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On the cover: The New Horizons Majestic 102-F44RLTSS is a front bedroom, quad-slide fifth-wheel designed for full-time luxury. Photo by Rich Cox Photography

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Muscle and Manor

Your tow vehicle and trailer has earned a whole lot of TLC



hen talking about tow vehicles and trailers, some will argue that one is more important than the other, while some agree that each are of equal value and importance. We feel both play a significant role in fulfilling the RVing lifestyle, and offer articles for those that love to pay attention to truck and trailer.

A neat and tidy installation of the DB Diesel Performance Variable Vane Brake kit is profiled. This is an easy-to-install, plug-and-drive setup that works with and helps to control the turbocharger used in the 2004.5 and newer Duramax engines to develop more retarding horsepower and assist exhaust braking. The company is also currently developing a similar product for Ford light-truck diesel engines.

Getting more cool, clean air into an engine's intake system can help it develop more power. Installing an aftermarket intake such as one of Volant's Cool Air Intake kits available for many late model Dodge, GM and Ford diesel-powered pickups can improve filtration and overall engine performance and longevity. These are easy D-I-Y kits that most shade-tree mechanics can do at home. Inside, we'll show you just how easy one of these kits is to install with simple tools in less than a few hours.

For those readers who really want to put some elbow grease into their trailers and upgrade the brakes, we have a step-by-step story on Kodiak's hydraulic-overelectric replacement system that will boost your trailer braking effectiveness. Not only does the hybrid hydraulic-electric system give it more power, but this disc brake system can provide far more stopping power to your trailer than a simple electric drum brake system.

To top it all off, this issue includes a fairly comprehensive cleaning product evaluation and tips story full of valuable information about keeping your RV clean and tidy. But it's not just about looks. Cleanliness is part of a regular maintenance routine that allows you to inspect the condition of each and every piece, part and corner of your tow vehicle and trailer. That sort of familiarity allows you to know how well a part or system is wearing and working, keep an eye on fluid levels, on lubrication schedules and, in general, have a better understanding of the status of your RV at all times and help you create your own all-important cleaning and maintenance routine. 🗭

- Stuart Bourdon, editor-in-chief

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ONLINE: Readers Choice Awards!

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>>> This month kicks off the Trailer Life Readers Choice Awards! You get to choose your favorite products and travel destinations from around the U.S. Who better than to pick the best RVing products and places to go than the most experienced "field testers" in the world — Trailer Life readers. Log on to www.TrailerLife.com/readers-choice and vote for your favorites. Full details are available on the voting site, so get started now!





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Full-Timing Costs

LETTERS

Barry Zander's article ("What will fulltiming cost you?" — May 2012) missed two significant costs that can turn out to be huge and unpleasant surprises to anyone who might be considering living the supposedly carefree life on the road. I've been burned by both of these, so I speak from experience.

As soon as you surrender a street address and inform your vehicle insurance agent that you're living full-time in the RV, the agent is likely to cancel your policy. Most insurance companies, including the ones purporting to be RV-friendly, do not insure people living full-time in a trailer or motorhome. If you can find coverage, you'll discover that the premium is proportionately much higher than what's charged for part-time use of the same RV. You won't be able to get the same kind of coverage on your belongings that you did when you had a physical address, either, and if you try to get coverage from your agent for belongings stored in a storage facility, you'll have to jump through all kinds of hoops to make it happen.

An even bigger shock comes to full-timers who decide to take out a loan and buy a new rig. Finance companies (again, even those aggressively seeking RVer business) do not like to finance rigs that will be lived in fulltime. Since there's no home address, the rig would be difficult to recover in the event of a lapse in payments. In my case, I was able to secure financing for a new trailer even though I have been a full-timer for three years – but the one and only company that would finance me is charging a rate so obscene I won't even declare it in print. When a need arises that I have to speak with the company's customer service people, they make me feel like some kind of dirty, wandering hobo.

I have no regrets about living fulltime in my RV. But, I am concerned that some readers may think that the biggest worries a full-timer would have are where to travel and how

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Canadian Non-Residents

On page 6 of the May issue of Trailer Life, you indicate that a Canadian Non-Resident Insurance Card is required. That information is out of date. The requirement was dropped recently. There is no longer such a card and your U.S. proof of insurance is adequate for driving in Canada. Many U.S. Auto Insurance policies cover Canada as well as the United States. This is not true for Mexico and travelers should be alerted that special Mexican auto coverage is still needed. - Jim Scott, Olympia, Wash.



UP NORTH

According to Citizenship and Immigration Canada, more than 35 million people visit Canada each year.

much fuel to use getting there. In reality, there's much more at stake than that. Anyone wanting to cut ties to a physical address needs to think long and hard, and weigh all the financial ramifications.

Doug Swanson, Orange, Calif.



Hidden Hall of Fame

On Page 8 of the June issue, there is quite a bit of space devoted to the RV/MV Hall of Fame. Yet, nowhere do you mention where it is, where I can camp nearby if I wish to visit or where to send the check if I wish to contribute.

I know I most likely can get many of those answers on the website or by calling. But I seriously doubt I'm the only one who was looking for this information.

Fred Myers, Ala.

or email: info@trailerlife.com. Please include your full name and location.

Fred, you are right, here you, and all the rest of our readers, go: For the record, the RV/MH Hall of Fame is located at 21565 Executive Parkway, Elkhart, Indiana 46514. You can contact the folks there by calling 800-378-

8694 or 574-293-2344, or the website www.rvmhhalloffame.org features a link on the home page that allows donations to be made by credit card. If vou would like to tour the RV/MH Hall of Fame, it is conveniently located adjacent to the Indiana Toll Road (I-80/I-90) at County Road 17 (Exit 96) in Elkhart and there is plenty of parking for large rigs in the oversized lot. As to campground recommendations, the only place we have camped in the area is rustic Eby's Pine's RV Park & Campground right off the Toll Road on State Road 120 in Bristol, Ind., between Elkhart and Shipshewana. Go to www.woodalls.com and www.goodsam.com to find more RV campgrounds and resorts in the region. 🗬

F FACEBOOK POLL

How do you know when it's time to replace your trailer?

/ I'll know it when I see it **31%** The wheels fall off **17%** A new model catches my eye **5%** Just before you pay it off



Ron Olsen Probably when the kids no longer come out with us, we'll get more living space less sleeping space. Sleeps nine now with the three bunks.

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by Amanda Lepinski



The Park Before Time

Alberta's Dinosaur Provincial Park Bridges the Past to the Present

About 15,000 years ago the area that is now Dinosaur Provincial Park was flat and covered by an ice sheet nearly 2,000 feet thick. Throughout time, the ice thawed to unveil rolling valleys, hills and hoodoos (tall, thin spires of rock) that now cover the park. In 1979, Dinosaur Provincial Park was designated a UNESCO World Heritage Site namely for the significant fossil discoveries of nearly 35 dinosaur species — some 75 million years old. Located about 30 miles northeast of Brooks, Alberta, Canada in the country's largest badlands region, Dinosaur Provincial Park also harbors abundant live bird and mammal species among the sage flats, and the riparian cottonwood habitat sur-

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rounding the cascading Red Deer River that flows throughout the rocky park.

Outdoor adventurers can take note of more than 150 bird species including golden eagle, prairie falcon and loggerhead shrike, as well as several mammals roaming the park. The park's five trails offer different experiences: interpretive displays, easy trails for kids and those with limited mobility as well as advanced hiking trails with views from high above the park.

The park includes several special activities throughout the year: Sunset Tours occur at night when the air is cool and the sky is bright with stars giving visitors a special look at the natural preserve (May 19 – Sept. 1), the Prospecting Program gives hikers a chance to search for bones and fossil remains while exploring Alberta's badlands, Centrosaurus Quarry Hike provides unique views of concentrated dinosaur fossils and dig sites (May 19 -Oct. 6), Explorer's Bus Tour giving views of the park's nature preserve from the safety of a tour bus (May 19 - Oct. 7), and the Fossil Safari is a guided bus touring explaining how to identify turtle, fish, mammal and dinosaur remains (May 19 -Oct. 7).

Bikes are also allowed in specific areas of the park, while fishing enthusiasts can grab a rod and take advantage of the fish in Red Deer River. Canoeing and kayaking are allowed on Red Deer River



throughout the park. Camping is available in designated areas in the park for RVs up to 39 feet with 15-amp hook ups. Call ahead for reservations: 403-378-4342, www.albertaparks.ca/dinosaur.



August 15 - 17 Bonebed 30 3-Day Guided Excavation takes place and visitors can buy tickets to help dig for dinosaur fossils never before seen by humans. All findings will be chronicled with the research being done at the Royal Tyrell Museum. The excavation is \$700/person and includes most meals and accommodations.

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Eco-Friendly Exploration

AROUND

The i-GO lite 2013 is a lightweight fifth-wheel under the EverGreen Recreational Vehicles brand. Marketed as a low-maintenance trailer with vacuum-laminated sidewalls, floor and roof, the composite inner shell is touted as impervious to rot, mold and mildew. This 30-foot lightweight trailer has a

GWWR of 7,995 pounds and includes a six-gallon gas/electric direct spark ignition water heater, 14-inch nitrogen-filled radial tires, outside shower, awning and a large pass-through storage. The i-GO also offers a deep, 42-inch slideout, considerably opening up the interior living space, and a 78-inch interior height. Though the trailer is spacious, it is still considered lightweight for its size, helping to deliver better fuel economy. The bedroom accommodates a queen bed with dual wardrobe and drawer storage. Base MSRP: \$32,900. EverGreen RV, 574-825-4298, www.goevergreenrv.com

Airstream Opens Flagship Store in Los Angeles

Airstream opened its fifth stand-alone dealership in the United States, with the grand opening of Airstream Los Angeles on May 4. Twenty minutes east of downtown L.A. in San Gabriel, Calif., Airstream's newest store is a former automotive dealership built in 2005.



Airstream President and CEO Bob Wheeler spoke to Trailer

Life the day of the grand opening, and said the new dealership will serve one of the company's strongest regional markets with a modern stucco-and-glass exterior and a 14,000-square foot service department.

"We're lucky to step into a gorgeous facility that was barely ever used," Wheeler said. "The City of San Gabriel is overjoyed — this will bring employment and revenue to the area, so they've been very supportive."

Airstream Los Angeles is located at 1212 East Las Tunas Drive in San Gabriel, and at www.airstreamlosangeles.com. — Tom Kaiser



Celebrate the final leg of summer with an outdoor music event.

Satchmo SummerFest Aug. 2-5, New Orleans, La. www.fqfi.org/satchmosummerfest

Bluesapalooza

Aug. 3-5, Mammoth Lakes, Calif. www.mammothbluesbrewsfest.com

Peninsula Music Festival Aug. 7-25, Fish Creek, Wis. www.musicfestival.com

Summer Meltdown 2012 Aug. 10-12, Darrington, Wash. www.summermeltdown.com

Mackinac Music Festival Aug. 14-16, Mackinac Island Mich. www.mackinacislandmusicfestival.org

Gettysburg Bluegrass Festival Aug. 16-19, Gettysburg, PA www.granitehillcampingresort.com

Camp Barefoot 6 Music and Art Festival Aug. 23-26, Bartow, W.Va. www.campbarefoot.org

Moab Music Festival Aug. 30-Sept. 10, Moab, Utah www.moabmusicfest.org

READER RECIPE: TACO STEW

Ingredients:

- Choice of meat (2/3 lb. hamburger or 1 boneless skinless chicken breast)
- 4 heaping tablespoons of taco seasoning
- 1 can black beans including the juice
- 1/2 jar of sliced pepperoncini peppers (drained and sliced)
- 8-10-ounce can of sliced black olives
- 2 cups shredded four-blend cheese
- Tablespoon of sour cream
- Chopped yellow or white onion to taste

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(Serves 2), Total Time: 20 (beef recipe), 25 (chicken) Rick Bates, from Cameron Park, Calif., says this simple food can keep you warm on cold evenings.

Directions:

Cook meat until nearly done. While meat finishes, combine black beans and the juice, pepperoncini peppers, sliced olives, onion and taco seasoning in a five-quart pot, bringing all ingredients to a boil. Chop cooked meat and add to mixture. Stir occasionally while adding cheese until melted. Add more taco seasoning to taste. Top with sour cream. Eat as a stew or thicken stew with extra ingredients to pour over nachos or use as a dip.

If you would like to be considered for an upcoming Reader Recipe, email your recipe and finished food photo to info@trailerlife.com.

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User Guide



NEWSWIRE

Free Annual Pass for Military

Active duty military personnel and dependents with proper ID are eligible for a free Annual Pass — good for free entrance to all 397 National Parks. The pass includes admission to sites managed by the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, the BLM, the Bureau of Reclamation and the U.S. Forest Service. www.nps.gov/findapark/passes.html.

NADAguides Provides RV Valuation

Kelley Blue Book (KBB) suspended RV valuation products, however NADAguides continues to support consumer and industry professionals with RV valuation needs. Available 24/7 and valuing inventory from 1987 to present, NADAguides is the leading source for RV pricing and information. www.nadaguides.com.

Stonehenge Memorial Site/Maryhill Museum Expansion

The Maryhill Museum of Art, (also the site of America's outdoor large-scale replica of Stonehenge), 100 miles east of Portland, Ore. in Goldendale, Wash., expanded with a 25,000 square foot LEED gold-rated wing, to display larger indoor exhibitions. www.maryhillmuseum.org.



CONSUMER NEWS







A Welcome Companion

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RVers know they're living in an ever-changing electronic era that requires staying up-to-date with technology. The Jensen JRV212T touch-screen iPod/SIRIUS-ready stereo with three-camera outputs includes NOAA weather band radio, auto-store, adjustable display settings, an AM/FM tuner, CD player, audio mute, a 6.1-inch LCD screen with an easy-to-read backlight for day or night trips. Other than plenty of music options, the three-camera output is ideal for merging, changing lanes or reversing. MSRP \$779.99. Jensen: 877-305-0445, www.jensenrvdirect.com.



WEB-EXCLUSIVE



▶ This month's Web Exclusive takes you to the heart of Southern California's Imperial Sand Dunes, with additional photos, more of the story and virtual ride along through the desert.

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RV ACTION LINE TRAILER LIFE TO THE RESCUE

Campground Blues

A misunderstanding about this campground's rules had Leeloni Knechtges of Fenton, Mich. singing the blues. She reached out to RV Action Line.

» Dear Sirs,

This letter concerns a trip we were planning to Casa Grande, Ariz. The manager of Cottonwood Cove Mobile Home & RV Park asked us to send a deposit to secure a place to stay. We sent a cashier's check late last summer. I had health issues and we decided to cancel the trip but the campground's \$250 deposit was non-refundable. This seems unreasonable due to health reasons. Can you help?

THE COMPANY RESPONDED

Dear Mr. Knechtges,

I received your letter to *Trailer Life* magazine. I received an email from you in July 2011 requesting a reservation for Feb 2012, and at that time I informed you that we required a non-refundable deposit. On about August 8, I received your cashier's check (which the bank would have given you a receipt for). I believe it was in late October or early November when I received an email and phone message stating that you were canceling because of health reasons. I emailed you that we could hold your deposit for a year because of our cancellation policy. I sent out a gift certificate in December for \$250, I have enclosed a copy of it. I am sorry that you did not receive it and it did not come back to me. However, I am enclosing a new one and I hope to see you next season when your health is better. As per our no-refund policy, as stated on the website this is the best that I can offer to help you.

Unfortunately, Mrs. Knechtges, we have had others that have canceled in the past for various reasons including health, finances, business reasons and even a house fire to name a few. I am not at liberty to pick and choose whom the policy should apply to, that is why it applies to everyone, with no exceptions. If you have need of further assistance please do not hesitate to call. I will be happy to answer any questions that you may have.

Cordially, Melanie Mitchell, Property Manager Cottonwood Cove Mobile Home Park, Casa Grande, Ariz.

Long Road

Trailer Life's RV Action Line received a letter from Al and Colleen Salazar, of Grand Junction, Colo., who were having difficulty resolving an alleged problem with their 2009 Cedar Creek Silverside 32 WRL fifth-wheel trailer. Documentation from the Salazars, including photographs describing the circumstances, was forwarded to Forest River Inc. customer service along with a cover letter from us indicating the reader's dissatisfaction. Below is an excerpt from a follow-up letter we recently received from the Salazars as a result of those efforts.

>> First, we wanted to thank you for all the help in this matter as we believe that it was your letter that prompted Forest River to reverse its denial of our claim regarding the gel coat cracking on our 2009 Cedar Creek 32 WRL fifthwheel.

The trailer had a crack in the gel coat on the nose when we first bought it. The dealer, Gibson's RV in Grand Junction, repaired it right away before we picked it up, saying they were not sure how it happened — possibly it had been hit during transport. The nose was repaired and it looked [continued on pg. 15]

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Diesel Applications Available



(continued from pg. 12)

great. A year later, two days before the warranty expired, we found three more cracks in the gel coat, two on the nose (right where the first one was), and one by the door.

This time, Gibson's tried to get Forest River to take care of it but the company would not fix the cracks under warranty. They said that the cracks were impact cracks, not material failure or some other problem so they were not covered under warranty. As this was all taking place, we noticed that the walls in the bedroom were separating from the ceiling on both sides of the closet at the front of the coach. We could see daylight between the ceiling and the wall.

We believe it was [Trailer Life's] letter that prompted Forest River to reverse its denial of our claim...

Then Forest River informed us that we were to take our trailer to have the nose cap removed and to begin further repairs but Gibson's RV was not set up for that kind of work. Gibson's had us take it to Humphrey's RV, also in Grand Junction, where they had the equipment for extensive mechanical repairs.

While Humphrey's had our trailer, they discovered that the pin box traveled two inches before it came off the landing gear. They also found weld failures on both sides of the frame and no welds at all in the center of the frame. Forest River offered to send out a welder to repair the frame so it could be transported back to the factory for repair. In closing, after a long wait, we are looking forward to getting our trailer back and have been assured by Forest River that they will address all our concerns and it will be better than new.

