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August 2016

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The National Park Service celebrates 100 years of offering visitors scenic treats like this one in Maine's Acadia National Park (see page 28).



The ArcRV Side Room from Let's Go Aero offers RVers a sealed 6-by-10-foot shelter extension for additional outdoor space while protected from the elements. Pg. 62

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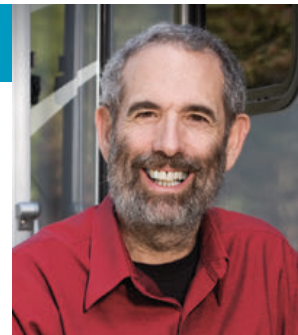


## ON THE COVER

Winnebago's Trend Class C is easy to drive and offers expanded living space thanks to its new slideout floorplan. Photo by Scott Hirko.



By Bob Livingston



## Keeping the Knowledge Base Fresh

I think most owners will agree that motorhome ownership is an ongoing learning experience. Beyond the basics of acclimating to all the systems that make a motorhome a true home, most people build their personal book of knowledge about the different facets of the lifestyle through trial and error. The more you get on the road, make mistakes and consult with fellow owners, the more you eventually learn. In time, most enthusiasts get into a routine, based on previous experience.

I do the same thing. Spending time in a motorhome in new places, with new people, in new RV parks almost always results in a few items that are added to my list of best practices and ideas to follow up on. As I write this column, I'm in an RV park in the Midwest, sitting at the dining table and watching my neighbor set up his motorhome in the site next door. He's very meticulous and I got a kick out of his obsession — like mine — with bugs as he removed every last one of them before relaxing under the awning. I not only picked up a couple of tips on cleaning bugs, but I learned about a portable satellite antenna tripod that I have not seen.

Tapping into fellow RVers' knowledge base is one of the most valuable tools we have as we pursue our own experiences with motorhome travel. That's why we initiated the

Readers' Choice Awards four years ago. In a short time, most owners figure out which products, appliances and accessories work best for their situation — from bug cleaners to toilet chemicals to refrigerators to tires. So once again, we're giving our readers an opportunity to share those experiences with fellow RVers by logging on to [www.motorhome.com](http://www.motorhome.com) and voting for items that make life on the road the most pleasurable. And don't forget to share your favorite states to visit, campgrounds to stay in, places to fuel up and even the best restaurants on the road. We'll publish the winners in the January 2017 issue.

While we treasure your thoughts, we also provide content based on our research, testing and hands-on installations of various motorhomes, systems and products. Over the years, you've told us that technical articles

are a very important part of the editorial mix. And we've responded by continually publishing timely articles that help you better understand the inner workings of motorhomes, how to maintain them, learn what's new in the industry and, overall, enhance the lifestyle — and strengthen the value of this magazine. To build on that commitment, we've added a new technical editor to our staff, Chris Dougherty.

Dougherty brings to the table many years of experience as an RV enthusiast from an early age and is a certified RV technician, leaving his most recent position as a service manager at an RV dealership on the East Coast. His articles have been published in a number of RV business and consumer publications and websites. He's been heavily involved in RV safety and education, volunteering his time on committee work for the Recreation Vehicle Industry Association (RVIA). Dougherty also spent 10 years as a full-timer, and will use this experience along with his training as a service technician to bring strength to our technical team.

We welcome Dougherty aboard and look forward to your votes as we tally the winners of the best of the best in the RV arena. **M**

### Contributors | August



**Donya Carlson** is the managing editor of *Trailer Life* magazine. She grew up camping and loves the outdoors. Previously, she was the managing editor of the motorcycle enthusiast and travel magazine, *Rider*.



**Ann Eichenmuller** is a retired educator and freelance writer living in Virginia's Northern Neck. She and her husband, Eric, divide their time between sailing and traveling in their Minnie Winnie.



**Karen Lee Ensley** is a writer with a passion to explore and photograph the beautiful, the bizarre and the places people want to see. Her work has been published in books, magazines and newspapers.



**Alan Rider** has been wandering America's backroads for more than four decades, and is passionate about collecting memories of the remarkable people and unforgettable places he encounters along the way.



**E. Don Smith** is a Tennessee-based freelance writer and photographer who has been a frequent contributor to *MotorHome* magazine since 2006. He is the proud owner of a Tiffin Phaeton coach.



**Rosanne Wagstaff** and her husband, Greg, an award-winning photographer, are living their dream of full-time RVing in their Monaco Diplomat motorhome, and enjoy sharing their adventures.



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## What resources do you use for navigating roads in a large motorhome? Is there a specific book or atlas, or even GPS program or app that seems to consistently steer your big rig clear of potentially dangerous situations?

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



### Be Prepared

It takes a lot of work going to an unknown place with a large Class A, but it's a lot of fun!

When we plan our trips, we'll first look at the route on MapQuest. I sometimes check the blogs of some RVers for their suggestions, and I also use Google to query which is the best route. If you're a member of AAA, you can visit [www.aaa.com](http://www.aaa.com) to check your route with its software.

Make sure you know the length, height, weight and width of your motorhome, both in feet and in metric measurements. One blogger I read suggested a trucker's road atlas, which lists heights of overpasses and road restrictions.

After I check all this out, I then use my Good Sam Trip Planner, inputting height restrictions, RV restrictions, bridges, overpasses and LP-gas restrictions, etc. The planner can be customized based on your RV type.

I then put the trip planner's results into my GPS. If I'm unsure of where I am going, I research each road in the area I'll be traveling to double-check height restrictions, tolls, etc.

Even with a GPS in hand, you need to be alert to what's actually around you. The GPS is not perfect and should not be relied on fully. There are apps that you can use, but I like to watch, check and do research myself.

Keep in mind that road construction will not always be in the GPS. For

example, our next trip is to Kentucky, and the area we're visiting recently experienced a mudslide that wiped out half the road. Information I read in a blog indicated that a portion of the closed road will be reopened, but advised to be prepared for delays in the area. That's the type of information that's not always available on a GPS or generic app.

**Kimmie in a 2015 Newmar Dutch Star**  
Via email

### Paper, Please

I own a small-screen TomTom, a 7-inch Magellan RoadMate and a 7-inch Rand McNally Good Sam GPS. I have found that none are particularly helpful unless you've spent time with a paper

### Featured Letter

## No Substitute for Experience

Navigating a big rig can be as easy or as difficult as making the correct or the incorrect decisions. As with most choices, the right tools help.

But the best tool is one you cannot purchase, and that is experience. Being familiar with your motorhome; knowing its height, width, weight, stopping distance, turning radius, how well it accelerates and maneuvers in all situations; and whether there is heavy traffic, wet roads and/or high winds ahead are crucial. And last but not least, the condition and inflation of your tires is important as well. Most people will talk about this or that GPS or this or that book. And those resources will help, but experience will be your best tool.



We drive a 2015 Holiday Rambler Ambassador 38DB Class A diesel pusher and tow a 2000 Ford Explorer, four wheels down. That puts us at about 18 tons and about 53 feet long. We have been to all the lower 48 states at least twice, Alaska and the Top of the World Highway in 2009, and many places in Canada. We travel about 7,000 to 9,000 miles per year. As good as our GPS is, as good as our maps and books are, experience has been and still is our best tool.