Thanks,

Al and Colleen Salazar, Grand Junction, Colo.

TAKE ACTION » After exhausting all other resources without success, please forward information with copies of appropriate bills and correspondence to RV Action Line, 3300 Fernbrook Lane N, Suite 200, Minneapolis, MN 55447. Please include a self-addressed, stamped envelope. No phone calls, please.

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Protect your skin while enjoying the outdoors

Vers are sun lovers by nature. Evidence of that is the sizeable flock of "snow birds" heading south each winter to enjoy toasty weather instead of northern climes soon to be shovel-deep in snow. There's nothing like a sunny day to lift our spirits. We now know that too much exposure to sunlight can be damaging to our skin and health, causing dermatological complications such as premature aging and UV damage. When it comes to the sun, the prospects of serious problems from various diseases such as cancer have also become a concern. Here are some tips and tricks to keeping yourself protected in the sun.

SUN SAFE

Sunscreen is a good place to start. The Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends the use of broad-spectrum sunscreen that provides protection against UVA and UVB rays. If you have fair skin and burn easily, you'll need sunscreen with a higher SPF rating. According to the American Academy of Dermatology (www.aad.org), SPF 30 or higher is a good starting point, combined with other safe sun practices such as limiting sunlight exposure. Reapplication of sunscreen every two hours is recommended, or more often if you're swimming or sweating. Be sure to check the expiration date on the sun-

SunZone

rding to the CDC sun's rays are mos rdous between 10 and 4 p.m. in the

nited States

screen. According to the CDC, sunscreen that doesn't display a use-by date has an effective life of no more than three years. If yours is getting old, it's time to buy a fresh supply.

The lips are particularly sensitive to sunburn, so don't forget to apply a sun-blocking lip balm frequently during the day. Lip balm should display the same kind of SPF rating as other sunscreen.

One of the first steps is to make a determination about how much sun is too much for you. It's not the same for everyone. If you sunburn easily, that's a clue that you need to take extra precautions. According to the CDC (www.cdc.gov), the sun's UV rays can damage skin in as little as 15 minutes. A visit with your doctor might be in order to determine your vulnerability.

Regardless of skin type, there are strategies that will provide more protection. One method is to manage time in the sun. Limit the amount of time you spend in the sun, and also

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Sunscreen with an SPF 30-rating or higher is recommended.

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control which hours of the day exposure takes place. Spend more time in the sun during the cooler morning and evening hours, and spend the hotter, middle of the day in the shade. This time frame also applies to lightly overcast days, because the damaging UV radiation also penetrates clouds.

COVER ALL

Not all clothing does the same job at blocking UV radiation. Clothing specially designed to block the sun bears a UPF (Ultraviolet Protection Factor) label with ratings. The higher the UPF number, the better the sun-blocking capability. A good rating doesn't even begin until UPF 15. Look for a rating of 40-50 for best protection.

Cover as much of your body as possible. It's easy to forget to cover your feet and end up with disabling sunburns in the pattern of flip-flops. Wear a widebrimmed hat or one with a wrap-around flap that covers your neck and ears.

To protect your eyes from damaging rays, wear top-quality wrap-around sunglasses that provide 100 percent

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protection against UV light penetration. According to Dr. Gary Heiting, OD, "anyone who spends time outdoors is at risk for eye problems from UV radiation." You can check on the amount of local UV risk at

www.allaboutvision.com/uv/ where a constantly updated map and chart display UV intensity information.

Sun safety for children is important. According to cancercare.org, babies younger than 6-months of age should never be exposed to the sun. When outside during the day, protect them by using a blanket, wide-brimmed hat or bonnet, and a stroller with a canopy. Older children who itch to be active during the day should be encouraged to engage in shade-friendly activities, and protected with a broad-spectrum SPF 30 sunscreen, applied every two hours (more frequently if in the water).

Bright days are an excellent reason to celebrate our RV lifestyle, and even though the sun does present some risks if we over-do it, by taking the proper precautions we can relax and enjoy the warm summer weather.

SUN-PROTECTION CLOTHING

UPF-rated clothing, made with special dyes versus the garment color, is the variant that makes clothes resistant to UV rays.

Tightly woven clothing offers more protection with less space between fibers and yarn preventing harmful UV rays from contacting skin beneath.

Polyester and nylon offer the best protection against UV rays while wool and silk are moderately effective. Cotton, rayon, flax and hemp fabrics do not offer much protection unless they're unbleached or are naturally colored cotton versus bleached cotton.

Keep UPF-rated clothing as dry as possible – wet UPF clothing causes about a 30- to 50-percent reduction in effectiveness.

Companies like Patagonia and REI offer full lines of UPF-rated clothing. Visit www.patagonia.com or www.rei.com for a complete listing.



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by Len Cousineau



Panhandle Treasures

More than 700 quarries exist in this region, most of which are found within 60 acres of the park.

The ancestors of modern Wichita, Pawnee and Caddo peoples inhabited land along the Canadian River in the area currently known as the Texas Panhandle between the years 1150 to 1450. Human habitation in the region stretches back 13,000 years, however, and modern day travelers can study the colorful proof of these early people in Alibates Flint Quarries National Monument.

The only national monument in the state of Texas, Alibates Flint Quarries owns up to its name from the more than 700 quarries that exist in the region, many of them concentrated on the 60acre mesa that sits within the park's arid 1,000 acres.

The monument's name is a misnomer, since the abundant flint is actually agatized dolomite. However, visitors to the monument aren't likely to worry about semantic distinctions, because

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they will be too busy appreciating the geologic, historic and cultural aspects of Alibates Flint Quarries and taking in the colorful beauty of the stone itself.

From within the quarries, which were dug by hand and measure approximately six feet in diameter, the local inhabitants retrieved the sharp-edged stone and knapped it carefully to create tools, which were essential to the residents' survival. Tools made from the stone that came from the Alibates quarries have been found throughout the southwest and the Great Plains.

By reservation only, park rangers lead visitors on tours of the park at 10 a.m. and 2 p.m. daily. These one-mile, two-hour round trip hikes require visitors to adjust to an elevation gain of 170 feet.

Visitors will learn about how the dolomite layer was formed and they will view the quarries themselves. Travelers



who take the tour in late summer are likely to encounter gorgeous sand lilies that attract various flying creatures.

No matter the season, guests should begin at the visitor center that features exhibits and a film, in addition to amenities that will make their time there more pleasant. All tours begin and end at the center. For more information on Alibates Flint Quarries National Monument: (806) 857-3151; nps.gov/alfl. While in the region, you should also visit the nearby Lake Meredith National Recreation Area (806-857-3151, nps.gov/lamr), which features camping, boating and fishing.

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DID YOU KNOW?

According to the NPS, Alibates Flint Quarries is named after an 1880s-era Texan cowboy, Allen "Allie" Bates.

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GOING TO F

TRAILERS ARE THE WAY TO LIVE IN SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA'S MYSTERIOUS SANDBOX

icturing Southern California conjures up images of Santa Barbara, Los Angeles, Newport Beach and San Diego but there's so much more to explore beyond the mountains surrounding this cosmopolitan megalopolis. Drive away from all the people, heading east from the greater Los Angeles basin, and the scene guickly morphs. Skinny palms, packed freeways and pine-covered hills give way to barren, rugged mountains along Interstate 10. After passing the San Jacinto Peak near Palm Springs, the range opens to a desert valley populated by unnaturally tall wind turbines spinning in the rapidly moving air of this expansive basin.

Breaking off the interstate at Indio and heading southeast, state Highway 86 is the gateway to one of the most otherworldly regions in the United States: the brine-choked Salton Sea shining like an oasis, the abandoned resorts of Desert Shores and bright green farm fields that seem entirely out of place on this arid land. Who would've thought so much of our country's produce comes from the desert?

Approaching the town of Brawley, just north of the U.S.-Mexico border, the terrain shifts again to impossibly flat, with the dark-shaded Chocolate Mountains looming in the distance. Twenty miles east of town, the farm fields abruptly end, and suddenly you're surrounded by nothing but sand dunes. It looks like the Sahara, but you have now entered California's Imperial Sand Dunes, where the landscape is so harsh that, in most cases, campers need the hard sides and stability of an RV to stay overnight. It's either that or brave the elements, a contest the desert usually wins.

Arriving in Glamis

From above, the heart of the narrow Imperial Sand Dunes resembles a beige-colored fish on its side stretching 45 miles long by six miles wide. It's extreme terrain has been used to simulate other planets in films but is an earthly paradise to the motorized recreation crowd who call this place Glamis.

Local outfitter, Camp 'N Style, services visiting riders and campers looking to brave one of America's most unforgiving places. Our group was going to spend three days in the dunes, and boondocking in a trailer would be a powerful reminder of



nature's beauty and relentless power, as well as the Imperial Dunes' remarkable recreation possibilities.

The trailers were delivered before we arrived. Our unit was a 26-foot toyhauler trailer that was capable of sleeping six and was one of four rental options ranging up to a 40-foot fifthwheel. Each trailer came stocked with an on-board generator, TV with DVD player, a fully furnished kitchen (including coffee) and cleaning supplies for keeping things tidy during our stay.

For the Imperial Sand Dunes, Camp 'N Style charges a one-time delivery fee of \$95, and a minimum two-night stay ranges from \$378 in a 26-foot front queen travel trailer with a slideout, rear bath and adjacent rear bunk beds, or up to \$478 for a fancier, 28-foot toy hauler with a front queen and bath, and a pulldown queen bed in the rear. Group discounts are available to those reserving three trailers on the same dates.

There are several other RV rental companies serving the park. However you come, all sites are primitive, widely dispersed and have no signage denoting individual sites. Several places also rent ATVs, multi-passenger UTVs and dirt bikes to visiting riders.

In brief, camping is allowed in the park for up to 14 days within a 28-day period at any location and is prohibited within 300 feet of any water source to protect wildlife and livestock. All trash must be packed up, camping is prohibited outside the six designated campgrounds within the Yuha Area of Critical Environmental Concern and a permit may be required for campfires. Contact the El

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Centro Field Office for current fire restrictions and assistance picking your site.

Two friends and I shared a toy hauler trailer — a coin was flipped for the queen-size front master bedroom, which I won, while my cohorts Jeff Henson bunked on the streetside sofa bed and Bill Lanphier climbed up on the elevated over-the-garage queen mattress.

A spacious bathroom was adjacent to the master bedroom in the front of the unit, and the ample space and ceiling height made post-ride showers easy for 6-foot-plus guys like us. The openformat galley, microwave, three-burner stove with oven and standard fridge made it easy to prepare morning coffee or mid-day snacks, although we left the major cooking to the culinary experts attending this trip.

Hot Day in Paradise

Even when temperatures break 90 or 100 degrees during the day in this area, the dry air quickly cools when the sun slinks behind the horizon, so we had little use for the air conditioning. Ferocious winds rocked our trailer all night, though, which can be relaxing or disconcerting, depending on your point of view. After previous camping trips to Glamis, I've grown to enjoy the windblown nighttime soundtrack.

Sunrises here are equally mesmerizing, as shades of orange and yellow spread across the sandy horizon. The night winds wipe away the previous day's tracks and footprints, leaving a clean slate of fresh sand. As soon as the sun begins its rise, the mercury starts climbing. Summertime temperatures often reach well above 100 degrees, so naturally spring, fall and winter are when the area attracts crowds, which can exceed 150,000 on holiday weekends.

Most visitors come by truck or motorhome, pulling travel trailers, ATVs, dirt bikes and high-powered sand rail cars (some with burly V-8 engines) that can effortlessly charge up the tallest dunes. Some non-gearheads also come to bike or hike — only 40 percent of the sand field is open to motorized recreation — and others come to camp and enjoy the unique solitude of the desert.

Luckily, we came during mid-week and, seemingly, had the whole place to ourselves. That meant we also had our choice of where to set up basecamp, and picked a prime spot right against a tall dune along Gecko Road on the west side of the park.

Soaring Over the Dunes

With so much space to play in, beginning riders can go at their own pace as they learn to navigate these towering mountains of sand. Never assume what's on the other side of a hill and watch out for sharp divots that hide in the shadows.

Advanced riders, like many in our group, take desert riding to a higher, faster level that's a work of fine performance art. Thirty riders in bright safety gear lined up atop the rib-like dune behind our trailers as the lead rider shot off into the distance with the pack following right behind.

Staying close together, but not too



User Guide



Our basecamp as seen atop a tall dune along Gecko Road looking toward Brawley.

close, can allow you to get into a symbiotic relationship with the rider you're trailing, telling you precisely how to navigate the succession of massive sand bowls, long side hills, brushlined scrubby sections and the steepest, tallest hills — Oldsmobile and China Wall, the two most famous attractions in the Imperial Sand Dunes.

We flew through enormous banked turns that pinned us to our seats, jumped our way out of bowls only to land in another, quickly scrambled across crumbling ridge tops, gained momentum following stomach-wrenching drops and threw gigantic rooster tails of sand executing the sharpest high-speed corners imaginable.

After every ride, we returned to camp wearing permanent smiles, covered in sweat and completely, utterly

wiped out. With cooks preparing a lumberjack's dinner, everybody cleaned up while the campfire was stoked and the sun faded. Even though water pressure was low, having a shower makes a big difference after such an active day. Also, the rear garage of our toy hauler camper was particularly useful as a place to shed and store sandy gear.

Around the Campfire

With two grills, a few Dutch ovens and a propane-fired grill combo camp oven, we roasted pork loins that were a welcome delicacy after a long day of exercise. We learned a few camp cooking tips, like slicing pork loins in half lengthwise to allow the seasonings to penetrate deeper for a juicier, more flavorful cut of meat.

"AFTER EVERY RIDE, WE RETURNED TO CAMP WEARING PERMANENT SMILES"



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After a little story telling around the fire, it was time for a competitive horseshoes tournament. Generator-powered floodlights illuminated our site and kept us lively until the sky was pitch black and our breath formed clouds in the cool night air. Being able to retreat to the comfort of a heated trailer was the cherry on top, an ideal end to a day spent in paradise; sleep came easily.

A few sand handling tips come from experience: blowing sand can damage the paint of your truck and trailer - or anything else left in the elements. Pay attention to the wind's direction to minimize exposure, and take extra steps to prevent sand from intruding into nooks and crannies. A simple strip of tape over a keyhole, for example, can make a difference.

Sinking vehicles in the sand is also a concern, and a pushing them out is a common team activity out here. Don't drive far off the paved road, because you can easily bury your truck up to the axles. As a preventative measure, lower the air pressure of your tires for maximum flotation and traction in the sand.

Not Just for Riders

The sparse, unusual vegetation and the scent of wild sage blowing between the dunes, wild temperature extremes, driving winds and the remarkable sunrises and sunsets are just a primer for what you can expect while visiting this strange place.

Riding made it famous, but Glamis is not just for the motorized set. Other area attractions include the aforementioned Salton Sea and Joshua Tree National Park to the north, Picacho State Recreation Area and Chocolate Mountains to the east and the Anza-Borrego Desert State Wilderness Area and Cuyamaca Rancho State Park to the west. IAnd, for the truly adventurous, the lively town of Mexicali is just a short drive south of Brawley across the Mexican border.

In younger years, the desert never seemed of interest. Now expectations of a desert visit make me feel like a child approaching Disneyland for the very first time. The exotic desert camping and exciting off-road riding in the Imperial Sand Dunes are unforgettable proof that there's much more to Southern California than its crowded coastal cities.

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Regional Attractions

From bird watching at the mysterious Salton Sea to the tony resorts and restaurants at Palm Springs, extreme Southern California has many diverse places to create a unique and adventurous itinerary for your visit. Here are a few can't-miss adventures within two hours of the Imperial Sand Dunes.

Joshua Tree National Park

Named for twisty, spiky trees in the area, Joshua Tree National Park lies directly north of the Salton See just south of Twentynine Palms and encompasses 550,000 acres of scenic desert terrain. There are nine campgrounds in the park, as well as picnic areas for daytime visitors. Consider joining one of the rangerguided walks, hikes or campfire talks, mostly during spring and fall, where you can learn more about the park and its surrounding ecosystem. www.nps.gov/jotr, 760-367-5500

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- the Salton Sea stands out from its arid surroundings like an oasis in the desert, because that's exactly what it is. Covering 14 miles on the northeastern shore, the Salton Sea State Recreation Area attracts campers, anglers, canoe and kayak enthusiasts, hikers and photographers. Bird watchers frequent the area for the diversity of migrating fowl that use this unique body of water as a rest stop on their cross-continental journeys. www.parks.ca.gov, 760-393-3052

Palm Springs

An easy-to-reach gateway to California's south-central region, Palm Springs is one hour and 45 minutes northwest of Brawley just off I-10. Aside from upscale restaurants and boutique resorts, Palm Springs has biplane and carriage rides, the Living Desert Zoo & Gardens, Hummer tours through nearby canyons, toprated golf courses, bike and hiking trails, rock climbing and much more. www.visitpalmsprings.com

Anza-Borrego Desert State Park

Known for vibrant wildflower displays

and blooming cactus in the spring, the Anza-Borrego Desert State Park approximately one hour west of Brawlev and is California's largest state park. Visitors should keep their eyes peeled for desert wildlife including golden eagles, fox, mule deer, bighorn sheep, chuckwalla lizards and rattlesnakes. Camping is first-come, first-served, with hookup sites going for \$30/night. The maximum trailer length is 35 feet. Day passes for fleeting visitors are \$5 per car. The park is named for Juan Bautista de Anza, an 18-century Spanish explore, and borrego, which is the spanish word for bighorn sheep.

www.parks.ca.gov, 760-767-4205 🗭

BLM El Centro Field Office:

760-337-4400, www.blm.gov/ca/st/en/fo/elcentrol.html **Brawley Chamber of Commerce:** 760-344-3160, www.brawleychamber.com **Camp 'N Style:** 877-965-7368, www.campnstyle.com



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G. 32 oz. Liquid #56066 Club SALE \$8.49 Reg. \$11.79 | Ship Wt. 3 lbs.