**Dick Kashdin and Sandy Donovan | Near Buffalo, New York**



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map planning your route. For example, I was in Port Hueneme, California, and wanted to go via El Centro to Tucson, Arizona. I wanted to stay north of Los Angeles by heading east on Interstate 210 until it joined Interstate 10, continuing east to California 86 south to El Centro. Every north/south major artery was recommended by the GPS, as we passed them, to take me right through central Los Angeles, not

a place I wanted to take my 40-footer. Much, much recalculation noise!

So, paper plot your route so that when the GPS comes up with a bad idea, you'll know it!

**Bill Hohmann | Tucson, Arizona**

### Go Like the Pros

I use the same tools the professional truck drivers use: a Rand McNally Motor Carriers' Road Atlas and a GPS

loaded with the same. I tried a GPS marketed to RVers, but found it totally unacceptable, as it could not locate 50 to 60 percent of the RV parks, even when the address listed in the Good Sam campground directory was input. I went to a Love's Travel Stop and got both the atlas and the GPS. The GPS will keep you off roads that are not suitable for large vehicles and will warn you of steep grades, etc.

**Chuck Hayes | Via email**

Having been a truck driver for many years, my husband was well-aware that all roads are not suitable for all vehicles. Early in his career he discovered Rand McNally's Motor Carriers' Road Atlas. This resource has also served us well in our Class A motorhome. It contains lots of pertinent information, including phone numbers for road conditions and construction, state police phone numbers, low-clearance locations and more. It has proved to be a valuable tool in plotting our trips.

**Sandra Dries | Clayton, Delaware**

### Better Safe Than Sorry

I use the Garmin RV 760LMT navigation unit when traveling in my 31-foot Class C towing a dolly-mounted vehicle. If I'm going to travel to an area I'm not familiar with, I begin by changing the true specifications of my unit in the Garmin by adding extra width, height and length. This way I find that the navigation unit keeps me out of those narrow backroads and unexpected surprises. I also look on YouTube for videos from fellow RVers who have traveled the same route that I will be traveling. Not only do you get to see real-time road conditions, but you also get to listen to their stories and tips along the way.

**Steven Richards | Ellenton, Florida**

### Good Garmin

Up until recently, I always used a Garmin 465T GPS. This model is made for trucks (but can be switched to Auto Mode) and you can put in your rig's length, width, height, weight and any hazardous materials you may



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be carrying (such as propane). This GPS will always keep you on the main highways unless it is necessary to travel off the beaten path to get you to your destination. And, it will not let you travel to a bridge that's too low, or one that's not able to carry your motorhome's weight, etc. My new RV came with a built-in Rand McNally GPS, and it does the exact same thing as the Garmin 465T did.

**Jerry Little | Framingham, Massachusetts**

### Detour Difficulties

My wife and I were near Fort Worth, Texas, a few years back and had to make a detour. The marked detour was not suitable for a 36-foot Class A motorhome towing a GMC Envoy. It took us through suburban neighborhoods, sharp turns and many other tight situations. The GPS that I use in the Envoy was no help because it was made for a car.

When I got home, I started checking out GPS devices for RVs. I picked the Rand McNally RVND because it had all the features I thought necessary. I could set the width, height and length of my motorhome. It also offers lifetime updates, which I check for manually whenever we hit the road for a long trip. It shows the types of roads I want to avoid and offers lots of other driver input (too numerous to mention here) to make the trip safer and easier. It is very accurate and fairly easy to use. It will not take you anywhere that your motorhome will not fit. I really like it, and it has saved me a lot of headaches.

Do your homework, read over the features of each GPS you are considering, purchase one of these devices and enjoy the road.

**Dale Trinklein | Birch Run, Michigan**

### Camp and RV App

We have a 36-foot Classic American motorhome and tow a Honda CR-V. The Allstays Camp and RV app is constantly in use when we travel. The app's designer is very responsive and helpful; for example, we once contacted the designer and asked for grade percentages on roads, and the

next update included that information.

The app not only has grade percentages, but also low-overhead-clearance information. We use it to find big-box stores, gas stations, campgrounds (private and government) and just about everything else we need.

**Doris Ringbloom | Irvine, California**

### Best Bets

The question about what resources to use for navigating a large motorhome made me think of the Big Rigs Best Bets Campground Directory. It is a spiral-bound directory that lists campgrounds and resorts that can actually accommodate a big rig. The authors claim to have been to every site in the book, and many of the entries comment on the roads leading to the resorts and advise on how to best get there. And, once there, the book states which sites in particular are the ones that actually are parkable (not just measured to be the size to fit your rig as though you air-lifted it in using a helicopter). There also is an online version that is kept up to date at [www.big-rigs-rv.com](http://www.big-rigs-rv.com). The resource is very helpful in avoiding the types of problems those driving a large motorhome generally encounter.

**Adam Miller | Via email**

### Mountain Directories

After our third incident involving mountain passes and their grades, we invested in the Mountain Directories. We paid \$25 for both directories (East and West). Visit [www.mountain-directory.com](http://www.mountain-directory.com) to check it out. The site offers many options for receiving the directories: a printed book, an e-book for PCs and laptops running Windows, apps for iPods and iPads, and apps for Android phones and tablets. The e-book and app versions download directly to your device, so you don't need to be online to use them. We finally found a resource to help us plan our trips and to avoid unpleasant white-knuckle events in our 40-foot motorhome. When we know how long that 10 percent grade actually goes, we can plan accordingly.

**Chris Durkee | Madison, South Dakota**



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## P.O. BOX

### Correction

In the article "Flying High in the Heartland," in the May issue, we mistakenly listed the campground where the author stayed as Cottonwood Grove RV Campground in Hesston. The correct campground is the Cottonwood Grove RV Park, 2800 N. Main Street, Great Bend, Kansas, 67530; 620-792-4558. *MotorHome* regrets the error.

### Dog Days

We are preparing to sell our now-childless and much-too-large house to begin our new life as full-timers in a 2003 45-foot Beaver Marquis Sapphire. We travel with two Rhodesian Ridgebacks and no matter how much we try to keep the carpets clean (wipe dogs' feet, no shoes inside, etc.), our carpets frequently need spot-cleaning. We love to use our wide-track Rug Doctor carpet-cleaning machine at home, but it is much too large to take on the road. We've had several small spot carpet cleaners over the years, but just found

the "magic bullet" in the form of the new Rug Doctor Portable Spot Cleaner. We highly recommend this well-built little red machine. It makes spot cleanups easier at home and in the coach, and works much better than any of its predecessors. More importantly, it leaves me feeling confident that I can keep all of the carpets in our coach clean.

**Bruce and Pat Sieloff**  
Snohomish, Washington

### Question of the Month

If you travel with a pet, which pet-cleanup products have you found to be most successful for use in your motorhome?

#### Send your comments to:

*MotorHome*, 2750 Park View Court,  
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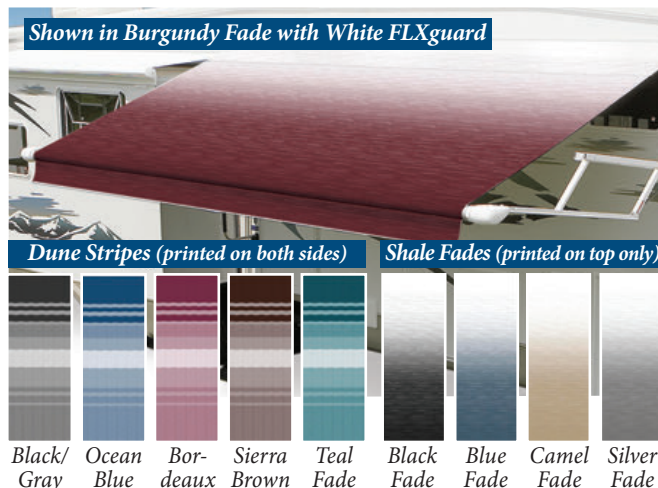


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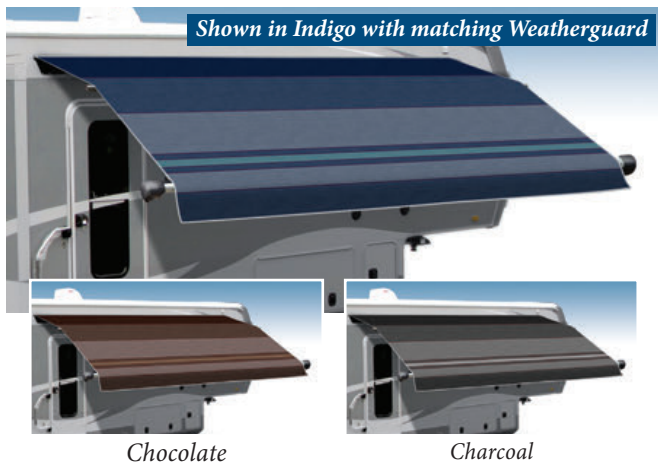
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## Antelope Canyon

The soul of the Navajo Nation lives on at this majestic northern Arizona landmark

By Morey Edelman

**E**ven though Antelope Canyon is one of the most photographed sites in the U.S., you haven't truly "seen" this slot canyon until you have seen it with your own eyes. Located on Navajo land just east of Page, Arizona, Antelope Canyon was formed over time through erosion of the Navajo sandstone, which occurred mainly as the result of the frequent flash floods in the area (which do still occur, so be aware of weather conditions and heed any warnings). The canyon is separated into Upper Antelope Canyon (the site of our visit) and Lower Antelope Canyon.

The site is available only with a guide, and once ours led us to the narrow entrance, we immediately thought that there was no way that we could fit. But we easily

stepped down the metal staircase and into a beautiful slot canyon.

Our experience was more than mesmerizing, and as we walked through the slot, at every bend and twist, there was one incredible view after the next. Our guide helped us with photographing the formation, drawing on his years of experience to point out where to stand, and how to adjust our camera's controls to compensate for the varying lighting conditions and tight quarters.

Tours are offered hourly from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., with the best lighting conditions around noon.

Antelope Canyon Navajo Tours, 928-698-3384, [www.navajotours.com](http://www.navajotours.com).

By Bobbie Hasselbring

# Hmmm ... Hummus

**W**hether you're traveling the roads or kicking back at home, summer is a time to enjoy light fare like salads, appetizers and dips with chips and veggies. I'm especially a fan of dips, but many are loaded with fat and calories. And who can eat just 2 tablespoons of dip? Not me.

A great alternative is hummus, a creamy Mediterranean dip/spread made from cooked chickpeas (garbanzo beans), lemon, garlic, salt, olive oil and tahini (sesame seed paste). It's easy to make and delicious, and it's good for you. Even your vegan/vegetarian friends will love hummus.

## Ancient, Healthy Food

Hummus, which means "chickpeas" in Arabic, is an ancient dish. Variations of hummus appeared in cookbooks in the Middle East as early as the 13th century. It's likely that hummus is even much older. Archaeologists tell us that people in the Middle East have been eating chickpeas for 10,000 years. Today, hummus is a central part of Turkish, Lebanese, Syrian, Egyptian and other Middle Eastern and North African cuisines.

Unlike cream- or mayonnaise-based dips or spreads, the base for hummus is garbanzo beans (aka chickpeas), a fiber-rich nutritional powerhouse. A 3½-ounce serving of hummus contains 164 calories, 4 grams of fiber, 8.6 grams of fat (most of it mono-unsaturated, a "good" fat) and almost no sugar. A serving provides nearly 5 grams of protein and boasts vitamins like A, thiamine, riboflavin, niacin, B-6, C, E, K, plus minerals like calcium, iron and magnesium. And studies have shown chickpeas are good for controlling blood sugar, building bones, lowering blood pressure, managing and improving weight and lowering LDL ("bad") cholesterol and staying heart-healthy.

Just a few years ago, hummus was considered exotic, but you can buy prepared hummus in many grocery stores. While store-bought is OK, you can easily make your own; it's tastier and much less expensive.

### Got a favorite dip recipe you'd like to share?

Email [bobbie@realfoodtraveler.com](mailto:bobbie@realfoodtraveler.com) with "dip" in the subject line.



From top: You can easily make your own roasted red pepper pesto. Dried chickpeas (aka garbanzo beans) cost only pennies per pound.

## ROASTED RED PEPPER HUMMUS



Here's a wonderful recipe for Roasted Red Pepper Hummus from Birch & Barley restaurant in Pullman, Washington. The roasted red pepper adds sweetness and depth. You can buy or make your own roasted red pepper pesto: Roast the red peppers, then peel and whirl with olive oil, pine nuts and salt.

- ☐ 2¼ cups dried garbanzo beans (or substitute canned)
- ☐ 2 garlic cloves, finely minced
- ☐ 4 tablespoons lemon juice
- ☐ 6 tablespoons olive oil
- ☐ 2 tablespoons tahini
- ☐ 2 teaspoons salt
- ☐ ½ teaspoon cumin
- ☐ ½ teaspoon coriander
- ☐ 7 tablespoons red pepper pesto

► Soak dried garbanzo beans overnight to soften. Cover garbanzos with water and bring to a boil (for each cup of garbanzo beans, use 2½ cups water). Lower heat and cook until soft (60-90 minutes). Drain well.

Using a food processor, place garbanzo beans, minced garlic, lemon juice, olive oil, tahini, seasonings and half the red pepper pesto into the processor bowl and whirl until smooth. Season to taste.

Spoon into a bowl and add the remaining red pepper pesto on top. Serve with crackers, bread or veggies for dipping.



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## Water Watcher

Anyone who has ever camped without hookups knows that keeping track of exactly how much fresh water is in your motorhome's tank is an important task. Running out of water can bring the good times to a standstill, leading you on a quest to find the wet stuff. To help boondockers know their rig's freshwater level, Topargee RV Levelling Systems introduces the H2Flow H2F-FM water tank gauge. The new model, which now features a larger, backlit display, actually shows users the number of gallons remaining in the tank, rather than the traditional FULL/HALF/EMPTY readout, making it easier for RVers to calculate their water usage and to better plan out their water needs. The unit is fitted most anywhere in the motorhome's water line between the tank and faucets and counts down the gallons used based on a preset amount. The display lights up any time water flows through the sensor, and beeps when the capacity reaches zero. MSRP: \$129.