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By Russ Steele

ONE PILOT'S CROSS-COUNTRY RV TRIP TO THE STRATEGIC AIR COMMAND MUSEUM BRINGS MEMORIES SOARING HOME

Above: Steele with Brian York exchanging a plaque recording some first-time accomplishments. Below: Steele's rig in front of the Strategic Air & Space Museum. aving completed 20 years of service in the Air Force, with most of my career in Strategic Air Command (SAC), I collected a number of certificates and plaques that were cluttering up my home office 30 years after retirement. While they were significant to me, recognition of some first-time events in SAC, these items of edification needed a better home.

I had to find these memorable treasures a better resting place; a home where those interested in Air Force history might appreciate them. So, I contacted the Strategic Air and Space Museum near Ashland, Neb., and asked if they would be interested in having my memorabilia.

Brian York, curator of exhibits and collections, initially said, "I already have 35 cans of old aircraft oil." Once York and I spoke further he said he would like to look at my material before making a commitment.

After some deliberation, my wife,



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Above: The Lockheed SR-71A Blackbird is a high-speed reconnaissance plane designed to outrun the U-2 spy plane. Its maximum speed is still classified, but its cruising speed is 1,320 mph. Below: Snow-covered Rocky Mountains from historic Route 40 in Colorado.

Ellen, and I decided a road trip to Ashland would make a great RV excursion. We set about planning the route from our home in Northern California to the museum in eastern Nebraska. We heard from friends about the scenery and historical charm of old Highway 40 through Utah and Colorado, and decided to traverse one of America's great arteries as we made our way east.

Historic US-40 once crossed the entire United States from Atlantic City, N.J. to San Francisco, Calif., but now only small sections still exist. When the Interstate Highway System was created, many western sections of Route 40 were decommissioned. We planned to tour one of the remaining sections from Silver Creek Junction, Utah, just off of I-80, to Silverthorne, Colo., where US-40 joins I-70 near Denver. That route would allow us to see more of rural America and visit interesting small towns, such as Vernal, Utah, and Craig and Steamboat Springs, Colo. along the way. We are much more comfortable on our nation's backroads than on the interstates in our rig anyway. The slower pace gives us an opportunity to take in the surroundings at every bend in the road.



Once we arrived at the museum, York met us in the front lobby and took my materials for review. Smiling, he suggested we tour the museum as his guests while he did an evaluation and prepared any transfer deeds.



Close-up of the Great Platte River Road Archway Monument.

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HISTORY STOP

For a little dose of history, we stopped at the Great Platte River Road Archway Monument, a giant log bridge across I-80. The Archway is a relative newcomer to Great Plains tourism, opened in 2000 to pay tribute to the enduring spirit of America's pioneers and their historic westward trek. We had never stayed overnight in a parking lot before, but the Archway website indicated that overnight parking was permitted, so we decided to do just that. Using our GPS, we found the right off-ramp at I-80 Exit 272, a few miles west of the Archway. We snaked our way along a winding service road from the I-80 exit just as the sun was setting. When we arrived the parking lot was empty. We envisioned other travelers taking advantage of the dry camping opportunity, but no one showed up until the next morning, just before the Archway opened for business. We had acres of concrete all to ourselves. While we felt safe, a little company would have been nice.

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SAC MUSEUM

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The Strategic Air Command Museum was General Curtis LeMay's vision. He wanted to preserve SAC's rich military history for future generations. The first aircraft we viewed, and the seed that started the museum, a B-36 Strategic Bomber, was located at the end of an old runway at Offutt Air Force Base in 1959. In May 1998, following a million-dollar local fundraising campaign, the museum was moved to a location more accessible to the public near Ashland, Neb., and renamed the Strategic Air & Space Museum in 2001.

Today the museum is a 300,000square-foot building and features a glass atrium, two aircraft display hangars, traveling exhibit area, children's interactive gallery, 200-seat theater and snack bar. The glass atrium is constructed of glass panels that encase a Lockheed SR-71 Blackbird. The two aircraft display hangars protect dozens of Air Force aircraft and memorabilia in the museum collection and exhibits from the harsh Nebraska winters and blazing summer sun.

We found an FB-111, just like the one I flew, on the lower floor of the museum and took some pictures of the right seat, where I used to log long flight hours. During the height of my flying career, I would spend as much as six hours at a time in this plane's small cockpit with limited comfort facilities. An avid coffee drinker, I soon discovered not to drink too much coffee before a flight, especially a long one.

However, my most memorable accomplishments were not in the cockpit, but in supervising a test team responsible for examining aircraft to make sure they were up to meeting their combat mission. My team was the one that determined if a plane was ready for combat, causing great consternation in the 509th Bombardment Wing, Second Air Force and HQ Strategic Air Command. We were infamous overnight when our predictions came true.

Our day at the museum was filled with memorable sights and sounds, but the one significant component of every aircraft ramp that was missing on the clean painted floor of the museum was the pungent, greasy smell of JP-4 jet fuel.

The JP-4 had been drained from all the aircraft as a safety measure. Hoping I was not drawing too much attention to

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Streets & Trips

myself, I put my nose close to the skin of the old FB-111 to catch a whiff, but it had been wiped clean. My aircraft sniffing caught the attention of a docent on the floor, who came to see if I had any questions, and to keep an eye on me.

After rebuilding memories for an hour or so, we met York again at the information desk. I was pleased to hear that all the materials I brought with me from California were of interest to the museum, as his assessment was that they were all one-of-a-kind items, including the story I wrote about my adventures as the first Category III FB-111 Test Director. I learned from the docent on the museum floor that the museum's FB-111 collection was rather thin and could use the boost. That made my small contribution even more important to the museum's archives.

We recommend that other Trailer Life readers check their closets, desk drawers and bookshelves for items they might

want to donate to their favorite museum. If you donate these items to a museum, future generations will have an opportunity to appreciate your small contributions to history. They do not have to be military items, just unique items that have a historical significance. And we bet that you'll have just as much fun as we did on our flight of memories to the Strategic Air & Space Museum, 🗭

Strategic Air & Space Museum

402-944-3100, www.sacmuseum.org The Craig Campground 970-824-5105, www.thecraigcampground.com Eugene T. Mahoney State Park 402-471-1414, nebraskastateparks.reserveamerica.com The Great Platte River Road Archway 877-511-2724, www.archway.org

WHERE WE STAYED

Our first overnight stay was at The Craig Campground. The camp owners were nice enough to tip us off to what they claimed were the best takeout BBQ ribs in town, and we were not disappointed. Mom & Pops Smoke BBQ was just a half-mile from the campground, and the

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ribs were finger-lickin' good.

Our next stop was at Eugene T. Mahoney State Park, within walking distance of the Strategic Air and Space Museum. This was one of the nicest state parks we have ever stayed at in our 45 years of RV travel. It is dry camping, but

every concrete pad has a 30-amp outlet, enabling campers to power up their AC during those scorching days when high humidity can make summer camping a real challenge in Nebraska. We also enjoyed the wireless Internet in this truly modern campground.



User Guide

THE CANAL THAT WAS ALMOST DITCHED

Visitors will find the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal National Historical Park a worthwhile addition to any visit to our nation's capital n a recent summer morning we stood in front of the Great Falls Tavern Visitor Center, a few feet away from Lock No. 20 and about 14 miles northwest of Washington, D.C., while we waited for the first trip of the day. Park Ranger, John McCarthy, explained that the fine white-stucco visitor center had originally been the lock keeper's house that was built when the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal was new in 1828.

Today it includes a small museum, and tickets (\$5) for rides aboard the canal boat Charles F. Mercer can be purchased inside. Just west of the canal is a large wooden deck that provides dramatic vistas of the Great Falls of the Potomac.

by Pamela Selbert

Georgetown, home of the C&O Canat, bought water from the canal to operate many of the town's water-driven factories.

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According to NPS canal historians about 35,000 laborers dug the canal and built aquaducts, culverts, locks and other associated structures for the canal. Mules were considered superior work animals and preferred by canal boat captains.

And a quarter mile or so south, a 0.2-mile walking bridge leads from the towpath to Olmstead Island where panoramas of these magnificent cascades are even more spectacular. The island was named for landscape architect Frederick Olmstead, who had been instrumental in preserving the falls and gorge.

McCarthy went on to tell us that long before work on the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal — affectionately referred to as the Grand Old Ditch began, President George Washington was a strong advocate of creating waterways to connect Eastern coastal shipping with the Great Lakes and the Ohio River.

CONTRACTOR OF THE

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TRATING

Washington founded the Potowmack Company in 1785 with the intention of making the Potomac River navigable. In 1824, holdings of the Potowmack were ceded to the Chesapeake and Ohio Company. The firm was to build a canal from the tidewater at Georgetown to the Ohio River, to provide a navigable waterway that would serve mainly for bringing coal from the Allegheny Mountains to the capital. Finally, on July 4, 1828, to the tunes of a brass band and cheers of a crowd, President John Quincy Adams held a groundbreaking ceremony to begin the ambitious project.

It would include 74 lift locks to raise

User Guide



the canal from sea level to 610 feet at Cumberland. Even more impressive, it would take eleven stone aqueducts to carry the canal water over the Potomac's tributaries; six intake dams to supply water from the Potomac, which the canal closely parallels; numerous waste weirs to control water flow; and 200 culverts to carry roads and streams under the canal. Numerous bridges and lock houses would be needed to complete the project. It was a seemingly full-fledged national economic stimulus package.

Ranger McCarthy told us that the work was very difficult, as the route "led through rocky terrain, not cornfields." There were also cost overruns — the projected expense was \$4 million, which was exceeded by \$18 million — as well as labor problems. However, for the next 22 years, some 35,000 laborers, who

Historic homes and shops are tightly packed in rows along the canal near Georgetown.

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Chesapeake and Ohio Canal National Historical Park

were mostly Irish immigrants, toiled away, and quite a few died during the construction. A Celtic cross stands at Cumberland, dedicated to the immigrants whose lives were lost building the 60-foot wide, six-foot deep canal. And one gravesite near Sharpsburg, Md., is said to hold the remains of 500 workers

All the while, during all that strife and struggle, railroad technology steadily improved by leaps and bounds. By the time the canal reached Cumberland in 1850, it was already obsolete as the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad arrived eight years earlier. The canal would go no farther than Pittsburgh, still nearly 180 miles from its intended destination. The B&O already completed the link to the West. Another disadvantage of the canal was the weather. The boats could only travel during mild weather from late March to late October, while the trains could run the same route year-round.

In 1889, after the flood and another bankruptcy, ownership of the canal was transferred to the railroad, which contin-

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ued operating it at a loss to prevent its right-of-way from falling into the hands of the Western Maryland Railway. Operations ceased in 1924 after another flood damaged the canal structure.

Locking Through

We watched the Mercer lock through an eight-foot drop in the canal. Then, after the mules were released from their duties, a half-dozen rangers and volunteers, men and women in 19th century attire, turned the boat around with ropes and poles, towing it backward to the dock. Although some of the boats carried passengers, most hauled mail and other cargo. Operating a boat required a minimum of three people: one to lead the mules (each boat had two pair) another person to steer the vessel and a third to do the cooking. Many of the canal boats were operated by families that lived aboard.

The park currently has seven working mules. One of them, named Frances, now resides at President Jimmy Carter's Georgia estate. When their working years are over they are found suitable homes. Another mule, Ida, 30 years old, was recently retired after 27 years in the traces, working 7,776 boat trips on the towpath.

In this former working-class district where simple, narrow brick buildings can now sell for \$1 million, the canal is lined by high stone walls, topped in places by elegant condos. At bridges the mules must be unhitched. At one time, the tandem hitching allowed two teams to pass on the towpath. However, because there is no drag, the 17-ton, 88-foot long boats could be easily pulled by two people, the rangers told us.

Canal boats traveled up to 30 miles a day, taking six days to make the trip between Georgetown and Cumberland, with downstream boats enjoying the right-of-way. Four miles per hour was top speed, or the boat would create a bank-eroding wake. Ice can also cause damage, so the canal is kept drained from November through April.

Almost Erased

If it hadn't been for a feisty Supreme Court Justice by the name of William Douglas, the beautiful national monument you can visit and enjoy today would be nothing but an ugly two-lane highway. In 1938 the United States acquired the abandoned canal — it was drained 14

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Nearly converted to a two-lane highway, the canal was saved and designated a National Historical Park in 1961.

years earlier - planning to restore it as a recreation area. The lower 22 miles of it were repaired and rewatered, but when the country entered World War II the project was halted. By 1954, Supreme Court Justice William Douglas wrote about a national park he envisioned "at the capital's back door — a refuge, a place of retreat, a long stretch of quiet and peace." He was responding to a Washington Post editorial recommending that the old Chesapeake and Ohio Canal, a long-out-of-use waterway linking Georgetown in Washington, D.C. and Cumberland, Md., be turned into a parkway.

"It is a sanctuary for everyone who loves woods," Douglas continued, "a sanctuary that would be utterly destroyed by a fine two-lane highway." He invited newspaper editors, reporters and others to join him on a hike along the old canal's entire 184.5 miles. Fifty-eight signed on — with only nine, including Douglas, walking the whole way — and on March 22 that year the highly-publicized eight-day trek began near Cumberland.

The effort was a success. Douglas and other concerned citizens persuaded Congress to protect the canal, and in 1961 it was designated a National Monument. One decade later, it was made a National Historical Park.

At Georgetown in Washington, D.C. and Great Falls, Md., visitors can experience water travel of an earlier day; on mule-drawn canal boat rides offered by park rangers and volunteers in period costume. The hour-long narrated trips on replica boats, which depart three times a day, are available Wednesday through Sunday, May through October. Hikers and bicycle riders can travel the entire, nearly-level towpath, maintained

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by the National Park Service, where more than a century and a half ago mules first leaned into their traces. Most of the canal is now dry or un-navigable, but whether they come to ride a canal boat or walk or bike the tow path, more than 3 million visitors a year come to enjoy the 20,000-acre park.

For information contact the Great Falls Visitor Center, 11710 MacArthur Blvd., Potomac, MD 20854; 301-767-3714, or the Georgetown Visitor Center, 1057 Thomas Jefferson St. NW, Washington, DC 20007; 202-653-5190. For information about other park programs visit www.nps.gov/choh.

Parking is available at both sites, but we recommend leaving your tailer at the campground. Our choice was firstrate Cherry Hill Park in College Park, MD, about 16 miles east of Great Falls. For information call 800-801-6449, or visit www.cherryhillpark.com. For more campgrounds, search: www.woodalls.com or www.goodsam.com.



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Craig Nardone **RV** Owner

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WALK-THROUGH: NEW HORIZONS MAJESTIC 102-F44RLTSS

The New Horizons Majestic is an Exceptional Fifth-Wheel Designed for Full-Time Living

roviding the ultimate in luxury and an abundance of amenities to a market can be a doubleedged sword. This is particularly true of the luxury fifth-wheel market, where doing so can create a price tag high enough for potential buyers to wonder if they should consider purchasing a luxury motorhome instead.

It's a challenge that Phil Brokenicky, president and CEO of New

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Horizons, has faced ever since he took over the company in 2002. But through creative thinking, exceptional build quality and innovative features, this small company from Junction City, Kan., has positioned itself as a premier luxury fifth-wheel brand.

Like a manufacturer of bespoke furniture or fine clothing, New Horizons' focus is on creating the finest quality, not the largest numbers. Its



48,000-square-foot facility houses more than 50 employees, who build just three products: Summit, Moto-Mover (a luxury toy hauler) and the company's flagship fifth-wheel, Majestic.

We recently spent time in a New Horizons Majestic 102-F44RLTSS, a

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The bedroom and bathroom offer 6-foot-8-inch-high ceilings, delivering a feeling of spaciousness and luxury that is topped off by the rich look of Rustic Cherry cabinetry throughout the interior. The bedroom includes a 26-inch TV that swings down from the massive wardrobe. A gorgeous one-piece radius-type shower highlights the large bathroom that can be completely closed off from the bedroom.

41-footer with the traditional front bedroom and four slideouts. The 102 denotes a 102-inch-wide body design that, when combined with the 8-foot-high ceilings in the living area, delivered the impression that we stepped into a highend residence rather than a trailer. That feeling was reinforced by the 5/8-inchthick flooring, heavy-gauge steel frame (built on premises) and standard Bigfoot automatic hydraulic leveling jacks, which make for a solid foundation.

All luxury fifth-wheels captivate their potential buyers with a beautiful interior, and the same is true of the Majestic. But it takes a closer look to really appreciate the details. For example, those aren't solid cabinet fronts, but solid Rustic Cherry cabinets made in house — replete with natural knots. The drawers have roller guides and dovetail joints — the mark of a master cabinetmaker. Corian countertops are used throughout, and the unit we sampled also featured hand-scraped hickory hardwood flooring.

Many New Horizons customers comment that the Majestic's kitchen is nicer than the one in their own home, and we would be inclined to agree. There's an abundance of counter space, a deep under-mount stainless steel sink with a pull-out faucet and integrated sprayer, and a residential-style Verona four-burner cooktop with a high-output burner. A Whirlpool Velos convection microwave is standard, as is a Dometic 12.3-cubic-foot refrigerator with matching wood panel doors. Our unit also featured some welcome options, such as a kitchen island, tumbled marble backsplashes (also used in the bathroom) and a drawer-style dishwasher. Plus, there's a large pantry closet with slideout shelves, and more than enough storage space for the most accomplished traveling chef.

As your eyes move about the living area, you'll find a couch with coffee table at the back, and in the streetside slideout, a pair of glider/recliner chairs and a two-place dining table. Expecting extra guests? The table easily extends to accommodate two more, and two folding chairs in a matching fabric are



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part of the package.

Across from the dining area, adjacent to the galley, is an impressive entertainment center: included are a 40-inch Samsung LCD HDTV that rises out of the desktop, and a home theater package that includes a Denon receiver, Boston Acoustic 5.1 surround sound speakers and a Samsung Blu-Ray

player. Upping the "wow factor" in our unit was an optional electric fireplace (for ambiance, heat or both), and MCD electric shades with remote operation.

The bed and bath areas in RVs can be lacking in residential feel for one reason or another, but we're happy to report that New Horizons really got it right in the Majestic. First and fore-

most, the bath area is its own zone, completely separate from the bedroom. There are even sliding doors that divide the two areas, so if your partner wants to rise early and take a shower, you can still relax in blissful darkness. The bath area also incorporates some very chic residential details, like a one-piece radius shower with sliding glass door (with space to move around in) and a beautiful glass bowl sink. The toilet room is also separate, and is equipped with a SeaLand vitreous china toilet with sprayer, plus a lav and medicine cabinet. This room is a little small, but there's adequate space to accomplish the task at hand. A large linen closet that is washer/dryer prepped is also included, but the appliances are optional.

Likewise, the bedroom feels like a luxury suite. Everywhere you look there is more Rustic Cherry cabinetry, with plenty of room for a traveling couple's clothes, shoes and the like. Both the bed and bath areas boast 6-foot-8-inch ceilings so you don't feel cramped, and the queen-sized bed has night tables on both sides, storage for your books

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WALK-THROUGH: NEW HORIZONS MAJESTIC 102-F44RLTSS

and integrated reading lamps. A 26inch Samsung television that swings down from the wardrobe is an elegant solution, but we would opt for the larger unit that rises out of the surface, even though it means doing without a dedicated clothes hamper. For our needs at least, the large, cedar-lined closet at the front of the fifth-wheel has more than enough room for clothes both clean and dirty.

You might think New Horizons built this fifth-wheel the way you would, but they've gone above and beyond with some very thoughtful features. For example, there's a broom closet just inside the entry door, and a central vac system with a dust pan built into the baseboard. Nudge it with your foot, and a panel opens; the vacuum turns on automatically, and you just sweep dirt right into the opening. There's another vacuum port in the bedroom area, and the motor itself is located in the basement to minimize noise.

All of the power outlets in the Majestic are located underneath the cabi-



The galley inside the Majestic can easily best many non-RV kitchens for no-compromise luxury and convenience on the road. The upscale features continue into the living area with high-end fixtures, lavish fabrics, huge windows and high-quality seating.

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nets, so cold air can't come in through those cutouts in the walls. And in most areas, there are three types of lighting: task, mood and accent, because you don't necessarily want the same lighting when you're watching a movie as you do when you're preparing dinner. The lighting systems are controlled by a 12-volt DC multiplex light switch control with dimmers, and the panels are placed in the appropriate areas for ease of operation.

Consideration for how you want to live extends to the rest of the coach as

well. New Horizons is mindful of the fact that most people don't like spending too much time setting up, so the Majestic is designed to be ready for relaxation in as little as 15 minutes from the time you reach your destination. This is made possible by the aforementioned fully automatic leveling jacks, as well as a 50-amp power cord and fresh water hose that are both on power-retractable reels. And since most of the Majestic's customers are full-timers, engineers bestowed this fifth-wheel with a



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44-inch-high pass-through storage compartment and up to 4,000 pounds of cargo capacity.

The chassis comes standard with MOR/Ryde independent suspension, which means there's less chance your belongings will end up on the floor after a long haul. And New Horizons also offers electric/hydraulic disc brakes, which can now be equipped with Tuson anti-lock braking (ABS) an extra measure of safety.

It seems that no stone has remained unturned during the development of this fifth-wheel. The ducted A/C system features an extra layer of insulation between the roof and the

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ducts, so the air will still blow cold even when the sun is beating down on the roof. And New Horizons worked with Coleman to equip the two 15,000-Btu A/C units with condensation pumps, which route condensation through a tube that is located underneath the one-piece fiberglass roof and rear cap. This way, condensation simply drips out of a hole underneath the rear of the coach, instead of down an exterior wall.

It should be no surprise the Majestic comes standard with a three-color full-body paint scheme with clear coat plus your choice of four décor packages and four cabinetry wood options. The test trailer also came with an optional exterior entertainment center, which consisted of an 40-inch Samsung television, sound bar and subwoofer.

New Horizons sells factory direct, and if you can't find something you like in one of the many floorplans (30 as of this writing) you can customize some features or build a completely unique floorplan to suit you needs. The Manufacturer Direct Sales Price as tested for the unit we sampled is \$182,875. Pricing with a brand new Ford F-450 Lariat is \$235,000. New Horizons can bundle these deals; it's a unique way to look at costs.

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Carry The Fun This new SURV offers small family toy-hauling capabilities in a lightweight package

URVs are certainly nothing new in the RV market; they have become more prominent over the last decade, providing off-road enthusiasts the best of both worlds by allowing them to spend the day exploring rugged terrain on an ATV, dirt bike or snowmobile, while still enabling them to sleep off the ground when the sun goes down. However, the majority of SURVs are quite large, and require heavy-duty pickups to tow, thereby causing prospective buyers to either upsize their vehicle or to look elsewhere to pursue their outdoor interests. Recognizing this need for a lightweight SURV that's towable by many half-ton vehicles, KZ has rolled out the 2012 MXT 20, which boasts an unloaded vehicle weight (UVW) just north of 4,000 pounds.

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KZ-RV CON





The new KZ MXT easily converts from toy hauler to comfortable six-person family sleeper with plenty of room in just a matter of minutes.



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KZ's construction utilizes wood rafters, 5/8-inch plywood decking, aluminum-laminated side and front walls and a fiberglass exterior to help keep the weight low and offer protection from the pounding these trailers can take while adventurous families enjoy their favorite off-pavement endeavors. All new KZ trailers come with a oneyear roadside assistance program.

The interior of the MXT belies the trailer's primary usage — this isn't an overly luxurious floorplan with posh appointments. No, the MXT is designed with off-roaders in mind, clearly focusing on function over form. When set up for indoor activity, there are two beds and a convertible dinette. plus the lav in the rear and a small kitchen area. That's it. The Murphy bed up front folds up into the wall when in transit (a wardrobe is situated on each side of the bed). The rear bed also folds up, though it is secured in travel mode using a heavy-duty snap strap. The dinette consists of two separate flip-up seats that store similarly to the rear bed. The table can be stored in the front pass-through storage area.

Though this layout may seem Spartan, it's a great setup for off-road enthusiasts. After a long day at the dunes or on the mountain, a comfortable, climate-controlled environment with amenities is just what the doctor ordered. But this isn't merely a wooden box with four walls; the attractive Ming décor and Legacy Cherry

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cabinetry offer a sense of residential comfort. And KZ makes sure owners aren't left wanting. A 6-cubic-foot refrigerator and a microwave-convection oven to handle food prep are part of the package, but there is virtually no counter space (save for a nifty flip-down cover for the two-burner stove), which means meals will likely be of the shortorder variety. The lav area, though cramped, is roomy enough to get the job done and offers a place to wash off dirt and grime that the exterior spray station may have missed.

The front and rear beds in the MXT won't win any awards for extreme comfort, but out of necessity the thin mattresses fold up for storage. Its flip-down seating for the dinette offers a smaller sleeping area, and the cushions are just fine, exactly as we have encountered in other RV dinettes. In all, KZ has done a great job offering up to six sleeping areas in a shorter trailer whose primary function is to haul motorized toys. Not bad.

Our test unit was equipped with an AM/FM/CD stereo, and also included the exterior speaker option (\$90). There's no TV in the MXT 20, though there is a spot for one near the front sleeping area should you wish to add it.

OK, enough about the living; the diminutive MXT really shines when it comes to toy hauling. The trailer offers six tie-downs to accommodate outdoor toys, and the 51-by-75-inch rear curbside ramp rated at 2,500 pounds makes it easy to load and unload vehicles. Of course, owners need to heed both the tow rating of their tow vehicle and the nearly 2,900-pound cargo carrying capacity of the MXT when deciding which toys to bring along.

Converting the MXT from living quarters to toy hauler is a rather simple affair, and can easily be done by one person in a couple of minutes. Once I became accustomed to the seats and beds, folding them both up was a snap.

In all, the MXT 20 makes for a great extended-weekend toy hauler. KZ has ensured that there is enough storage space and fluid capacity to accommodate a family for several days, and the ease of converting the MXT 20 into a sixperson sleeper is more than reason enough to consider purchasing the trailer. If you have a small family — or even just a group of buddies who like to indulge in outdoor adventure — the KZ MXT is a solid choice given its practicality and light weight.

QUICK INFO 🗹

Ext. length	24' 5 1/2"
Ext. width	8'
Ext. height	10' 5 1/2"
Int. height	6' 6"
Freshwater cap	50 gal.
Black-/gray-water cap	32 gal/32 gal.
LP-gas cap	10 gal.
UVW	4,173 lbs.
Hitch weight, dry	520 lbs.
GVWR	7,000 lbs.
MSRP, as tested	\$24,700



KZ-RV LLP (800) 765-4016, www.kz-rv.com. Circle 202 on Reader Service Card.

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n Rig, Happy Owner

Keeping your trailer clean all year not only preserves its appearance and integrity, but also helps retain its value

Any chef knows it's easier to clean up the kitchen as you go, lest you create a lengthy to-do list after dessert when you're feeling tired and lazy. The same logic applies to your RV: Keep it clean between trips to preserve its longevity and ensure your home-away-from-home is as trouble-free and enjoyable as possible. This keep-it-clean mantra is even more important when venturing off the paved road, traveling with kids, racking up high mileage or camping with the windows open.

Our rigs are exposed to the elements, road debris and friends and family coming and going. It doesn't take many sandy footprints or muddy roads to turn a showroom-fresh trailer and tow vehicle into a rolling pigpen.

We checked out a cornucopia of cleaning products and accessories to find out what works and how to save time maintaining your rig — and even discovered a few short cuts and tricks along the way.

WASHING

It's not rocket science. First, you need to rinse off the chunks. Soap comes later. And, face it, your ordinary garden hose hand sprayer is hard to beat. However, Carrand makes the Water Snake that can redirect the adjustable spray in any direction, which is great for getting under the frame. The telescoping wand and three-position off-, hi- and lowthumb switch make reaching the roof easy without a ladder.

With the big stuff rinsed off, it's time to move on to the fun part. We found the Grit Guard bucket (Grit Guard 3.5-Gallon System: \$34.95). It has a big grate in the bottom that allows sand and grit to fall through instead of turning your wash mitt or brush into a piece of sandpaper.

We used Joy dishwashing detergent for years at the risk of stripping the wax off our paint. It works, but several companies have products specifically for washing vehicles. We have tried many of them, including Protect All Quick & Easy Wash, Meguiar's Ultimate Wash &

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Wax, Mothers Marine Wash'n Wax, Armor All Ultra Shine Wash & Wax, and Thetford Premium RV Wash & Wax. Some claim to be rinse free or self-drying. Maybe, but we prefer to rinse and dry by hand.

If your trailer is dirty, and I don't mean just a little dust, you can't clean it with a hose. You could use a rag, but there are special products that can vastly improve and speed up the job. Emgee/Clean Tools, Adjust-a-Brush and Carrand all offer great wash mitts made of some combination of natural wool, polyester and nylon. A bug sponge will help with the insect guts on your front cap.

Wash mitts and gloves are important for details, but for big jobs like a full-size rig, a brush works wonders. Many companies make extendable brushes, including Adjust-a-Brush, Camco and Carrand. The Carrand Deluxe 10-inch Flow-Thru Wash Brush has a huge soft head that carries loads of soap and water, and the click-lock handle is easy to adjust with wet hands. It has a long extension, and a three-position flow-through feature.

Carrand also offers a handy wash mitt that can be adapted to an extension pole. Trillium's WhirlyWash (\$29.95) is a water powered, gear-driven soft bristle brush that attaches to any garden hose to wash anything, including RVs. It extends to more than 57 inches long to reach high on the sides of tall vehicles, and includes a soap dispenser and an on-, off- and rinse-valve.

When it comes time to deal with

Protect All Quick & Easy Wash, Meguiar's Ultimate Wash & Wax, Mothers Marine Wash'n Wax, Armor All Ultra Shine Wash & Wax, and Thetford Premium RV Wash & Wax are all excellent products. Emgee/Clean Tools, Adjust-a-Brush and Carrand all make great wash mitts.



Clean Rig, Happy Owner

stuck-on bugs, Protect All, Thetford and Rain-X make special bug and tar removers but they'll probably take off your last wax job, too. Got love bugs? We've heard folks in Florida spray cooking oil on their trucks and trailers to keep them from sticking when a hatch occurs, but we've found an application of RejeX (\$14.95 for 12 oz.) is a much better method.

Using a selection of the products mentioned here can have you making 15 trips to the garage and back to your trailer. The Bucket Taxi (\$59.95) has big wheels that even roll on gravel, and little pockets for stuff like a wheel brush and a squeegee, and the center will carry a full bucket of soapy water. Just load it up and pull it behind you. If you need more space, Grit Guard's Universal Detailing Cart (\$169.95) also has a holder for a 5-gallon bucket. Both can save you a lot of walking.

DRYING

Next, and one of the most important steps, is drying. If you've done a good

job with quality soap followed by a thorough rinse, gravity will do some of the work. In any case, grab a squeegee. Shurhold offers an assortment of squeegees as well as its SHUR-Dry Flexible Water Blade (\$26.98), which molds to curved surfaces. The Water Blade can be used by hand, or inserted into an adapter for use with any Shurhold handle.

An old bath towel still has a place but for the 10 percent of water a squeegee leaves behind, The Absorber by Emgee/Clean Tools or a Carrand Drying Towel is next in line. The Absorber has replaced all our old chamois and the Carrand Drying Towel sucks up water like magic. Both can be tossed in the washing machine and reused hundreds of times. And they shed zero lint!

CLEANING GLASS

towing capacity, you can tow confidently with the B&W Companion.

Trucks and trailers have a lot of glass. For the outside, a good coat of Rain-X really does keep everything from sticking, even rain. If the glass is just a little dirty, one of the several spray cleaners



will work. We especially like the Invisible Glass Cleaner by Stoner. The company now has Invisible Glass with Rain Repellent.

A great alternative is mixing 2 gallons of water, 1 cup of sudsy ammonia, 2 pints of rubbing alcohol and 2 tablespoons of dishwashing liquid. We use this with a 20-inch-long handle combination squeegee and scrubber. The mixture keeps for weeks. We carry the squeegee and scrubber on the road. It saves paper towels and having to use



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Shurhold's SHUR-Dry Flexible Water Blade is great for a quick dry. The Reach & Clean wand by Invisible Glass can clean where your hand has never gone. Our test between Soft Scrub with elbow grease and Mothers All Wheel & Tire Cleaner was nearly a draw.

the greasy wash sticks often poking out of foul soups in service stations.

We all know how difficult it is to get the inside of windows clean. Now there are two products that make that awkward job almost fun. The In-Shield Wiper slips on the back of your hand, making those hard to reach corners a breeze. The Reach & Clean wand by Invisible Glass can clean where your hand

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has never gone. Especially for the inside glass, Invisible Glass Cleaner is a winner.

TIRES & WHEELS

If you can't clean your RV, at least clean the tires and wheels. For some reason, clean rubber makes everything look better. There are several spray-on tire and wheel cleaners on the market that will remove most of the brake dust and road grime from rims using a garden hose. A product that specifies both tires and wheels will make the job easier and a good brush and elbow grease always helps.

For getting into places where you may not want to stick your fingers, Carrand offers a selection of long round wheel brushes that are just right for



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cleaning around spokes. If all else fails, our recommended tire cleaning method is a bead of Soft Scrub and/or a little Simple Green, with a stiff bristle brush and elbow grease. Natural bristle is the best if you can find one.

Once your tires are clean and dry, there are many products that will put the "new" back on old rubber. On the backside of a Michelin XZL truck tire, we tested products from Slime, Armor All, Simonize, Mothers, Vinylex and Turtle Wax. Personally, we don't care for the shiny look produced by some, so Original Armor All, Armor All Gel, Vinylex by Lexol, Mothers Protectant, and Turtle Wax F21 gave us that new tire appearance. All require you to buff off the excess if you want that matte fin-

ish of new rubber. If you don't want to get your hands dirty, Carrand makes a tire dressing





applicator that is convenient. The handy Wheel Shield keeps the spray off of the rims.

If you've let your aluminum wheels become scratched or pitted, there are some great tools and products that will give them back a blinding shine: X-Treem, Flitz-Polish and Mothers, to name a few. Flitz and Mothers

have drill-powered buffing wheels. We really like the Mothers Cone Power-Ball for getting into hard-to-clean spokes.

SCRATCHES & HEADLIGHT LENSES

If you have a few miles on your rig, chances are it has some nicks, scratches and rock dents. Mothers, Turtle Wax, Quixx and Meguiar's have kits that may help those ugly battle scars disappear. To avoid those problems in the first place, XPEL Paint Protection for grilles and hoods are custom-cut sections of special film that are easy to apply, and they really work to keep bugs and gravel from nicking your paint.

Sunlight, UV rays, and the elements can degrade the plastic lenses of modern headlights, reducing their output by 30 percent or more. Several companies offer restoration kits and the ones that use drill-powered buffing pads, like Flitz-Polish, Mothers and 3M, work the best. Once the headlight lens is cleaned and restored to its original clarity, you can obtain precision custom cut, optically clear PVC headlight protection kits from XPEL.

WAXING

Now that everything is spiffed up, it's time for a good wax job. There are so many choices from companies like Mothers, Protect All, Griots Garage, Thetford, Turtle Wax and Meguiar's, it can boggle the mind. Some products claim to do everything in one-step: wash, clean, wax and polish. Others may involve different products for each of those steps. Wax Shop Super Glaze is

« The Universal Detailing Cart by Grit Guard will save you time and energy.