**Topargee RV Levelling Systems, [www.topargee.com.au](http://www.topargee.com.au)**

## Mobile Cooling

Dometic has expanded its CFX line of cooler-sized portable refrigerator/freezer units. The CFX models require no ice, as they are powered using 12-volt DC or 120-volt AC power. The smaller units — the CFX-28, CFX-35, CFX-40 and CFX-50 — can operate either as a refrigerator or freezer, depending on where you set the thermostat. The larger, "dual-zone" units — the CFX-65DZ (pictured) and CFX-95DZ — each have separate compartments for storing fresh refrigerated food and frozen food simultaneously.

All CFX models come with a soft-touch digital thermostat. A quick-chill turbo function runs the compressors until desired temperatures are reached, from minus 8 degrees Fahrenheit to 50 degrees Fahrenheit. Once the preferred temperature is reached, the CFX draws just 1 amp of power consumption to maintain the temperature. An optional freestanding or wall-mounted CFX Wireless Display allows owners to monitor and control their CFX unit from up to 49 feet away. MSRP (range): \$545-\$1,018.

**Dometic Corp., 574-294-2511, [www.dometicusa.com](http://www.dometicusa.com)**



## Make a Play

For RVers and tailgaters who are DISH Network subscribers, Winegard now offers the DISH Playmaker portable automatic satellite HDTV antenna. The Playmaker portable automatic satellite HDTV antenna features a compact design that's easy to store. The user-friendly setup takes less than 15 minutes using the simple on-screen setup wizard, where users select the state where they are located and let the device do the rest. The Playmaker is powered using a single coax connection through DISH Wally or DISH Solo HD receivers, and is compatible with DISH Network's popular pay-as-you-go programming (programming sold separately) in both standard and high definition. The unit is only 14.3 inches in diameter and 13.5 inches tall, plus its 10-pound weight and easy-grip handle make for effortless carrying. Winegard offers a warranty of 2 years for parts and 1 year for labor. MSRP: \$329.

**Winegard, 800-288-8094, [www.winegard.com/playmaker](http://www.winegard.com/playmaker)**



## OneSource Fits All

Most RV gadgets are multitaskers by design, but the OneSource System from PDQ actually performs three duties, facilitating long-range cell service, Wi-Fi and HDTV from one antenna. The OneSource System amplifies existing signals utilizing the antenna and one cable connection for all three services, and offers cellular boost up to 20 miles for all carriers; faster, long-range internet; a Wi-Fi hotspot; and clear HD images. Users can even utilize all three services simultaneously (provided the respective signals are present). The antenna mounts to your motorhome's roof and measures 14 inches tall (7 inches when folded for travel). We recommend mounting in a location that can be safely and easily accessed since you will be folding and unfolding upon setup/break down. MSRP: \$1,295.

**PDQ Connect Inc., 858-598-5001, [www.pdqconnect.com](http://www.pdqconnect.com)**





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### Outdoor Wonderland

There is an abundance of outdoor recreation in the Land Between the Lakes National Recreation Area, a 170,000-acre strip of land between Kentucky Lake and Lake Barkley. The LBL, as it's commonly known, is located in Tennessee and Kentucky, and offers water activities on the large lakes as well as endless land-based opportunities.

The 45-mile Trace, the main road through the LBL, has side roads to various attractions and lake access points, hiking trails, camping and backcountry areas. A sampling of possibilities includes more than 200 miles of trails, four campgrounds, three visitor centers, the Elk & Bison Prairie, the Woodlands Nature Station and Homeplace 1850s — a farm and living-history museum.

The LBL offers great recreation but has no services like fuel, restaurants or grocery stores, so plan accordingly. The gateway towns of Paris and Dover in Tennessee, and Grand Rivers, Kentucky, are the best places for services.

**For more information**, call 800-525-7077, or visit [www.landbetweenthelakes.us](http://www.landbetweenthelakes.us) — *James Richardson*



Photo: James Richardson

**Terrebonne, Oregon**

### High-desert Adventure

Smith Rock State Park is nestled in a deep river canyon with rock spires and the winding Crooked River, just north of Bend, Oregon. Formed by volcanic activity millions of years ago, the landscape looks much like an artistic painting. But what sets the 650-plus-acre park apart from the other scenic wonderlands in the area is the rock climbing opportunities, as Smith Rock is one of the premier rock climbing destinations for beginners and experts alike.

Visitors who prefer to keep both feet on terra firma can walk the miles of trails to the different segments of

the formation to watch the climbers in action. Those who wish to join in the fun can bring their own gear, or can utilize one of the local adventure outfitters to conquer the seemingly countless routes up the rock faces, many with bolted routes. Tent camping is available in Smith Rock (overnighting in any type of vehicle is prohibited), but less than 20 minutes away is Tumalo State Park, which offers 23 full-hookup sites, more than 50 tent sites and even seven yurts.

**Smith Rock State Park**,  
541-516-0054, [www.smithrock.com](http://www.smithrock.com)  
**Tumalo State Park**, 541-388-6055,  
[www.oregonstateparks.org](http://www.oregonstateparks.org) — *Morey Edelman*

Photo: Morey Edelman







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An early morning hot air balloon flight over the vineyards is a great way to start your wine-tasting weekend.

# An Unexpected Delight

Southern California's Temecula Valley dazzles visitors with world-class wineries, old-town charm and a pair of top-notch RV-friendly casinos

By Rosanne Wagstaff

**S**omewhere between “off the beaten path” and “travel spots we can’t believe we overlooked” lies a delightful destination boasting a burgeoning wine country, charming Old Town and an outdoor playground high atop a plateau. Just an hour’s drive from San Diego’s coastal paradise and Palm Springs’ desert utopia, tucked in the foothills of Southern California, sits the Temecula Valley. For years we heard praises about Temecula’s wine country, but didn’t realize what we missed until we visited on a whim one day. “What a pleasant surprise!” I exclaimed, feeling like a latecomer to a party. We took the back route in past farmland, grazing sheep and dairies. Slowly, pleasantly, the terrain transformed into rolling hills as the

two-lane road ribboned between orange groves and fence-lined estates. Vineyards beckoned us toward an eclectic cache of wineries from stately villas to country-style homes fringed with spacious decks. What else could we do but venture in?

## Wine Country Gala

“It sounds like the vines are singing!” I commented, stepping out of our dinghy vehicle at Doffo Winery. “They are,” my music-loving husband, Greg, laughed. Speakers set among the vineyards filled the air with tunes, a nice welcome. We walked past the barrel room and encountered an impressive display of vintage motorcycles suspended in rows along the exterior walls. It was all part of a self-guided tour. So far, so fun — and we hadn’t even entered the tasting room yet.

Photos: Greg Wagstaff

## Getting There ➞

The city of Temecula is located off Interstate 15 in Southern California. From Los Angeles, take U.S. Highway 91 east to I-15 south; it’s about 35 minutes from the interchange to Temecula. From the Palm Springs area, take state Route 111 west to Interstate 10 west, merge on to Highway 60 west, then take Interstate 215 south to I-15 south.