For More Information

Adjust-A-Brush

727-571-1234, www.adjust-a-brush.com California Car Duster 800-282-8828, www.calcarduster.com

Carrand 310-761-8510, www.carrand.com

Covercraft 405-238-9651, www.covercraft.com Flitz-Polish

800-333-9325, www.flitz-polish.com

Griot's Garage 800-345-5789, www.griotsgarage.com Grit Guard 866-592-5925, www.gritguard.com Invisible Glass/Stoner 800-227-5538, www.invisibleglass.com Meguiar's 800-347-5700, www.meguiars.com Mothers Polish 714-891-3364, www.mothers.com

Protect All

800-322-4491, www.protectall.com **Quixx USA** 305-261-6755, www.quixx-usa.com **Shurhold** 800-962-6241, www.shurhold.com **Thetford** 800-543-1219, www.thetford.com **Xpel** 800-447-9928, www.xpel.com

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one of our favorites. It's fast, easy and doesn't leave a white residue on black trim. If you're in a hurry, try one of the spray-on waxes from Meguiar's, Mothers, Rain-X, Thetford and Turtle Wax. They are marketed do a good job but may not last as long as those that require more work.

Often waxing and polishing amounts to how much work you want, how long do you want it to last and what results you want. With any wax, polish, cleaner or sealer, application is half the secret and often twice the work to do it right. Griot's Garage has 3-inch and 6inch Random Orbital polishing and buffing tools. Carrand now offers an Auto Spa buffer. All produce professional results without damaging the paint. We like to finish up with microfiber cleaning, drying and polishing cloths. You should have a few of these around before you start a wax job. If you use any kind of power polishing and buffing tool, you know cleaning the pads is a messy job. Grit Guard's new Universal Pad Washer (\$134.95) does the job in seconds.



Keeping furniture clean in the first place is easier than cleaning it. To help, Covercraft makes poly-cotton SeatGloves, SeatSavers and SofaSavers that can help away keep dirt and stains.

INTERIOR CLEANING

Turning our attention to the inside, cleaning the dash and instrument panel of your tow truck can be difficult with all its nooks and crannies. We recently discovered Cyber Clean, a weird squishy synthetic membrane developed in Switzerland. When it's pressed on and into those impossible-to-reach places, like A/C vents and around radio buttons, it picks up dirt and dust like a magnet.

For the bigger areas our favorites are Lexol's Vinylex, Turtle Wax F21, Mothers Vinyl & Rubber Care, and Armor All Gel Protectant. Vinylex seems

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to repel dust nicely and it's the least shiny. Armor All Gel is convenient because there is no overspray. For small glass and plastic surfaces like auxiliary gauges and GPS screens, Invisible Glass offers mini Lens Wipes that clean without scratching. We carry a few in the glove box.

If you have carpet or cloth seats, there are also plenty of options. Mothers and Super Green Naturals work well on moderate stains. WD-40 has a new Spot Shot carpet stain and odor eliminator, and a product called Carpet Fresh that removes odors. Frankly, keeping your furniture clean is easier than cleaning it once it's messy. For that purpose, Covercraft makes SeatGloves, SeatSavers and SofaSavers. Their durable poly-cotton fabric construction makes them easy on/easy off, and they can be cleaned in the washing machine when they're dirty.

FINAL DETAILS

In between heavy cleanings, keep your RV spruced up with a super-size duster like The Original California Truck/RV Duster (\$39.99) that picks up dust like a magnet and has an extra-large dusting head. Bring back the shine with a spray-on detailer such as Meguiar's Quik Detailer, Shurhold Serious Shine or Mothers California Gold Instant Detailer, which can be used with a microfiber cloth to produce quick results.

Most of this information has been about dirt and how to get it off your truck and trailer, but the real trick is to keep it off in the first place. Most of us don't have a garage big enough to store our RV, and even a garage has dust that paint attracts like white on rice. When you're not on the road, use a good cover like those made by ADCO or Covercraft. Our trailer can sit for months under sun, rain, snow, tree sap and bird droppings. When we pull back the cover, the most it might need is a quick pass with an Original California Car Duster.

So there you have it, some news about cleaning products, accessories and even a few tips you may not have known. The only product we didn't tell you about is the one they have not invented yet – Instant Elbow Grease in a spray bottle for when you get tired of cleaning!

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Power Braking

BD Diesel's plug-and-play variable-vane controller gives GM diesel pickups 130 retarding horsepower to help slow down the biggest travel trailers

heavy trailer places a great deal of stress on any tow vehicle's brakes. Towing large trailers in mountainous regions, along twisting, diving highways or in heavy stop-and-go traffic taxes brake systems even more. The combination of repeated applications of the brake pedal under loaded conditions results in a more frequent need to replace brake parts such as

pads, discs, shoes and drums. And on top of all that, there's the basic towing safety issue of brake fade when decsending long, steep grades.

Most of the modern diesel engines in pickup trucks are now equipped with factory exhaust braking systems to help slow the truck down by utilizing the diesel's turbo and exhaust systems. As an example, the General Motors Duramax diesel engine utilizes a variablevane turbo to help do that braking work.

But if you want even greater exhaust braking from your General Motors heavy duty pickup — and desire more physical control over that braking — BD Diesel Performance has developed an adjustable electronic controller that greatly enhances the engine-braking power of the Duramax turbo.



1) Run the wires from the control switch from the engine compartment into the cab on the driver's side. Then carefully pop loose the upper left dash panel. 2 & 3) Drill out the center hole (switch shaft) and smaller outer hole (for lock pin) using the BD VVB decal as your guide.

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Power Braking

BD's Variable Vane Brake (VVB), which is literally a plug-and-drive installation, works with the turbocharger used in the 2004.5 and newer Duramax engines.

The BD VVB kit comes with a "brain box" pre-wired with a "T" wiring harness that plugs in to the mass of sensor wires leading from the engine to the onboard computer. That allows the BD computer to make changes that affect the engine, turbo and transmission functions to maximize exhaust braking and downshifts. And for 2006-andnewer applications the VVB kit offers a warm-up feature that will close the vanes at idle until engine temperature reaches a pre-set level.

It's really simple to install and works by developing exhaust backpressure in the engine's combustion chamber, which creates resistance against the piston from reaching top dead center. In the most basic of terms. BD Diesel's kit helps to maximize the engine's compression braking.

BD's technology electronically

closes off the Duramax's turbo vanes. which creates up to 130 retarding horsepower to shoulder some of the braking responsibility off of the Silverado/Sierra HD pickup's brake pads and rotors. Best yet, The VVB system works in "Normal," "Manual Shift" and "Tow/Haul" driving transmission modes.

This added exhaust-braking force, along with more aggressive downshifts that are also part of the VVB programming, really helps slow down trucks that are pulling heavy trailers or carrying large slide-in campers.

The VVB rotary switch has four different positions the driver can select depending on need:

Off: The engine works in stock mode. Level/Position 1: Closes the turbo vanes only when the throttle is released. Level/Position 2: Closes the turbo vanes and causes a moderate down shift when the throttle is released. Level/Position 3: Closes the turbo vanes and causes a more aggressive downshift when throttle is released.



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4) Lock the BD control switch in place and then replace the panel.



5) Control knob placement high on the dash makes it easy to see and access. Three stages of exhaust braking/downshifts are available with the turn of the selector.

R.com

I drove a 2009 Silverado 3500 HD with the BD VVB system installed while towing a gooseneck trailer that tipped that scales at close to 16,500 pounds. The difference in braking and brake use was like night and day. When the VVB dial was in the #3 position, the truck slowed down the combo I was driving on a fairly steep section of highway as if I were applying the brakes fairly aggressively.

Driving in city traffic had the same

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results, effectively eliminating the need to touch the brake pedal during normal traffic slow-downs.

If you want that added level of braking power in your diesel-powered GM HD truck during your towing travels, consider beefing up that turbo to help take the load off your rig's braking system. BD's \$695 VVB kit will pay for itself in short order. In addition, BD Diesel Performance is developing a kit for Ford diesel engines.



...the Standard in Full Wall Slide Truck Campers now has 2 Non-Slide, Light Duty Little Brothers...



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6) The control module "T's" into the LOWER engine control wiring harness. It's a simple plug-and-run installation. 7) GM Duramax's two master harness connectors use blue plastic levers to hold them in place. Just lift up on levers to pull plugs out. 8) Push plugs back in and push down on levers to lock in.

SOURCE BD Diesel Performance 800-887-5030, www.dieselperformance.com

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9) Follow BD's instructions related to the insertion of additional wires into the loom coming from the dash controller to the plug that goes into the control box. They are well marked and easy to install. 10) The control wire loom harness from the VVB in-cab control switch plugs into the BD module. The module can then be mounted about anywhere. Best place to mount it is on the auxiliary battery cover using strips of hook-and-loop fastener to hold it in place. 11) The last step is to attach the BD control box power wire to the auxiliary battery per the instructions. It really is a simple install/upgrade. \clubsuit

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Cooking Logs

Forget the odor, insects, moisture, splinters and mess you get by hauling around bundles of firewood in your truck or RV. The Campfire Roasting Logs from Duraflame are stackable, burn like real wood and are specifically made for roasting and cooking over an open flame, without giving your food a funky taste. Coming in clean, sealed packages, the logs quickly create hot, glowing coals that are perfect for roasting marshmallows, hot dogs or anything else you're craving in the outdoors. Best of all, they're made from real wood charcoal, which is a renewable resource, and ignite easily on the first try.

MSRP: \$5.99 (4-piece bundle) 209-461-6600, www.duraflame.com Circle 203 on Reader Service Card.



Fridge Freshener

Help your RV fridge operate more efficiently, eliminate hot and cold spots within the box and keep your food fresher with Camco's affordable Fridge Airator. Like water purification pitchers, the Airator uses replaceable charcoal packs to absorb odors and impurities, and a high-volume, extremely quiet fan to circulate the air inside your fridge through the filter. Two D-cell batteries (not included) should provide approximately 30 days of power to the fan, and it's small enough to preserve the already precious space within your trailer's refrigerator.

MSRP: \$17.88

800-334-2004, www.camco.net Circle 204 on Reader Service Card.



Fire Knife

Combining multiple functions into a single device is the key to traveling light and organized in an RV. While many multitools combine small versions of many different tools. the Swedish FireKnife combines a fullsize, sturdy and high-quality stainless steel blade with a fire starter capable of providing 3,000 strikes to light campfires for years to come. The 3.75-inch blade has a contoured and rubberized handle for comfort and safety, as well as a lanyard and wearable sheath so you don't lose track of such a handy gadget. It's available in five bright colors.

MSRP: \$39.99

888-297-6062, www.industrialrev.com Circle 205 on Reader Service Card.



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Upgrade Your Tires

If you're in the market for new trailer tires take a look at the M8008 ST Radial from Maxxis. They can help provide improved ride quality and decrease rolling resistance, which may lead to extended fuel mileage and lengthen the life of the tire. Double steel-belt construction adds strength to the tires, ensuring uniformity and durability throughout their service life. The tires are available with outlined white letters or all-black sidewalls.

MSRP \$64.33/tire 800-462-9947, www.maxxis.com Circle 206 on Reader Service Card.

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A BREATH OF FRESH AIR

Install A Volant Cool Air Intake System For More Towing Power

2500 HQ

ost diesel truck owners have come to know that additional power and engine longevity can be obtained by combining improved air filtration with cold inlet temperatures. On most light truck turbo-diesel engines, this can be easily achieved by installing an aftermarket cold-air intake system designed to accomplish two major functions. One is to block out under-hood air heated by the engine, and minimize any disruption of the airflow. The other is to provide improved air filtration that won't hinder the additional airflow the system provides.

Volant of Rancho Cucamonga, Calif., offers its Cool Air Intake kits for a wide range of vehicles including many late model GM, Ford and Dodge/Ram dieselpowered pickups. The installation pictured, a 2011 GMC Sierra HD pickup, presented a good opportunity to see how one of the company's recently introduced kits (Volant part number 15366, \$375) is installed.

The Volant system comes with a larger air filter box that is designed to

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keep out engine heat, while providing a greater volume of cooler air for the engine. Included is the company's Primo seven-layer cotton/gauze filter that offers increased filtration, and features extra wide pleats to create a larger surface area that won't hinder airflow. The Volant Primo filter can be washed, re-oiled and used again, saving the owner the cost of new filters over the life of the vehicle. A smoother intake duct and rubber couplers with stainless steel clamps replace the factory units. Volant is also finalizing a design on an optional scoop for this intake that has shown to deliver increased highway fuel economy by sourcing air from underneath the front bumper and forcing it into the air filter box.

The Volant system was installed in 30-45 minutes and didn't take any special tools or advanced engine knowledge to accomplish. Most truck owners who know how to turn a wrench could easily install a system like this and enjoy the added power and reliability it produced. However, as a precaution any installa-



tery terminal. This is just an extra precaution to avoid any possibility of an accident that can damage the truck's electrical system. Most importantly however, it's good to know you can easily improve your truck's efficiency with a simple air-intake upgrade like this.



The plug to the Mass Air Flow sensor on the factory intake duct is pulled off. Then the two screws are removed so the sensor can be pulled carefully out of the air duct.



Both clamps for the factory inlet tube are loosened. The factory air-inlet tube is then removed from the engine. A good tug releases the factory air filter box and it's pulled away from the engine compartment.



The filter box sits on a flat base that is attached to the inner fender with a single bolt. Once the bolt is removed, the air filter box base is pulled out. The area now offers much more room for the larger Volant air-filter box. Air will enter into the box from the factory inlet on the fender, and because the base is removed, there's also room for an air inlet from below.



The larger Volant air-filter box is simply set in position. The same bolt that held the OEM filter box bracket will now secure the Volant box onto the inner fender.

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A BREATH OF FRESH AIR





B) Another coupler and two clamps are also attached to the Volant air inlet tube.

C) The Volant air inlet tube is then set into place and the clamps are tightened.

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The Mass Air Flow sensor is inserted into the Volant air inlet tube and held in position using the factory screws.



With the new air intake in place, the Primo seven-layer cotton/gauze filter is set into the filter box and secured into position with the stainless steel clamp.



Volant offers a scoop for this vehicle that fits under the bumper using factory hardware, (no drilling), and forces air to the underside of the Volant air filter box. Volant claims that its scoop provides significant highway MPG improvements.

SOURCE Volant Performance: 909-481-3888, www.volant.com



Volant's black aluminum lid is attached to the top of the filter box and provides a distinctive appearance to the underhood of this Chevy Silverado HD.



The finished installation has a clean look and provides additional air and better filtration to this 6.6L diesel engine.

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Retrofitting Kodiak Retrofitting Kodiak Trailer Disc Brakes is an Investment in safety and precision performance precision performance when bringing heavy when bringing heavy to ads to smooth and loads to smooth and timely stops

lectric trailer brakes consist of multiple moving parts that can be inefficient and prone to failure. Stopping a tow vehicle pulling a heavy trailer can be a major challenge, especially when equipped with electric brakes that are not properly sized and/or hardware of questionable quality. Many electric trailer brake systems are simply not as good as they used to be. Disc brakes, the standard in the automotive industry, consist of only one moving part and the brake pads achieve 100 percent contact against the rotor. Retrofitting a trailer with disc brakes will make a big difference in stopping performance, and to get there Kodiak Trailer Components offers a high-quality hydraulic-over-electric disc brake upgrade kit.

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Ideally, 100 percent of the shoe surface in electric brake assemblies should contact the brake drum, which would result in shorter stopping distances. With the advent of the unified hub and drum as well as cheaper brake assemblies being manufactured and utilized by a number of manufacturers, there is rarely a perfect match between the arc of the brake shoe and the curvature of the drum. If you are lucky, you might achieve 75 percent contact between the shoe and the drum. When a drum overheats, it warps, which equates to even less surface contact. To top it all off, the brake magnet can lose up to 70 percent of its efficiency due to heat fade and uneven armature surface when descending long grades. Electric brakes need constant adjustment as they wear, and

Kodiak's floating calipers require rubber brake lines for proper movement on the pins.
 The feed line from the brake actuator must be rubber or brake hose, allowing for flexing.
 Kodiak Trailer Disc Brake System does not come with brake hoses and bracketry. This kit was purchased separately from the Internet.



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ing long grades. Electric brakes need constant adjustment as they wear, and the vast majority of RVers are not very attentive to this service requirement.

Kodiak Trailer Disc Brakes offer improved performance, long life and less maintenance compared to electric drum brakes. Kodiak's ventilated rotors produce less heat so they run cooler. Its dual-piston floating calipers provide greater braking power and increase safety. Together, the system results in up to 47 percent shorter stopping distances with minimal upkeep. Kodiak Trailer Brakes now feature ceramic brake pads protected by a limited lifetime warranty. Ceramic pads outwear electric brakes two-to-one. The precision-machined hub and drum assembly minimize run out and provide smoother braking.

Making the transformation from electric drums to disc brakes is not a job for the casual shade-tree mechanic. Precision during the installation process is critical and professional technicians are less likely to make a mistake that can adversely impact the performance of the brakes. A pro should be able to complete the installation in around five or six hours, including the placement of the actuator and bleeding of the brake lines and calipers.

To begin the brake swap on our 36foot fifth-wheel, it was lifted off the ground and stabilized using properly rated jack stands under the frame in order to safely remove the wheels and tires. When removing the hub and drum and brake assemblies, make sure you save the bolts for later use. After that's done, the caliper mounting brackets are held up to the brake flange that is welded to the axle to make sure they will fit flat against the flange in the proper direction: nine o'clock (right side) and three o'clock (left side). Make sure all surfaces are free of excess rust and paint. The caliper mounting brackets are then installed using the bolts from the old brake assemblies. You may require longer bolts depending upon

your trailer's manufacturer.

The next step is to install the hub and rotor assemblies and check to be sure that there is clearance between the rotor and the caliper mounting bracket. When installing the calipers, pay close attention to the bleed screw, which should be pointing up. If the caliper has two bleed screws, you will need to bleed the brakes through the highest bleed screw. The caliper mounting bolts are torgued to 40-50 ft-lb. Avoid the use of impact tools as too much initial torque can result in distortion of parts. You need to spin the rotors to make sure there is no binding or excess resistance. Resistance is a sign that the axle flange may be slightly bent and requires disassembly and straightening. Keep in mind that the accuracy of disc brakes comes from precision alignment and proper mounting.