From far left: Old Town sports a delightful array of shops sure to turn browsers into buyers. Old Town also hosts a full calendar of special events including the Temecula Rod Run, Hot Summer Nights' live band performances and Santa's holiday arrival.

Sunshine streamed through misty skies, just like ancient legends proclaim. Temecula, derived from a Luiseño Indian word, means "sunlight through the mist." And that is the secret to this flourishing wine country. In this desert region, known as the rainbow gap, cool air flows in from the coast, creating a microclimate perfect for grape cultivation, with warm daytime temperatures and crisp nights. The first winery, Bella Vista, planted its first vineyard in 1968 and opened its doors in 1978; today there are more than 40, with expectations to exceed 100 in the near future. From intimate settings like Lorenzi Estate Vineyards and Winery to South Coast Winery Resort & Spa's luxurious restaurant and hotel, Temecula's wine country offers so much pageantry to enhance your tasting experience. Enjoy live music on the patio, picnics in parklike settings, gourmet wine-paired meals, hot air balloon excursions, horseback riding through the lush countryside or a horse-drawn carriage tour with a chilled bottle of wine. But don't let the festivities fool you; these award-winning vintners are passionate about their vines and wines. Rather than share our favorites, we'll leave you to swirl and sip your way through this acclaimed wine region in search of your own. A choice wine is, after all, in the palate of the taster. Tastings run from \$10 to \$15 for a flight of wine. Some wineries charge \$20 on weekends but that doesn't seem to diminish the crowds. The Temecula Valley Winegrowers Association's

website, [www.temeculawines.org](http://www.temeculawines.org), is an excellent trip-planning tool and includes a map along with information on self-guided and guided tours, dining, special events and activities. Our discovery of Temecula's wine country inspired us to don our treasure-hunter hats and explore the valley over several weeks to see what other jewels it held.

### Old Town Festivities

Temecula's Old Town greeted us with a lively mixture of antique charm and nouveau spirit. The colorful, historic buildings harbor boutiques and eclectic shops, while a cornucopia of restaurants serve up delectable feasts satisfying a wide range of tastes, with ambiances to match. Savor award-winning burgers at Mad Madeline's Grill with streetside counter seating, Crush & Brew's artisan cuisine paired with locally crafted beer and wine, The Bank Mexican Restaurant &

Bar's authentic fare in the historic First National Bank building or a host of other tasty eateries. Patio dining abounds, tempting one's appetite while music wafts through the air adding to the festive mood.

We strolled along Old Town Front Street to a light jazz tune, seeking the unique and unusual. From flavored olive oil and vinegar tastings at Temecula Olive Oil Co. to a trove of unique gifts at The Farmer's Wife mercantile, the town sports a delightful array of shops sure to turn browsers into buyers. The alluring scent of lavender enticed us into Temecula Lavender Co., brimming with a potpourri of everything lavender: lotions, bath salts, soaps, essential oils, candles and more. Proprietor Jan Schneider shared how her family's use and passion for this herb inspired them to start a small lavender farm in the Temecula wine country and create



Right: A Tyrannosaurus sculpture stands guard at Ricardo Breceda's Jurassic Park Gallery on U.S. Highway 79.



Right: Pala Casino Spa and Resort (known for its live concerts and entertainment) introduced its new star in May, a 100-site luxury RV Resort just 5 miles from I-15 and surrounded by the Palomar Mountains.

lavender products for all to enjoy.

Colorful, crooked letters invite visitors to Pennypickle's Workshop, where a cacophony of music, clanging, laughter, chimes and the distant rumble of an earthquake welcomed us into the 7,500-square-foot home of the elusive, imaginary professor Phineas T. Pennypickle, master scientist. What a find! Kids of all ages and their fun-loving parents pushed buttons, turned dials and played with contraptions of all sorts as they roamed through the professor's 11-room house-turned-workshop. My favorite, The Library, with a "Time and Travel" theme, featured a time machine and fireplace portal leading to a black-lighted maze filled with other time travelers. The Kitchen displayed a mess of the professor's chemistry and physics experiments. Under their father's watchful gaze, a couple of tyke architects stacked "biscuits" carefully on a metal plate and pushed the earthquake button to see if their building would survive. For the enjoyment of all, the children's museum manages the number of visitors with several two-hour sessions throughout the day and is open Tuesday through Sunday. It is not necessary to pre-register unless you are booking a large group or party. For a nominal entrance fee of \$5 (free for children younger than 3), Pennypickle's Workshop is a fun adventure for all ages and a great way to keep young travelers entertained. Check out [www.pennypickles.org](http://www.pennypickles.org) for more information.

For those who enjoy the footlights, Old Town Temecula Community Theater presents a full score of live jazz, dance, comedy and musicals. For performance schedules, go to [www.temeculatheater.org](http://www.temeculatheater.org) or call 866-653-8696.

### A Gallery Treat

Just footsteps from the theater, we discovered a gallery of famed metal sculptor Ricardo Breceda, known for his lifesize and larger-than-life sculptures depicting prehistoric mammals, wild horses, mythical creatures, raptors and



even a 350-foot-long sea serpent in the Borrego Springs, California, desert. To our delight, we learned his 20-acre Jurassic Park gallery is newly located a short drive from Old Town on U.S. Highway 79 in Aguanga. We bid the city farewell and set off for the hills. A full-size stagecoach pulled by a team of horses marked the gallery's location for our visit, and the menagerie of creatures filling the field was hard to miss. Stallions, frozen in time, reared up, manes flying in the wind. Wild horses galloped toward the road, freeze-framed in mid-jump. The display may differ on your visit. For more information visit [www.ricardobreceda.com](http://www.ricardobreceda.com).

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When you retreat to your motorhome after a fun-filled day, do you prefer a casual country setting, an upscale resort in the heart of the city or a luxury resort offering a blend of both? Graciously, the area offers all, anchored by Lake Skinner Recreation Area, north of the wine country; Pechanga Resort & Casino, south of Old Town; and Pala Casino Spa & Resort, south of Temecula.

Lake Skinner, a serene setting with 184 full-hookup sites, 16 water and electric sites, and 41 water-only sites, offers plenty of day-use and extended-stay activities including bicycling, kayaking and boating. Hiking and horseback riding (bring your own horse) along a 6-mile equestrian park trail is available from the end of May through November. Lake swimming is not permitted, but youngsters may quench the summer's heat at the Splash Pad near the playground. Don't forget your fishing rod, as fishing is the park's most popular year-round activity. Striped bass, largemouth bass, carp and bluegill inhabit the lake. Catfish are stocked in the summer, as are trout in the winter. Boat rentals are available at the camp store marina. Lake Skinner hosts the annual Temecula Valley Balloon & Wine Festival ([www.tvbwf.com](http://www.tvbwf.com)) in May. We recommend checking the park's website ([www.rivco.org/parks](http://www.rivco.org/parks)) for rules, regulations, schedules and special events when planning your trip. Please note that as of press time, the water levels at Lake Skinner were very low due to drought conditions; check the website for updates and call 800-234-7275 for information on the Splash Pad.

Pechanga Resort & Casino, nestled at the base of the foothills, offers an elegant city setting with dazzling casino and theater entertainment, a full menu of restaurants, luxurious spa facilities, a well-appointed fitness center and breathtaking views from its 18-hole championship golf course, Journey. The RV resort, tucked a short distance from the casino, features 168 full-service, spacious 18-by-55-foot sites with manicured lawns. Amenities include a heated

Hikers enjoy a leisurely trek in the Santa Rosa Plateau Ecological Reserve. Bicycling, horseback riding and dog walking are welcome in a separate multiuse area.

pool with two spas and a shuttle service with at-site pickup available 24/7. Guests may also practice their golf swing at Journey's practice facilities at no additional charge.

With its grand opening this past May, Pala Casino Spa & Resort's RV Resort is the area's new rising star. Framed by the Palomar Mountains, Pala is known for its serene setting and a score of live concerts, special events and entertainment. Guests may indulge in a variety of venues including jazz in the underground Wine Cave, tribute bands in the 2,000-seat events center, outdoor concerts at the Starlight Theater and a medley of popular artists in several lounges. The Starlight Theater also plays host to the resort's Food & Wine Festival (August 20 this year). Dining in the resort's 10 restaurants features tastes from around the world. We had the pleasure of previewing the 10-acre, 100-site luxury RV Resort prior to its completion. All sites are full-service, stretching 20 feet wide and up to 70 feet in length, with grass lawns, picnic tables and free Wi-Fi and cable TV. Amenities include a heated pool, two spas, horseshoe pit, barbecue grill areas and an indoor game room. For an additional fee, guests may celebrate special events in the clubhouse that features two meeting rooms complete with kitchens. A complimentary casino shuttle is available 24/7. Our travels carried us away prior to the resort's debut, but we hope to return soon.

## Take a Hike

If Temecula's bustling activities leave you yearning for nature's solitude, take heart. Better yet, take a hike in a nearby park. We explored the Santa Rosa Plateau Ecological Reserve, located about 14 miles northwest of Old Town Temecula near the city of Murrieta, on a windy day. After a short visitor center briefing we chased our hats across the parking lot at Vernal Pool Trailhead and began our trek to the historic adobes shaded by a 400-year-old oak tree. Bicycling, horseback riding and dog walking are permitted in a separate multiuse area. Our easy-to-moderate 4.6-mile round-trip hike over rolling hills and oak tree-speckled meadows was an ideal way to unwind. Prices for a day pass run \$4 per adult, and \$3 for kids between 2 and 12 years of age.

Relaxing in the shade of the ancient oak, we reflected on the Temecula Valley's appeal. Its wine country extravaganza, boutiques, art galleries, local craft breweries, live theater, cuisine, impressive special events calendar, natural recreation areas and RV camping under stars and city lights make it a place where visitors can create their own unique travel adventure. And yes, the Temecula Valley remains a travel spot we can't believe we overlooked! **M**

## FOR MORE INFORMATION

### City of Temecula

951-694-6444, [www.cityoftemecula.org/temecula/visitors](http://www.cityoftemecula.org/temecula/visitors)

### Pala Casino RV Resort

844-472-5278, [www.palacasino.com/resort/rv-resort](http://www.palacasino.com/resort/rv-resort)

### Visit Temecula Valley

888-363-2852, [www.visittemeculavalley.com](http://www.visittemeculavalley.com)







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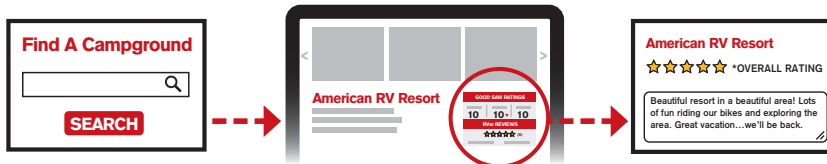




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Powered by Rand McNally, the Good Sam Trip Planner lets RVers customize their travel itineraries. The online mapping tool charts routes with colorful pins showing the locations of nearby Good Sam Parks, Camping World SuperCenters, Pilot Flying J travel plazas, restaurants and attractions along the way. Users can click on the pins for more information about each stop. The Trip Planner also estimates fuel costs and shows low clearances, LP-gas restrictions and other RV warnings.

► To get started, go to [www.goodsam.com](http://www.goodsam.com), select Trip Planner from the Plan a Trip tab, and create a new trip.



### RV PARK PICKS AND PANS

Looking for a great place to stay in your RV? Take advantage of the thousands of RV park reviews posted on the Good Sam Club website in the past year. Reviewers not only share their experiences, they rate RV parks with one to five stars, with an average score appearing on each reviewed park's information page, along with Good Sam's annual three-number rating.

► Share your own RV park experiences on [www.goodsam.com](http://www.goodsam.com) by clicking on Find a Campground and identifying the park you'd like to review. On the park's information page, locate Reviews and click on Write a Review.

### 21ST CENTURY SAVINGS AT CAMPING WORLD

The Camping World and Good Sam 50th anniversary festivities continue with a late-summer celebration of the 21st century at Camping World SuperCenters. From August 1 through 21, customers will receive a free 2000s-theme reusable shopping bag with any purchase of \$50 or more, while supplies last. On the first two weekends of the month — August 5, 6, 12 and 13 — customers can take advantage of event-only savings, including unadvertised discounts, and the first 50 shoppers each day will receive a gift.

► Go to [www.campingworld.com/stores](http://www.campingworld.com/stores) to find all 120 Camping World locations, driving directions, hours and available services.



## Game On!

### Camping World takes the field in Orlando

The Orlando, Florida, stadium formerly known as the Citrus Bowl now bears the name of America's top retailer of RVs, RV accessories and RV-related services. Rebranded Camping World Stadium, the historic arena opened in 1936 as a Works Progress Administration project and has hosted the annual Citrus Bowl college football game from its 1947 debut as the Tangerine Bowl to its current incarnation as the Buffalo Wild Wings Citrus Bowl.

The recently renovated venue is home to two other bowl games and a pair of Major League Soccer teams, and stages concerts as well as events on the Monster Jam and WWE Wrestlemania circuits. On September 5, the stadium welcomes Florida State and Ole Miss in the first annual Camping World Kickoff college football game.

Camping World Stadium isn't the company's first foray into sports sponsorship. Camping World also sponsors the NASCAR Camping World Truck Series and the Camping World Independence Bowl, and Good Sam Enterprises sponsors the Good Sam 500 NASCAR Sprint Cup Series race. [www.campingworldstadium.com](http://www.campingworldstadium.com)



► **CATS' CRADLE** Good Sam members and full-time RVers Cheryl and Pete Keefe weren't on a mission to spoil their cats. George and Gracie's outdoor habitat started off as a small tent. Then the Keefes added a tunnel, a ramp and a catwalk connecting their motorhome to the pets' tent, creating a kitty amusement park.



# POINTS OF INTEREST

## 57 things you always wondered about the National Park Service\*

(\*But didn't know who to ask)

**E**verybody knows the National Park Service (NPS). And by now you should know *MotorHome* is celebrating the organization's 100th birthday all year long with our Find Your Adventure series. Now that the big day is almost here, we're bringing you an assortment of fascinating facts designed to amaze, amuse and — of course — inspire you to go out and find your own adventure in America's national parks.