To make the disc brake system work, you'll need a hydraulic actuator since the brakes operate via hydraulic fluid. There are several manufactures of



4) The rubber brake line is routed with a litle slack in it so the caliper can float freely. 5) For this size fifth-wheel, the Carlisle 1600-psi actuator was employed for powerful braking control. 6) The complete Kodiak Trailer Disc Brake Conversion Kit includes the rotors and installation hardware. 7) Old bearings must be inspected. If they are usable, repack and install with new grease seals.



Ultimate Stopping Power

hydraulic brake actuators on the market. The Carlisle Hydraulic Brake Actuator (model HBA-16) was chosen because we wanted a higher-pressure actuator (1600 psi) for better braking. Low hydraulic pressure in an actuator will limit braking power and negatively impact stopping performance. Excessive pressure can result in permanent damage to the braking system, so it's important the right actuator is used.

The actuator is mounted in the front of the trailer near the batteries so you can gain access to the brake wire and the cold side of the breakaway switch. Following the wiring schematic, the wiring connections for the actuator are completed, but the hook up to the batteries is not made at this time. The actuator must be installed level with the filler neck in the up position — two very important details that must be followed.

You will also need to purchase a hydraulic line installation kit that includes five rubber pigtails. Kodiak's floating calipers require rubber pigtails to maintain proper movement where a steel line will be too restrictive. Additional hydraulic line extensions may be required depending on the length of the trailer. When installing the line kit pay close attention to the proprietary instructions.

Once installed, the air is bled out of the actuator and then the brake system is bled. You will need two people for the bleeding process. To accomplish this process, fill the brake actuator reservoir with DOT 3 or 4 brake fluid. Next, hook



up the 12-volt DC supply to the actuator. You will need a clear, clean jar, 1.5 feet of 1/4-inch clear vinyl tubing and a 5/16inch tubing wrench. Remove the dust cap on top of the actuator and install the vinyl tubing to the bleed screw. Immerse the free end of the tubing into the clean container that is partially filled with fresh brake fluid. Using the brakeaway switch or the brake control in your tow vehicle, activate the actuator. Run the actuator until the fluid becomes clear and free of bubbles. Tighten the bleeder screw and deactivate the actuator. Be sure to wear safety glasses throughout this entire process.

Air bubbles tend to rise to the highest point so when bleeding the entire system, be sure that all the brake lines are run as level as possible to avoid high spots that may trap unwanted air. At-

11) Caliper-mounting brackets were installed with new grade 8 bolts that were purchased at a local auto parts shop. 12) Mounting bolts are tightened with a torque wrench, following Kodiak's specifications. 13) Once all the rotors and calipers are mounted, the wheels and tires are mounted and the trailer road tested.



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8) Remove the old electric brake assemblies, clean and prep area for installation. 9) Hub and rotor is held in place to ensure a proper fit before bolting to the axle. 10) Old studs that held the electric brake assembly are removed because they are too short for the new hardware.

tach the vinyl tubing to the bleed screw on the caliper furthest from the actuator. With the tubing in the jar that is still partially filled with fluid, have an assistant pull the breakaway switch cable to activate the actuator. Open the bleed screw for five seconds, close the screw and insert the breakaway pin in place to release the actuator. Monitor the fluid level frequently during the bleeding process to make sure the actuator doesn't run out of brake fluid; add as needed. If you run out of fluid, the actuator will draw in unwanted air. You will get an idea how many seconds you can run the actuator before it runs too low on fluid. If you're not comfortable using the breakaway switch, have an assistant activate the brake control in the tow vehicle while bleeding the system.

Repeat this process at each wheel caliper. When you are certain that all the

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air has been bled out of the system it's time for the road test. Carlisle recommends that you bleed the brakes a second time after the trailer has been in service for 7-10 days. Also, Carlisle suggests checking the temperature on a regular basis to ensure that the trailer brakes are not dragging.

Before pulling out on the road, pull the breakaway switch cable and make sure the brakes lock up; you shouldn't be able to move the trailer forward at all. Road test the system in stages. We tested the brakes by manually engaging the brake controller fully when we reached a speed of 25 mph. It was immediately clear that the stopping power was incredible. I turned the brake control power level down two notches and headed for the freeway. At a speed of 60 mph I carefully checked my mirrors to be sure that no one was following and





when it was all clear. I hit the brakes pretty hard. The stopping power was amazing. Getting off the freeway I found a deserted road and manually applied full power to the brakes while watching in my side mirror. I immediately noticed smoke billowing from the tires as all four wheels locked up. The response time is immediate and stopping power is light years better than that provided by the stock electric drum brakes. At one point I was forced to make a panic stop at a signal due to a construction worker stepping into my line. The Kodiak Trailer Disc Brakes did not lock up, and I was thankful and amazed how quickly the rig stopped.

Looking back, I clearly recall the smell of buring brakes the previous time I was forced to make a panic stop — and that was only a hundred feet! At the end of this road test, I parked for a few minutes and checked the temperature of the rotors with a handheld laser thermometer; each rotor read between 120 and 130 degrees Fahrenheit, which was just about perfect.

While making an investment in disc brakes for your trailer is not inexpensive, the base retail price of the Kodiak Disc Trailer Brakes for this fifth wheel is \$508 for each axle and represents huge safety benefits that give enthusaists peace of mind when on the road. It's hard to put a price tag on that.

Kodiak: 817-284-5141, www.kodiaktrailer.com

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PERFORMANCE CORNER



K&N High-Flow Air Filters

When most RVers think about increasing the power of their tow vehicle, they likely consider changing the exhaust to a free-flowing aftermarket system, or perhaps a computer upgrade. Unfortunately, air intake mod's are often overlooked, because quite a few horses can be unleashed by improving airflow into the engine.

Automotive engines have substantial pressure available from combustion to force spent gases out through the exhaust. But the intake side relies on atmospheric pressure (which is less than 15 PSI at sea level, and drops steadily with elevation gains) to push air through the air-filter housing, ducts and filter medium. Therefore, intake systems are sensitive to restrictions, and any airflow improvements you make can yield significant gains.

K&N Engineering, of Riverside, Calif., has been heavily involved in nearly every form of motorsports, and K&N High-Flow Air Filters are designed to increase power and acceleration, while providing excellent filtration.

A K&N air filter is made up of four to six layers of special cotton gauze between two epoxy-coated aluminum wire screens. The cotton is treated with a specially formulated oil, which causes airborne dust particles to stick to the cotton strands. The nature of the treated cotton allows high-volume airflow, and the special blend of oil creates a powerful filtering media. K&N Air Filter media has been tested in-house and by independent labs using the ISO 5011 test developed by the Society of Automotive Engineers.

K&N High-Flow replacement air filters can be installed in minutes. Depending on driving conditions, cleaning is recommended every 50,000 miles. The filters can be cleaned with the K&N

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Recharger kit, saving money in the long run. They are designed to last the life of your vehicle, and K&N warrants its street vehicle OE Replacement Air Filters for 1 million miles.

Air Intake Tube Kits

Improving the air path between the filter and the engine is the next big potential area of improvement. For those who want more airflow and power than a K&N replacement air filter can provide through a stock air-filter housing, K&N offers Air Intake Tube kits for hundreds of popular vehicles. These allow the use of a larger open element filter, providing more surface area for increased airflow. The Air Intake Tube kits are made from two materials: molded polyethylene and polished, powder-coated or anodized aluminum. They are designed to get the largest horsepower gain attainable without causing a "Check Engine Light" to come on and are tested on in-house dynamometers. See K&N's website application search for fitment and specific horsepower gains.

Many K&N Air Intake Systems are 50-state street legal and include a California Air Resource Board (CARB) Executive Order (EO) number, which ensures the kit complies with emissions standards. Systems with no EO number are street legal in most states, but may not be used on emissions controlled vehicles in California or other states adopting California emission standards.

K&N asserts that when you buy an OE replacement High-Flow Air Filter or High-Flow Air Intake System your vehicle's warranty will remain in effect. K&N says it will assist customers if they have problems with a dealership warranty denial blamed on the presence of a K&N product. K&N Engineering: 800-858-3333, www.knfilters.com.

Vehicle Owners Spend on Automotive Infotainment

A recent J.D. Power and Associates 2012 U.S. Automotive Emerging Technologies Study found vehicle owners have come to expect additional safety features, and are now turning more attention to infotainment technologies. The study measured vehicle owner interest and purchase intent for emerging automotive technologies. The top five — based on what vehicle owners indicated that they "definitely" or "probably" would purchase in their next vehicle — both pre-price and at market price are: **\$\$**

Pre-Price Feature Interest

Light emitting diode (LED) headlights	.70%
Natural language voice activation	.69%
Next-generation heads-up display	.69%
Wireless connectivity system	.68%
Remote vehicle diagnostics	.65%

At Market Price Feature Interest

HD radio (at \$100)52	%
Enhanced collision mitigation46	%
system (at \$750)	
Wireless connectivity system (at \$300)45	%
Surround-view rear-vision camera (at \$550) 44	%
Personal assistance safety41	%
services (at \$15/month)	

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Goodbye Bugs

Love Bug Eraser sponge makes short work of removing the little critters with just soap and water

DIFFICULTY	1 2 3 4 5
TIME TO COMPLETE	5 MIN. ASSEMBLY
TOOLS NEEDED	SOAP AND WATER

Summer brings the kind of weather that makes us want to head out on the open road. It also brings out all the bugs. Most trailers have large frontal areas that naturally collect copious amounts of squashed bugs. You know the routine: Get to camp, grab the bug remover and the necessary accouterments to clean off the mess. If you want to keep your rig looking good, this process is an everyday ritual. And unless you're an entomologist, it's not fun.

Over the years, I've tried lots of bug remover products and protectants. Many do a decent job, but most require too much work. The Love Bug Eraser (Awesome Products Corp.) is an amazingly simple product that will change the way you tackle bug removal. What looks like a cross between a thin sponge and a scrubbing pad, the Love Bug Eraser is made from non-abrasive, space age fiber polymers and measures 6-by-9.5 inches. Not sure what "space" has to do with the design of the sponge, but it's destined to allow owners to throw away most of the tools in their cleaning arsenal.

The people who manufacture this product are uniquely qualified in this segment of

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the car-cleaning field. They hail from Florida where bugs are the size of small birds. They market a product that removes bugs, road tar, brake dust and, of course, dirt from all vehicle surfaces, including paint, glass and plastic.

Using the Love Bug Eraser couldn't be simpler. Just dip the sponge in a bucket of soapy water and clean away. It takes virtually no effort to remove anything in its path, and the sponge can be used over and over, even after it becomes soiled and frayed. While the company recommends using soap and water, I tested it on a trailer that was covered with bugs using only water to verify the claim that no other chemicals are needed. It worked exceptionally well, removing all the bugs in just a few minutes. There's no need to bear down on the sponge while cleaning, especially if the surface is painted. It's important to keep the sponge clean — you don't want to get debris embedded into the fibers by dropping it on the ground.

The Love Bug Eraser sells for \$4.99, but you can get three for \$9.98. Reaching tall surfaces can be accomplished by using one of the company's two flat holders, which will screw onto a threaded pole, if you prefer not to use a step stool or ladder. Plastic hook and loop material is used to stick the sponge to the holder. The larger holder has a curvature that conforms to rounded corners and flattens out by applying light pressure. The smaller one stays flat and can easily get into nooks and crannies. Various kits sell for \$27.98 to \$39.98. The sponge is available online or at Publix and Winn-Dixie stores under the Boss Sponge name. It's made in the U.S.A. 🗭

Awesome Products Corp., 904-280-1499, www.lovebugeraser.com

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LESS ELBOW GREASE)) With very little pressure, and only soapy water, you can use the Love Bug Eraser to gently clean insects from your RV.

User Guide

CHLORINATED WATER

I know how to chlorinate my potable water system. However, what procedure do you recommend for purging the system of the chlorine? Should I simply purge with clear water, or use some additive to neutralize the chlorine? Joseph Murphy, Mountain Home, Idaho

A Chlorine used to kill waterborne germs in water disperses as a gas, which go out the tank vent. The speed at which this occurs varies with the temperature and concentration (the warmer ambient temperature, the faster it evaporates). So if you wait a few days, the smell of chlorine will be gone. However, if you are in a hurry and find the odor objectionable, or you used a high concentration to clean the system, simply drain the tank and refill it with fresh water and about a half a cup of baking soda for every 15 gallons of tank capacity. **– Ken Freund**

Drain the tank, refill with fresh water and a half cup of baking soda per 15 gallons to purge chlorine odor from your potable water system.

CHARGING OPTIONS

A have a 2004 Keystone Cougar with a MagneTek series 6300A converter. When dry camping I have an Onan 3600 generator in my pickup bed that I connect to the trailer. Is it safe to also connect my battery charger at the same time to charge the batteries quicker? I don't have a 15-amp receptacle on the generator and would have to plug the charger into the trailer. I'm just not sure if that would help or if it might harm the converter or the batteries. **Bill Campbell, Via email**

A You can plug your car battery charger into the RV and use it to charge your RV battery while the battery is connected to the RV. When two chargers are connected to a battery, in this case the RV's onboard converter/charger plus your car battery charger, the system automatically defaults to the more powerful of the two charging sources. It doesn't combine the two into a higher-voltage source. And you're right; the car battery charger will recharge your batteries faster than the converter can. **– Jeff Johnston**

HITCH CONSIDERATIONS

I purchased a new 28-foot Surveyor travel trailer by Forest River that has a claimed dry weight of 4,400 pounds and a hitch weight of 418 pounds. I plan to tow it with my 2008 Chevy Silverado 1500 pickup with a 5.3L V8 engine. If it were your rig, would you bother with an equalizer hitch? I know it

THE TECH TEAM

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KEN FREUND: Ken is a former ASE Certified Master Technician, service manager and shop owner who has authored numerous books on automotive repair.

JEFF JOHNSTON: Jeff served as technical director of *Trailer Life* for 18 years and has been a RV enthusiast, mechanic and writer since he could hold a wrench.

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RV CLINIC

will weigh more when loaded, but I travel alone and don't bring much stuff with me, and never travel with water in the tanks. I'm hoping to find a scale, but they are rare around here. Marc Bazin. Via email

A When the rig is loaded, the hitch weight will probably exceed 500 pounds, and when applied to the hitch receiver mounted far behind the rear axle, it will probably make the truck's rear end squat significantly. (This also unloads weight from the front axle, which is not good.) Measure the distance from the top of the front and rear wheel wells to the road. Hook up and compare the measurements. Your goal is to have the truck sit fairly level when connected and loaded. You may need to use a properly rated weight-distribution hitch set to achieve this. **– K.F.**

UNEQUAL TRAILER BRAKING

We have a problem with the brakes on our 2008 Keystone Cougar 276 RLS. The tow vehicle is a 2008 Ford F- 350 diesel with the OEM integrated brake controller. With the brake adjusting screws set in the normal fashion. both front brakes lock up with the brake controller set fairly low and the rear brakes provide very little braking. In order to obtain somewhat even braking between the front and rear, I have loosened the front brake adjusting screws 10 to 12 cogs looser than the rear brakes. With this adjustment the brakes provide adequate and somewhat even braking between the front and rear with the brake controller set at 6.5. (The controller has a scale of 1 through 10 in 0.5 increments.) The brakes are AL-KO brand 12-by-2-inch units, and the brake housings and drums are free of grease contamination. Voltage and current measurements are essentially equal at all magnets and the trailer is level when connected to the tow vehicle. Ronald Montgomery, Madison, Va.

A You've made a good attempt at solving your problem, and this is a



User Guide
difficult one. Very often, weak or no braking from specific wheels is due to poor electrical connections. This can be due to corrosion or insulation damage where wires run through the axle. However, if the voltage measurements when the brakes are applied and the flowthrough current readings are nearly identical at all wheel positions, it reduces the chance that the problem is caused by faulty connections. Try swapping the brake components between the two axles (front to rear and vice versa) and see if the problems move too. Make sure that all parts and mounting hardware are installed exactly as per the factory instructions, and inspect each part closely for wear or damage. - K. F.

SHIFTED AXLES

We have a 2009 34-foot Cameo fifth-wheel trailer. The last time we pulled the trailer I noticed the space between the tandem tires on one side of the trailer and the other was different. I know that it changed because when we were setting up I could no longer get

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the wheel chock between the wheels on the curb side of the trailer. There is a $\frac{3}{4}$ inch difference between the two clearance spaces now, and when I think about it, that chock may have always been a closer fit on the curb side. checked the axle U clamps and all were tight except for two that needed a 1/8 to maybe a 1/4 turn to tighten up fully. I also checked the bolts on the shackles and they were tight. The shackles looked as if they were bolted tight. I use a chock that cranks tightly directly between the tires.

When I contacted our area Cameo service representative I was told the ³/₄inch difference was in specification, spacing between the wheels may even out with travel, and that axle alignment was a recommended periodic maintenance. After driving another 360 miles, the spacing did not change. At first I thought that one of the axles moved and I was narrow-mindedly approaching the problem from that viewpoint. Now that I have climbed under the trailer and made a

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RV CLINIC

(continued from pg. 73)

few measurements, I see one or more of the tires may be the cause. The axles are fairly well centered on the springs and the separation between the axles is wider on the curb side.

So my questions are: Can the tires change their shape (bulge out in the center) to cause from a ½- to ¾-inch change in the spacing between the tires or do you think that one of the axles may have shifted? Is a ¾-inch differential really OK? Who does tandem axle alignment? Will the alignment techs diagnose if the shackles and rocker arms are installed properly?