If you're a reader of *MotorHome* magazine, chances are

you're a well-traveled person. And in those travels, you've also likely been to your fair share of national parks.

But what do you really know about the NPS and the properties it protects and preserves on our behalf? While you can probably tick off a handful of parks you've been to, we think you'll be surprised to learn the depth and breadth of the agency's holdings.

To that end, we present 57 of the most extraordinary "points of interest" from the first 100 years of the NPS.

### Happy Birthday!

Mark your calendars for August 25, the Park Service's 100th birthday. Formed when President Woodrow Wilson signed the Organic Act of 1916, the legislation transferred management of 35 national parks and monuments to the new agency. Today, the NPS rides herd on more than 400 areas, with new ones being added all the time.

### Remarkable Rocks

While there are picturesque rock formations in many national parks, the 2,000-plus sandstone arches that give southern Utah's Arches National Park

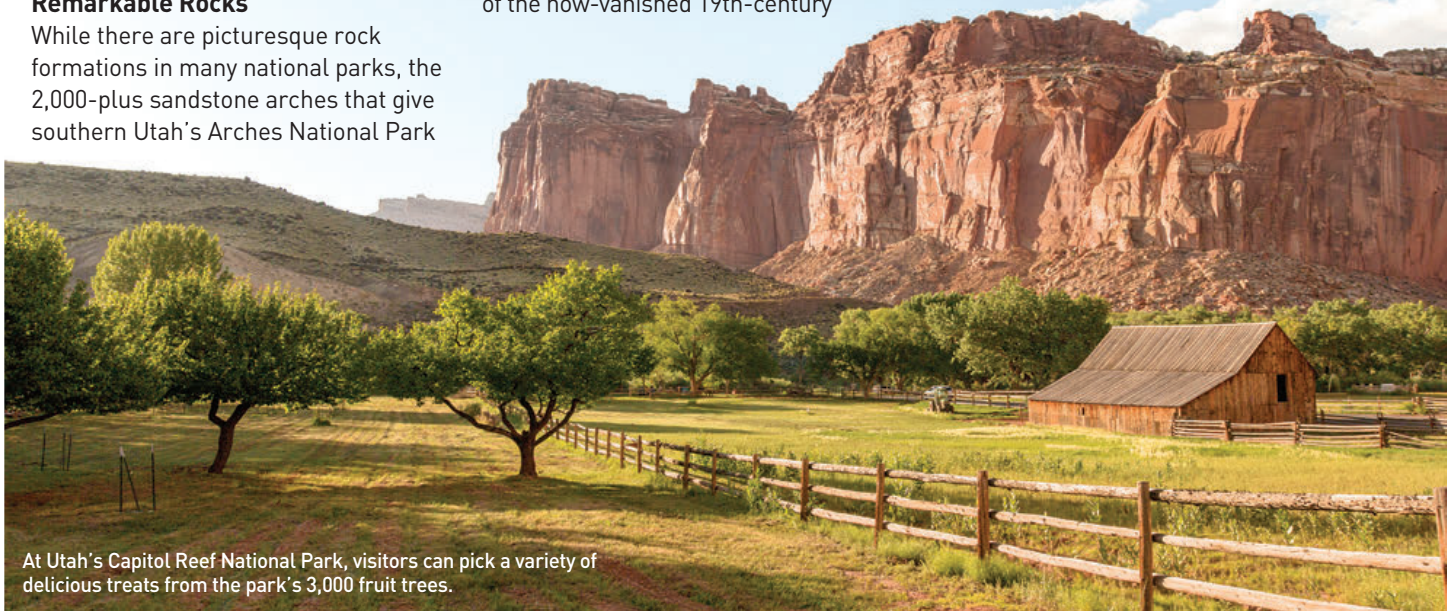
its name are quite possibly the most extraordinary natural features you'll find anywhere.

### Sweet Treats

Time your visit to Utah's Capitol Reef National Park right — from midsummer to early fall — and you can pluck heirloom varieties of apples, peaches, cherries and more, fresh from the park's 3,000 fruit trees, a remnant of the now-vanished 19th-century



Rocks at Death Valley National Park's The Racetrack playa appear to mysteriously move on their own.



At Utah's Capitol Reef National Park, visitors can pick a variety of delicious treats from the park's 3,000 fruit trees.





See bears feasting on spawning salmon during July and September at Katmai National Park and Preserve in Alaska.

community appropriately named Fruita.

### In the Dark

Places that have been declared International Dark Sky Parks — like Texas' Big Bend National Park, Utah's Natural Bridges National Monument and California's Death Valley National Park — still have lots to see after the sun goes down. Namely, more stars in the sky than you even knew existed, including the cloudlike swash across the eastern sky, otherwise known as our own Milky Way galaxy, rising above you.

### Hot Enough For You?

With a record ambient air temperature of 134 degrees Fahrenheit, you might think California's Death Valley National Park takes the prize for hottest place in the NPS. Then you remember that the water bubbling up out of the ground at Arkansas' Hot Springs National Park comes out at a steamy 143 degrees Fahrenheit. Which is right about the time you realize that the lava being spewed out

by Hawai'i Volcanoes National Park's Kilauea and Mauna Loa emerges at somewhere in the neighborhood of 2,100 degrees Fahrenheit.

### Get Wet

When we picture national parks we naturally picture dry land — mountains, valleys and forests. That said, there are more than a few NPS properties that are literally all wet. Foremost among them is south Florida's Biscayne National Park, which is said to be 95 percent water.

### Get Weird

For our money, the quirkiest sights you'll ever see in a national park are the rocks that appear to have moved under their own power on the barren surface of Death Valley National Park's The Racetrack playa. Runner-up: Wyoming's Devils Tower National Monument gets the nod, for both its unnaturally conical shape and its role as the landing site for the aliens in the sci-fi flick "Close Encounters of the Third Kind."



## Q & A

WE HAVE THE QUESTIONS, YOU COME UP WITH THE ANSWERS IN THIS QUICK QUIZ DESIGNED TO TEST YOUR NATIONAL PARK SAVVY:

1. What was the first national park?
2. What are Bryce Canyon National Park's most famous rock formations?
3. What is the name of the fort, now a national monument, that inspired "The Star Spangled Banner"?
4. What is the only national park named after a president?
5. Which national park's name means "heaven"?
6. Which national monument marks Custer's Last Stand?
7. Which is the southernmost national park?
8. Which national park takes its name from French fur trappers' phrase "les mauvaises terres a traverser"?
9. Which national park is named after turtles?
10. Which national park is home to more than 400,000 bats?

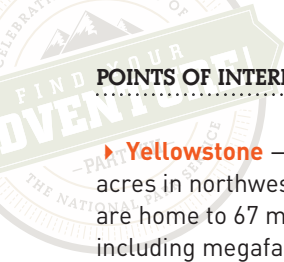
**ANSWERS:** 1. Yellowstone NP; 2. Hoodoos; 3. Fort McHenry; 4. Theodore Roosevelt NP; 5. Zion NP; 6. Little Bighorn Battlefield NM; 7. NP of American Samoa; 8. Transilvania; "Bad lands to cross"/"Badlands NP; 9. Dry Tortugas NP; 10. Carlsbad Caverns NP.