Curtis Hart, Round Rock, Texas

A If you have a wide variation in tire inflation pressures or are using different brands or tire sizes on both sides, it is possible that this might be causing some of the difference. However, if tire pressures and types are the same you can eliminate that as a cause. I consider a %-inch difference to be excessive on something like a tandem-axle travel trailer. You should be able to find a shop that does trailer-axle work and alignments in or near a large town or city. RV shops, truck centers and wheel alignment specialists should be able to help, and ask them to check the shackles and rockers for wear also. – **K. F.**

TIRE TRAUMA TIPS

This is in regards to the "Tire Trauma" letter in the April 2012 issue. I have some experiences to share that might prove useful regarding Marathon tires. I run six of the same tires as in the article. ST235/80R16. My first set lasted 10,000 miles. It was very frustrating to watch in the mirror as I watched four tires fly apart, one by one, every 400-600 miles of the last trip. Regarding the Marathon tire, I found a factory tech service bulletin (TSB) that authorizes increased pressure for speeds up to 75 MPH. I will be putting that to the test on this year's road trip. It was found on www.tirerack.com as a direct link from the tire information page. Consider



running a trailer tire rated for truck trailer duty. The Marathon is offered in a 17.5-inch wheel size that, in overall tire size, is no larger in diameter or wider than a 16-inch tire. And best of all, it has a substantially higher weight rating. If it's good enough for the big boys doing interstate long-haul work and needing reliability, it will be good enough for me. Granted it's an expensive change with new wheels required, but I suspect one will do it once and never worry about it again. **Tom Grancey, Auburn, Calif.**

A Thanks for writing, Tom. Trailer tires are a common reader problem. Swapping up to truck-trailer tires may help reduce or eliminate these expensive failures. – K.F. 🗣

HAVE A QUESTION » Email our experts at: RVClinic@trailerlife.com or write to: RV Clinic, 3300 Fernbrook Lane N. #200, Minneapolis, MN 55447. No phone calls, please.



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2012 Forest River MAVERICK

2902 WAS \$28,977 NOW \$19,995 SAVE

\$8,982 (866) 415-9726 Golden, CO STK#

USED

310B

2009

Savannah, GA STK# SAV16327

NEW

KC511708

USED 2007 Keystone MOUNTAINEER 32PHD WAS \$34,982 NOW \$19,995 SAVE \$14,987 (866) 820-0335 Council Bluffs, IA STK# CBI18634

Heartland NORTHTRAIL

NOW \$19.995 (888) 696-2165



 NEW
 2012
 Coleman

 COLEMAN
 CTS260BH

 WAS
 \$27,351
 NOW

 \$19,995
 SAVE
 \$7,356

 (866)
 673-0250
 Statesville, NC
 STK#

 STA126069
 STA126069
 STA126069
 STA126069



NEW 2011 Coleman COLEMAN CTS264RL WAS \$26,419 NOW \$19,997 SAVE \$6,422 (888) 474-1330 Bartow, FL STK# DCW8513



USED 2007 Keystone SYDNEY OUTBACK 31FRKS WAS \$29,998 NOW \$19,999 SAVE \$9,999 (877) 554-3516 Lakewood, NJ STK# LAK8509



NEW 2012 Coleman COLEMAN CTS260BH WAS \$27,066 NOW \$20,751 SAVE \$6,315 (888) 682-3036 Churchville, NY STK# CHU70252



NEW 2010 Forest River WILDWOOD

28RLSS WAS \$28,186 NOW \$19,999

SAVE \$8,187 (877) 774-0328 Ocala, FL

STK# 0CA19095

 NEW
 2011
 Keystone
 BULLET
 200EXP

 MSRP
 \$28,508
 NOW
 \$21,857
 SAVE

 \$6,651
 (888)
 641-0925
 Kaysville, UT
 STK#

 KY37365
 SAVE
 SAVE
 SAVE
 SAVE



NEW 2012 Dutchmen DENALI 261BH WAS \$33,416 NOW \$20,000 SAVE \$13,416 (866) 820-0335 Council Bluffs, IA STK# CBI15371



USED 2004 Forest River CEDAR CREEK 36 NOW \$21,925 (888) 479-3568 Vacaville, CA STK# VAC17720A VIN# 4P188221



USED 2007 Jayco EAGLE 288 RLS WAS \$28,000 NOW \$21,988 SAVE \$6,012 (888) 859-6653 Hillsboro, OR STK# HIL39228



USED 2007 Monaco STARWOOD M-29RKD WAS \$31,824 NOW \$21,995 SAVE \$9,829 (877) 458-3214 Jacksonville, FL STK# JAX20585

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NEW 2012 Dutchmen DENALI 262RB WAS \$34,003 NOW \$22,000 SAVE \$12,003 (866) 820-0335 Council Bluffs, IA STK# CBI15370



USED 2002 Keystone MONTANA 295RL NOW \$22,895 WAS \$34,140 SAVE \$11,245 (888) 692-9016 Myrtle Beach, SC STK# MB126583



Patomine

USED 2009 Jayco EAGLE SUPER LITE 298 RLS NOW \$22,978 (888) 614-5201 Draper, UT STK# ABRV39927



USED 2004 Forest River CEDAR CREEK 34RLBS WAS \$30,690 NOW \$22,995 SAVE \$7,695 (866) 610-5049 Akron, OH STK# SRV19145



USED 2007 Keystone COUGAR 311EFS WAS \$29,995 NOW \$22,995 SAVE \$7,000 (888) 903-6787 Harrisburg, PA STK# HAR70761



PARADISE **USED 2006** CrossRoads NOW \$23,995 **POINTE 36RL** (888) 668-6715 Katy, TX STK# KAT9581A



USED 2002 NuWa HITCHHIKER 35LK-TGE WAS \$35,995 NOW \$24,561 SAVE \$11,434 (888) 474-1330 Bartow, FL STK# DCW8187A

Go to TRAILER.com



USED 2006 Americamp SUMMIT RIDGE 327RRK WAS \$34,995 NOW \$23,995 SAVE \$11,000 (866) 996-3140 Calera, AL STK# CLE18948



USED 2011 Keystone PREMIER 28RL

(888) 815-7523 Wood-

NOW \$22,998

stock, GA STK# WDS16817

USED 2010 Keystone BULLET 295BHS NOW \$23,995 (888) 331-1595 Santa STK# AMRV22614 Clarita, CA VIN# AM420062

NEW 2011 Keystone **308BHS** SPRINTER WAS \$34.011 NOW \$24,599 SAVE \$9,412 (888) 568-2177 Burlington, WA STK# FRV9814



NEW 2012 Coleman COLEMAN CT-F267BH WAS \$37,685 NOW \$23,685 SAVE \$14,000 (888) 242-0293 Madison, WI STK# MAD16062

USED 2009 Fleetwood PROWLER 250RLS WAS \$38,995 NOW \$23,889 SAVE \$15,106 (866)755-9604 Charleston, SC STK# CHN126466



NEW 2011 Keystone SPRINTER 277RLS WAS \$31,955 NOW \$23,995 SAVE \$7,960 (866) 820-0335 Council Bluffs, IA STK# CBI15346



USED 2008 Keystone LAREDO 30BH WAS \$31,995 NOW \$24,858 SAVE \$7,137 (888) 254-9145 Meridian, ID STK# MER19491





USED 2010 Forest River WILDCAT 282RK NOW \$24,995 (888) 828-9906 Lowell, AR STK# LOW25032



USED 2007 Cross-Roads CROSSFIRE 33MK WAS \$36,586 NOW \$24,995 SAVE \$11,591 (888) 450-7060 Dothan, AL STK# DOT42369



USED 2007 Keystone RAPTOR 299 MP NOW \$24,995 (888) 828-9906 Lowell, AR STK# LOW24548

NEW 2012 Dutchmen KODIAK 290BHSL

WAS \$32,832 NOW \$24,995 SAVE \$7,837

Hamburg, NY STK#

(888) 865-1507

BUF69827



NEW 2011 Keystone OUTBACK 280RS WAS \$38,995 **NOW \$24,995** SAVE \$14,000 (888) 902-8565 Tallahassee, FL STK# TAL39149



NEW 2011 Keystone SPRINTER 255RKS LIST PRICE \$35,385 NOW \$24,995 SAVE \$10,390 (888) 331-1595 Santa Clarita, CA STK# AMRV21977 VIN# B1533234



NEW 2011 Coleman COLEMAN CT387DQDS MSRP \$34,287 NOW \$24,998 SAVE \$9,289 (877) 371-2412 Bellemont, AZ STK# FLG13897



USED 2010 Dutchmen FREEDOM SPIRIT 259REX WAS \$34,995 NOW \$25,698 SAVE \$9,297 (888) 692-9016 Myrtle Beach, SC STK# MB126250



USED 2007 Gulf Stream SEDONA 34FSBW NOW \$25,987 (888) 641-0925 Kaysville, UT STK# KY36139



NEW 2012 CrossRoads CRUISER 27RLX WAS \$38,392 NOW \$25,988 SAVE \$12,404 (888) 386-5187 Houghton Lake, MI STK# HL5970



 NEW
 2011
 Coleman
 COLEMAN
 CT

 F267BH
 WAS
 \$38,740
 NOW
 \$25,995
 SAVE \$12,745
 (888)
 903-6787
 Harrisburg, PA
 STK# HAR69261



 NEW
 2012
 Keystone
 PREMIER
 26BH

 MSRP
 \$33,271
 NOW
 \$25,998
 SAVE

 \$7,273
 (888)
 815-7523
 Woodstock, GA

 STK# WDS17551
 STK#
 WDS17551

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 NEW 2012 CrossRoads

 ZINGER 30RL
 WAS

 \$38,240
 NOW \$25,995

 SAVE
 \$12,245
 (888)

 860-8684
 Strafford, MO

 STK# STR17794
 STK# STR17794

USED 2007 CrossRoads PARADISE POINT 34RL WAS \$32,995 NOW \$25,995 SAVE \$7,000 (866) 673-0250 Statesville, NC STK# STA126682



 NEW
 2011
 Keystone
 PREMIER
 27RB

 WAS
 \$42,351
 NOW
 \$25,999
 SAVE

 \$16,352
 (888)
 672-5049
 Syracuse, NY

 STK#
 SYU69663
 SYRACUSE, NY



 NEW
 2012
 Keystone
 SYDNEY
 288FRL

 WAS
 \$43,588
 NOW
 \$26,199
 SAVE

 \$17,389
 (866)
 755-9604
 Charleston, SC

 STK#
 CHN125266
 STK#
 CHN125266

User Guide



USED 2009 Heartland BIG COUNTRY 3490BHS WAS \$47,865 NOW \$26,995 SAVE \$20,870 (888) 674-0275 Gulf Breeze, FL STK# GB40596

Contents





USED 2007 Keystone MOUNTAINEER 344RET WAS \$34,988 NOW \$26,995 SAVE \$7,993 (888) 475-5918 Robertsdale, AL STK# RD40348



 NEW
 2012
 Keystone
 SPRINTER

 270FWRET
 MSRP \$35,795
 NOW \$26,998

 SAVE
 \$8,797
 (888)
 815-7523
 Woodstock,

 GA
 STK# WDS16786
 VIC
 STAR
 Starter



NEW 2012 Coleman COLEMAN CT

F267BH MSRP \$34,430 NOW \$26,995

SAVE \$7,435 (888) 801-3226 Byron, GA

STK# MAC15686

USED 2007 Alpenlite VOYAGER 31CK WAS \$49,900 NOW \$26,999 SAVE \$22,901 (866) 289-0113 Chattanooga, TN STK# CH6868



NEW 2012 Keystone COUGAR 30WCV MSRP \$36,013 **NOW \$27,500** SAVE \$8,513 (888) 801-3226 Byron, GA STK# MAC16100



NEW 2012 Keystone SYDNEY 275FBH WAS \$45,620 **NOW \$27,533** SAVE \$18,087 (866) 755-9604 Charleston, SC STK# CHN125265



NEW 2012 Keystone COUGAR 27SAB WAS \$35,087 NOW \$27,988 SAVE \$7,099 (888) 386-5187 Houghton Lake, MI STK# HL5938



USED 2012 Keystone LAREDO 303TG NOW \$29,500 (888) 801-3226 Byron, GA STK# MAC17150



 NEW
 2011
 Coleman
 COLEMAN
 CT

 F267BH
 WAS
 \$40,860
 NOW
 \$28,950

 SAVE
 \$11,910
 (888)
 850-5575
 Wood
 Village, OR

 STK#
 POR37502
 COLEMAN
 CT COLEMAN
 CT



NEW 2012 Coleman COLEMAN CT-

F259RE MSRP \$38,227 NOW \$27,862

SAVE \$10,365 (888) 696-2165 Savannah,

GA STK# SAV17016

NEW 2012 Heartland ELKRIDGE 27RLSS WAS \$43,022 NOW \$28,995 SAVE \$14,027 (866) 775-0682 Roanoke, VA STK# ROA14410



 NEW
 2012
 Coleman
 COLEMAN
 CT

 F267BH
 MSRP
 \$36,274
 NOW
 \$27,862

 SAVE
 \$8,412
 (888)
 696-2165
 Savannah,

 GA
 STK#
 SAV16078



Wind wand

USED 2007 Forest River WILDWOOD 336BHBS WAS \$42,668 NOW \$28,995 SAVE \$13,673 (888) 461-1123 Asheville, NC STK# ASH22490



 NEW
 2011
 Coleman
 COLEMAN
 CT

 F267BH
 LIST
 PRICE
 \$37,591
 NOW

 \$29,785
 SAVE \$7,806
 (888)
 479-3568
 Va

 caville, CA
 STK# VAC17595
 VIN# BP627463

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 NEW
 2012
 Coleman
 COLEMAN
 CT

 F267BH
 WAS
 \$42,273
 NOW
 \$29,995
 SAVE \$12,278
 (877)
 289-0812
 Las Vegas, NV
 STK# LVN40038



USED 2006 Holiday Rambler PRESIDEN-TIAL 36RLQ NOW \$29,998 (888) 815-7523 Woodstock, GA STK# WDS16737



NEW 2013 Heartland SUNDANCE XLT 285BH WAS \$44,765 NOW \$31,320 SAVE \$13,445 (888) 713-4351 Fayetteville, NC STK# FAY25363

NEW

2012

STK# LC15931



USED 2009 Heartland BIG COUNTRY 325TSL WAS \$44,950 NOW \$31,988 SAVE \$12,962 (888) 850-5575 Wood Village, OR STK# POR37152



USED 2008 Heartland BIG HORN 3055RL WAS \$41,337 NOW \$31,988 SAVE \$9,349 (888) 896-2801 Albuquerque, NM STK# ARV15517A



USED 2010 Keystone MONTANA 347THT WAS \$44,995 NOW \$31,998 SAVE \$12,997 (888) 457-4801 Colfax, NC STK# CFX3828

Heartland

2900MK MSRP \$45,116 NOW \$31,995

SAVE \$13,121 (888) 905-0490 Anthony, TX

SUNDANCE



USED 2007 Heartland LANDMARK SHENAN-DOAH WAS \$42,988 NOW \$32,898 SAVE \$10,090 (888) 542-3819 Mesa, AZ STK# MES13837



USED 2007 Doubletree SELECT SUITES 31RLS3 NOW \$32,900 (888) 844-1758 New Braunfels, TX STK# SW9798A

USED



USED 2011 Keystone RAPTOR 30FS WAS \$39,995 NOW \$32,995 SAVE \$7,000 (888) 625-5187 Fort Myers, FL STK# FTM21927A



USED 2007 Alfa SEE YA 314/35RLIK WAS \$57,900 NOW \$32,999 SAVE \$24,901 (866) 289-0113 Chattanooga, TN STK# CH6952



USED 2005 Fleetwood TRIUMPH 395RL WAS \$47,695 NOW \$34,995 SAVE \$12,700 (888) 484-3906 Spartanburg, SC STK# GR125365



NEW 2012 Keystone SYDNEY 328FRK WAS \$50,128 NOW \$34,997 SAVE \$15,131 (888) 463-3995 Colorado Springs, CO STK# KC211405

brook SUNNYBROOK 39SURV WAS \$49,500 NOW \$34,877 SAVE \$14,623 (888) 474-1330 Bartow, FL STK# DCW7974A

Heartland

3000MK WAS \$50,337 NOW \$35,353

SAVE \$14,984 (888) 713-4351 Fayetteville,

SUNDANCE

2006 Sunny-



USED 2008 Keystone MONTANA 3295 WAS \$53,779 NOW \$34,995 SAVE \$18,784 (888) 672-5049 Syracuse, NY STK# SYU70404



USED 2008 Keystone BIG SKY 350RLQ WAS \$48,810 NOW \$35,995 SAVE \$12,815 (888) 674-0275 Gulf Breeze, FL STK# GB41196

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NEW

2012

NC STK# FAY21571





\$49,888 NOW \$35,999 SAVE \$13,889 (888) 542-3819 Mesa, AZ STK# MES14497



 NEW
 2012
 Heartland
 SUNDANCE

 3000CK
 WAS
 \$51,856
 NOW
 \$37,243

 SAVE
 \$14,613
 (888)
 713-4351
 Fayetteville,

 NC
 STK#
 FAY25402
 SAVE
 SAVE



345RL NOW \$36,500 (888) 617-5406

Oakwood, GA STK# ORV17121

NEW 2011 Starcraft LEXION S-LITE 315BSSA WAS \$53,530 NOW \$37,995 SAVE \$15,535 (877) 289-0812 Las Vegas, NV STK# LVN40266



USED 2007 McKenzie Towables MEDALLION 37 NOW \$38,960 (888) 903-5066 St. George, UT STK# SGU22305



USED 2008 Cedar Creek SILVERBACK 35L4QB WAS \$54,995 NOW \$39,995 SAVE \$15,000 (888) 461-1123 Asheville, NC STK# ASH22489



USED 2009 Forest River CARDINAL 38BHQS WAS \$54,995 NOW \$39,995 SAVE \$15,000 (866) 775-0682 Roanoke, VA STK# ROA13561



 NEW 2012 Keystone AVALANCHE 340TG

 WAS
 \$51,354
 NOW
 \$39,995
 SAVE

 \$11,359
 (888)
 902-8565
 Tallahassee, FL
 STK# TAL40721



USED 2009 Keystone RAPTOR 3602RL WAS \$53,999 NOW \$39,998 SAVE \$14,001 (888) 457-4801 Colfax, NC STK# CFX3844



USED 2008 Heartland BIG HORN 367ORL WAS \$59,875 NOW \$44,811 SAVE \$15,064 (888) 542-3819 Mesa, AZ STK# MES13519



 NEW
 2012
 Keystone
 RAPTOR
 300MP

 WAS
 \$68,326
 NOW
 \$48,302
 SAVE

 \$20,024
 (888)
 859-6653
 Hillsboro, OR

 STK# HIL38332
 SAVE



 NEW
 2012
 Dutchmen
 KOMFORT

 3130FRL
 MSRP
 \$59,555
 NOW
 \$44,900

 SAVE
 \$14,655
 (888)
 844-1758
 New

 Braunfels, TX
 STK#
 SW10078
 SW10078



USED 2006 Carriage CARRI LITE 36XTRM5 WAS \$62,995 NOW \$45,995 SAVE \$17,000 (866) 775-0682 Roanoke, VA STK# R0A13811

 NEW
 2011
 Keystone

 MONTANA
 3400RL

 WAS
 \$74,057
 NOW

 \$49,895
 SAVE \$24,162

 (888)
 242-0293
 Madi

 son, WI
 STK# MAD15462



USED 2012 Yellowstone RIDGELINE 36REQ WAS \$63,464 NOW \$46,995 SAVE \$16,469 (866) 996-3140 Calera, AL STK# CLE19463



NEW 2012 Keystone FUZION 322 WAS \$73,788 NOW \$49,526 SAVE \$24,262 (866) 755-9604 Charleston, SC STK# CHN127824





 NEW 2011 Keystone
 RAPTOR
 4014LEV

 WAS
 \$76,404
 NOW
 \$49,995
 SAVE

 \$26,409
 (888)
 682-3036
 Churchville, NY

 STK#
 CHU69198
 SAVE



 NEW
 2012
 Dutchmen

 men
 INFINITY
 3250RL

 WAS
 \$73,494
 NOW

 \$49,995
 SAVE

 \$23,499
 (888)
 463

 3995
 Colorado Springs,

 CO
 STK#
 KC211610



 NEW 2012 Dutchmen INFINITY 3520MS

 WAS
 \$75,871
 NOW
 \$49,997
 SAVE

 \$25,874
 (888) 463-3995
 Colorado Springs,
 CO STK# KC211612



NEW 2012 Dutchmen INFINITY 3520MS WAS \$82,362 **NOW \$53,995** SAVE \$28,367 (888) 819-7952 Longmont, CO STK# KC111625



NEW 2011 Coleman COLEMAN CTF340RL LIST PRICE \$76,481 NOW \$53,995 SAVE \$22,486 (888) 331-1595 Santa Clarita, CA STK# AMRV22005 VIN# BC659945



NEW 2012 Dutchmen INFINITY 3520MS MSRP \$75,439 NOW \$53,995 SAVE \$21,444 (888) 844-1758 New Braunfels, TX STK# SW10011



 NEW
 2012
 Keystone

 MONTANA
 3580RL

 WAS
 \$79,351
 NOW

 \$54,896
 SAVE
 \$24,455

 (866)
 502-8238
 Bath, NY

 STK#
 BAT69986
 SAVE



 NEW
 2011
 Keystone

 MONTANA
 3455SA

 WAS
 \$79,243
 NOW

 \$54,995
 SAVE
 \$24,248

 (877)
 289-0812
 Las Vegas, NV

 STK#
 LVN38432



NEW 2012 Keystone RAPTOR 3912LEV MSRP \$77,389 NOW \$54,995 SAVE \$22,394 (888) 617-5406 Oakwood, GA STK# 0RV17002

SAVE \$22,850

NEW 2012 Keystone ALPINE 3500RE WAS \$79,845 NOW \$56,995

450-7060 Dothan, AL STK# D0T40393

(888)



NEW 2012 Jayco PINNACLE 36REQS WAS \$71,784 NOW \$54,995 SAVE \$16,789 (866) 415-9726 Golden, CO STK# KC511751



 NEW 2012 Keystone
 RAPTOR
 365LEV

 WAS
 \$80,095
 NOW
 \$55,896
 SAVE

 \$24,199
 (866)
 502-8238
 Bath, NY
 STK#

 BAT69246
 SAVE
 SAVE
 SAVE
 SAVE



NEW 2011 Keystone MONTANA 3665RE MSRP \$84,877 NOW \$64,857 SAVE \$20,020 (888) 614-5201 Draper, UT STK# ABRV37201



 NEW
 2012
 Dutchmen
 VOLTAGE
 3900

 WAS
 \$92,895
 NOW
 \$64,995
 SAVE

 \$27,900
 (888)
 865-1507
 Hamburg, NY

 STK#
 BUF70396



 NEW
 2012
 Dutchmen
 VOLTAGE
 3900

 WAS
 \$91,319
 NOW
 \$64,995
 SAVE

 \$26,324
 (888)
 475-5918
 Robertsdale, AL

 STK# RD39358
 SAVE
 \$64,993
 SAVE



NEW 2012 Keystone MONTANA 3402RL WAS \$87,240 NOW \$63,995 SAVE \$23,245 (877) 439-7857 Conway, NH STK# CNW23879



 NEW 2012 Keystone MONTANA 3150RL

 WAS \$119,643
 NOW \$66,657
 SAVE

 \$52,986
 (888)
 713-4351
 Fayetteville, NC

 STK# FAY25425
 SAVE
 SAVE

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USED TRAVEL	TRAILE	BTO	WAR	IES	NEW TRAVEL TRAI		OWA		VCONTION
YEAR/MANUFACTURER/MAKE/MODEL	STOCK #	LIST	NOW*	PHONE NO.	YEAR/MANUFACTURER/MAKE/MODEL	STOCK #	LIST	NOW*	PHONE NO.
1990 Kit Mfg. Co. COMPANION CALLAY 24	MER18630	\$8,695	\$6,995	(888) 254-9145	2012 Keystone COUGAR 29RBK	LAC24354	\$34,957	\$31,995	(888) 378-1057
2007 Starcraft STARCRAFT 1900DBS	LAC21905	\$10,995	\$8,995	(888) 378-1057	2013 Keystone COUGAR 28RBS	RAL23429	\$36,410	\$34,885	(888) 868-1486
2006 Skyline LAYTON 198 LTD	KSC2209A	\$11,438	\$9,995	(888) 454-1707	2012 Keystone COUGAR 32SAB	STR17782	\$36,232	\$34,995	(888) 860-8684
2006 Skamper KODIAK 24RB	WGA22983	\$12.995	\$10,975	(888) 681-4635	2007 Heartland CYCLONE 4012	AV014476	\$46,815	\$39,999	(888) 348-5909
2005 Keystone SPRINGDALE 269RLS	FRV11092	\$12,995	\$11,995	(888) 568-2177		AV014470	940,013	400,000	(000) 540-5505
2004 Keystone OUTBACK 25RS	WGA22895	\$13,988	\$12,590	(888) 681-4635	USED FIFTH W	/HEEL	TOW	ABL	
2005 Coachmen CAPTIVA 275DS	WGA22899	\$14,495	\$12,988	(888) 681-4635	YEAR/MANUFACTURER/MAKE/MODEL	STOCK #	LIST	NOW*	PHONE NO.
2006 Starcraft TRAVELSTAR 300BS	AV013739	\$19,877	\$13,888	(888) 348-5909	2003 Forest River SIERRA 27RKSS	FTM1276C	\$12,995	\$11,995	(888) 625-5187
2002 Newmar AMERICAN STAR 32FK	FTM1282C	\$15,000	\$13,995	(888) 625-5187		FRV10833	\$13.995		1 C
1999 Holiday Rambler ALUMA LITE 28SKS	MER23628	\$16,995	\$14,858	(888) 254-9145	1995 Alpenlite ALPENLITE 34RL 2007 CrossRoads ZINGER 29BS	JAC42103	\$15,995	\$12,995	(888) 568-2177
2007 Keystone OUTBACK 28KRS	KC511378B	\$19,995	\$15,995	(866) 415-9726		FTM19163B	and an entreme	\$14,995	(866) 648-5288
2008 Forest River FLAGSTAFF 831FKSS	JAC41887	\$17,250	\$15,995	(866) 648-5288	2001 Keystone MONTANA 3555RL		\$17,998	\$15,995	(888) 625-5187
2005 Dutchmen TUNDRA 30RLDS	FRV11063	\$16,995	\$15,995	(888) 568-2177	2007 Forest River WILDCAT 29RLBS	OCA19191	\$19,995	\$16,888	(877) 774-0328
2010 Palomino PUMA 26RLSS	KS9330A	\$18,428	\$16,995	(888) 454-1707	2006 Gulf Stream CANYON TRAIL 30FBHS	MES14454	\$21,999	\$17,888	(888) 542-3819
2009 K-Z SPREE 289KS	DCW8418A	\$23,800	\$19,899	(888) 474-1330	2004 CrossRoads SILVERADO 33RL	STR17353C	\$21,995	\$18,995	(888) 860-8684
2010 Keystone BULLET 250RKS	FLG13122	\$32,254	\$21,995	(877) 371-2412	2006 Keystone COUGAR 314BH	KC1CN01117A	\$24,055	\$19,995	(888) 819-7952
2007 Keystone COPPER CANYON 3121SLS	CHU68788	\$28,995	\$21,995	(888) 682-3036	2004 Keystone MONTANA 3685FL	CLE18963	\$23,995	\$19,995	(866) 996-3140
2010 Forest River SALEM T23	POR39495	\$24,950	\$22,988	(888) 850-5575	2003 Keystone COUGAR 281	ASH22491	\$23,291	\$19,995	(888) 461-1123
2011 Keystone FUZION 230	TAL41457	\$29,995	\$23,995	(888) 902-8565	2004 Glendale TITANIUM 33E38TS	WGA22990	\$27,895	\$23,500	(888) 681-4635
Lott Rejudito Tokion 200	man crore	020,000	4201000	(000) 002 0000	2003 Forest River CEDAR CREEK 36RLTS	DCW7885B	\$29,995	\$24,995	(888) 474-1330
NEW TRAVEL	TRAILE	BTO	WARL	ES	2012 Gulf Stream CANYON TRAIL 28RBHB	CLE19457	\$30,008	\$26,995	(866) 996-3140
YEAR/MANUFACTURER/MAKE/MODEL	STOCK #	LIST	NOW*	PHONE NO.	2007 Keystone MOUNTAINEER 342PHT	CFX4266	\$32,995	\$27,998	(888) 457-4801
2012 Jayco JAY FLIGHT SWIFT SLX 154BH	KC111718	\$13,248	\$10,795	(888) 819-7952	2007 Fleetwood GEARBOX	FTM13974A	\$34,995	\$29,995	(888) 625-5187
2012 Jayco JAY FLIGHT SWIFT SLX 154BH	KC511964	\$13,322	\$10,995	(866) 415-9726	2007 Fleetwood ADVANTAGE M-345BHTS	AV014590	\$36,990	\$29,998	(888) 348-5909
2012 Coleman COLEMAN CTS274BH	COL15888	\$18,039	\$16,049	(888) 848-7312	2006 Open Road PURE SPORT 40	OCA19718	\$34,995	\$31,888	(877) 774-0328
2012 Coleman COLEMAN CTE184	LIT15050	\$20,925	\$18,616	(888) 727-2952	2008 Heartland BIG COUNTRY 3250TS	MES14594	\$35,888	\$31,988	(888) 542-3819
2012 Dutchmen ASPEN TRAIL 2710BH	FLG17170	\$23,928	\$19,995	(877) 371-2412	2006 Forest River SIERRA 315BHTS	ASH22496	\$38,380	\$32,995	(888) 461-1123
2012 CrossRoads Z-1 251BH	RAL20395	\$23,780	\$19,995	(888) 868-1486	2009 Keystone MONTANA 2980RL	LAK8710	\$53,053	\$42,789	(877) 554-3516
2011 Jayco JAY FEATHER SPORT 197	SLV21528	\$23,316	\$19,998	(877) 834-0429					
2012 Coleman COLEMAN CTS260BH	CFX3839	\$24,390	\$19,999	(888) 457-4801	NEW FIFTH W				
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Clearer Vision

If you store your RV alongside your house, you know that the overhanging eaves can be difficult to see using the side mirrors; they are too high for the normal line of sight. With a piece of rope and a 6-inch wood disc attached at the farthest outward point, adjusted to mirror height, I can now see where the overhang ends without messing with the mirror adjustment. Use a ¼-inch nylon rope and paint



the wood disc white for best visibility. Drill a hole in the end cap of the gutter and tie one end of the rope. Next, drill a hole in the center of the disc so the other end of the rope can be threaded through. Use knots in the rope to adjust disc height so that it's level with the mirrors. When the mirror makes contact with the disc you should also have 3 inches of clearance between the end of the overhang and the mirror. **Randy Brien, Bothell, Wash.**

Multi-Use Leveling Blocks

To make leveling blocks useful in many different situations, get a length of 2-by-8-inch treated lumber, and a couple feet of ¾-inch PVC tubing. Cut the lumber into three pieces: 14 inches, 20 inches and 26 inches, for each number of blocks you want to make. Angle the edges up on all pieces of wood. The three different sizes will form a pyramid shape. This is to make it easier to drive up on without having a high angle that would



make the block slide out of place when trying to drive on it.

Make a stack of three different sizes together, centering them on top of each other. Drill two 1-inch holes through all three leveling blocks but do not drill all the way through the bottom one. This is because you don't want the pieces of tubing that will hold the stack together to fall through the bottom block when stacked.

Now cut two sets of the ¾-inch PVC tubing. One set will be longer to hold three blocks together, and the other set will be shorter to hold two blocks together. Make sure to cut the tubing just a little shorter than needed, so that when inserted in the holes they do not stick out of the top.

Repeat the procedure for each set of leveling blocks you wish to make. You should end up with a set for each tire you will need to support.

Now you have sets of leveling blocks that can be used individually or stacked together in combinations.

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Laurie West, Sugar Land, Texas

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Stepping Up ... and Down

In order to eliminate slipping on our entry steps, and also to trap dust and mud, I designed simple removable step pads that are held in place with magnets. I purchased inexpensive carpet ends (or remnants) at a local carpet store. The cost is minimal and it is not difficult to find a color to match the rig's exterior. Then I purchased eight round magnets, 1/4-inch thick and 1 1/2 inches in diameter, for each step. After cutting the carpet to the exact measurement of the top surface of each step, I glued eight magnets to the underside of each newly cut step pad. It's important to use waterproof adhesive. I used Goop.

To prevent the carpeting from unraveling, I lightly applied a flame from a propane torch to the edges. Once the adhesive hardens, the pads can be positioned on the steps. These pads provide a soft, cushioned, nonslip surface that will trap dirt and dust. When we hit the road, the pads are removed and stored just inside the door. When the pads become too soiled for long use, I take off the magnets and glue them to newly cut pads. The whole job costs around \$12. **Dexter Blindbury, Chico, Calif.**

SEND YOUR TIPS: 10-Minute Tech, 3300 Fernbrook Lane N, Suite 200, Minneapolis, MN 55447 or email: 10minutetech@trailerlife.com. Please include an illustration or photo if applicable. Trailer Life will pay you \$35 for original 10-Minute Tech ideas.

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SANTA FE, NEW MEXICO

Town Interpreted

Artistry and History Delight Visitors



AMERICA'S

People in Santa Fe, N.M. told me it's the second oldest city in the United States, founded in 1607. I wondered how that could be when our country is not that old.

Then someone threw me for a loop, "Look at it this way: If I said that you were the oldest person in the room, then you left the room, would that make you any younger?"

It was awkward. "So what is the oldest city?" I asked. "St. Augustine in Florida," someone said.

"No, it's Jamestown, Virginia," a lady confidently chimed in. That started a debate on the age of settlements back East and where Santa Fe fit into this history.

So we know that Santa Fe is old. The point is that it looks its age, at least in the tourist walkabout areas. Since much of Santa Fe's appeal is that it is old, they know well here that their future depends on keeping it that way. So they quite successfully work hard to preserve it.

Walking up Canyon Road you'll find a district that has more than one hundred art galleries and studios. Those who create and sell this art have made Santa Fe the third largest art market in the country. From tapestries and rugs to intricate jewelry, they are all sold and often made here. People come from all over the world to buy this art and take it home. Or they buy it and take it to galleries elsewhere, places where you will never find a tag reading, "Made in China."

Canyon Road is narrow. The placement of houses here reminds me of New England. The front doors open right onto the street, no front yards. Structures are consistently adobe — earth-toned with flat roofs — so that variations in shape give the only relief from the tedious pattern repetition. Trim is generally either white or turquoise.

The art galleries continue into the Railyard District. The first train came in here 1880. The latest one is called the Rail Runner. It's a flashy looking, double decker that whisks people between Santa Fe and Albuquerque several times a day. Santa Fe is the state capital while Albuquerque is New Mexico's largest city, which probably justifies the train. The trip takes an hour and half, making it easy to do business here at the seat of government and live in the big city.

The Plaza, established over years 400 years ago as a cool hangout, is the heart of Santa Fe. The focus is a pinnacle monument with engravings that tell of an earlier time, and a bronze plaque that tells of our time of political correctness:

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(Top) Santa Fe, the second oldest city in the United States, features earth-toned buildings with flat roofs. (Bottom) People travel from all over the world to buy art in Santa Fe, N.M.

"This monument was dedicated in 1886 near the close of a period that pitted Northerner against Southerner, Indian against white, Indian against Indian. Thus, we see on this monument, and in other records, use of such terms as 'savage' and 'rebel.' Attitudes change and prejudices hopefully dissolve."

I appreciated the plaque. Lesser places choose to rewrite history – to erase words, as if the feeling they expressed never existed.

The Palace of Governors takes up the block on one side of the Plaza. This adobe structure, with walls four feet thick, housed the Spanish government that once ruled what is now southwestern United States. The front of the building is where Native Americans gather daily, creating a marketplace for their wares.

The Plaza's flowering trees and untrammeled lawn make a tranquil place to relax and contemplate the end of a day. Beneath a shade tree, Petra Babankova played her guitar a fitting complement to the restful ambience of this place.

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