### Get Wild

For most people, the chance to view animals up close is the highlight of a visit to America's national parks. Here are four parks guaranteed to provide plenty of watchable wildlife:

► **Katmai** — Every July and September, some of the largest bears in the world (the park has more than 2,000 grizzlies) converge to feed on spawning sockeye salmon in Alaska's Brooks River. Not to mention the beluga, gray and killer whales cruising by on the coast.

Far left: Biscayne National Park is just minutes from downtown Miami and features four distinct ecosystems: mangrove, bay, island and coral reef. Left: The landscape at Hawai'i Volcanoes National Park is constantly changing thanks to ongoing volcanic activity.



## POINTS OF INTEREST

► **Yellowstone** — These 2.2 million acres in northwestern Wyoming are home to 67 mammal species, including megafauna like bison, elk, grizzly and black bears and bighorn sheep. If you're extra lucky, you might even catch a glimpse of the park's recently reintroduced wolf packs.

► **Glacier** — While this park on the Canadian border in Montana is best known for attractions like the always enthralling Going-to-the-Sun Road, its million-plus acres are also home

to a large population of grizzlies, plus mountain goats, black bears, mountain lions, moose and more.

► **Denali** — Besides its namesake mountain, caribou, moose, Dall sheep, wolves, and grizzly bears are all prime attractions at this 6 million-acre Alaskan park. The best part is that it's not unreasonable to expect to see all of the above in a single day.



## 2 Strategies for Busy Parks

- Arrive early (or stay late) to avoid the crowds.
- Skip lines by making use of automated kiosks (where available) to pay park admission.

## 4 PARKS EVERYONE SHOULD VISIT GOT A BUCKET LIST? MAKE SURE THESE PARKS ARE ON IT.

### 1) Grand Canyon

Granted, it is just a big hole in the ground. That said, this mile-deep canyon in Arizona is guaranteed to be the most magnificent rift in the earth's crust you'll ever see.



### 2) Yellowstone

Brilliantly colored thermal pools, bubbling mud pots, sky-high geysers and more make this Wyoming, Montana and Idaho park nestled in the caldera of an ancient volcano fascinating.





## At the Extremes

► The largest of the Park Service's charges is Alaska's Wrangell-St. Elias National Park and Preserve, which could swallow Death Valley, Yellowstone and the Everglades and still have room left over.

► At 0.02 of an acre, Philadelphia's Thaddeus Kosciuszko

### MUST-HAVES

► If you're heading out for any hike more ambitious than a short stroll, make sure you bring along the items on the "10 Essentials" hiker's checklist. But above all else, don't forget your most valuable personal safety item: common sense (to cite just one example, posing for selfies with a 900-pound bull elk is not a good idea).



Copper mining at Kennecott Mines National Historic Landmark in Wrangell-St. Elias ceased operations in 1938.

### 3) Yosemite

With its plummeting waterfalls and distinctive rock faces like the climbing mecca of El Capitan, the California valley that John Muir fought to preserve is still breathtaking.



### 4) Acadia

This Maine gem starts with a stunningly beautiful rocky coastline, then adds 45 miles of historic carriage roads and Cadillac Mountain, the tallest peak on the U.S. Atlantic coast.



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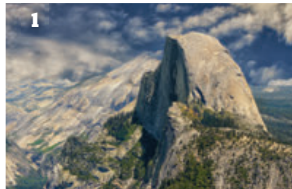


POINTS OF INTEREST

6 LANDMARKS

National parks and monuments are home to some of America's most famous landmarks. How many of these can you name? Extra points if you can also name the park they're found in.

ANSWERS: 1. Half Dome/Yosemite NP; 2. Giant cactus, Saguaro NP; 3. Delicate Arch/Arches NP; 4. Old Faithful/Yellowstone NP; 5. Saguaro NP; 6. Badlands/Badlands NP.



Photos: 3) Neal Herbert/NPS; 4) Jim Peaco/NPS; 6) NPS

National Memorial (named for a hero of the American Revolutionary War) is the smallest unit of the NPS.

► Denali National Park and Preserve wins the prize for highest spot in the NPS with its 20,310-foot namesake peak, which also happens to be the tallest mountain in North America.

► You'll find the lowest spot under the Park Service's dominion in Death Valley National Park, where Badwater Basin lies 282 feet below sea level.

Most Adventurous Parks

Everyone knows national parks are full of adventures, but here are four parks that really kick the adventure quotient up a notch:

Great Sand Dunes National Park and Preserve, Colorado

Lots of people snowboard on snow, but how many have tried sandboarding from the top of some of America's tallest dunes?



Photo: Patrick Myers/NPS

Sandboards made for the dry slopes in Great Sand Dunes National Park and Preserve are more effective than traditional snowboards.

SUCH A DEAL!

► Hands down, the best deals the National Park Service offers are the free admission days that happen several times every year, most notably during this month's NPS Birthday Weekend (August 25-28). The next-best bargains are the passes the NPS offers, from the \$10 lifetime Senior Pass, to the \$80 annual America the Beautiful Pass that can end up saving you serious money if you plan on visiting more than one national park during the coming year.

Wright Brothers National Memorial, North Carolina

Take a leap of faith while learning to hang glide on the same Kitty Hawk dunes Orville and Wilbur used to launch their flying machines.

Grand Canyon National Park, Arizona

Floating all or part of the 277 miles of the Colorado River that flow through the mile-deep canyon is sort of the definition of "trip of a lifetime."

Mammoth Cave National Park, Kentucky

The Wild Cave Tour here takes you — via climbing and crawling — to parts of the world's longest cave system the general public will never see. **M**

MOST POPULAR NPS SITES FOR RVERS, 2015

PARK	RV CAMPERS	% OF TOTAL
1 Yosemite NP	284,372	12.58%
2 Lake Mead NRA	140,395	6.21%
3 Gulf Islands NS	124,764	5.52%
4 Great Smoky Mountains NP	117,177	5.18%
5 Grand Canyon NP	101,227	4.48%
6 Glacier NP	99,846	4.42%
7 Joshua Tree NP	74,952	3.32%
8 Zion NP	73,783	3.26%
9 Yellowstone NP	69,830	3.09%
10 Death Valley NP	66,445	2.94%





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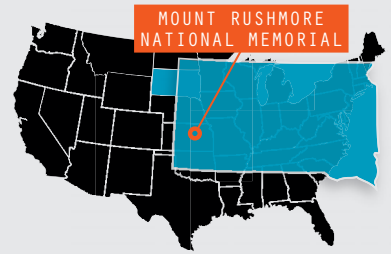
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# MOUNT RUSHMORE TURNS 75!

Celebrate this historic achievement with 15 tantalizing trivia tidbits about the famous South Dakota mountain



## Getting There

From Interstate 90, exit at Rapid City and follow U.S. Highway 16 southwest to Keystone, and then Highway 244 to Mount Rushmore. Visitors coming from the south should follow Highway 385 north to Highway 244, which is the road leading to the memorial.

**T**he iconic symbol of democracy, Mount Rushmore, features four famous United States presidents carved into a mountain, but did you know the original idea had nothing to do with the presidents? The sculpture was envisioned featuring Wild West heroes.

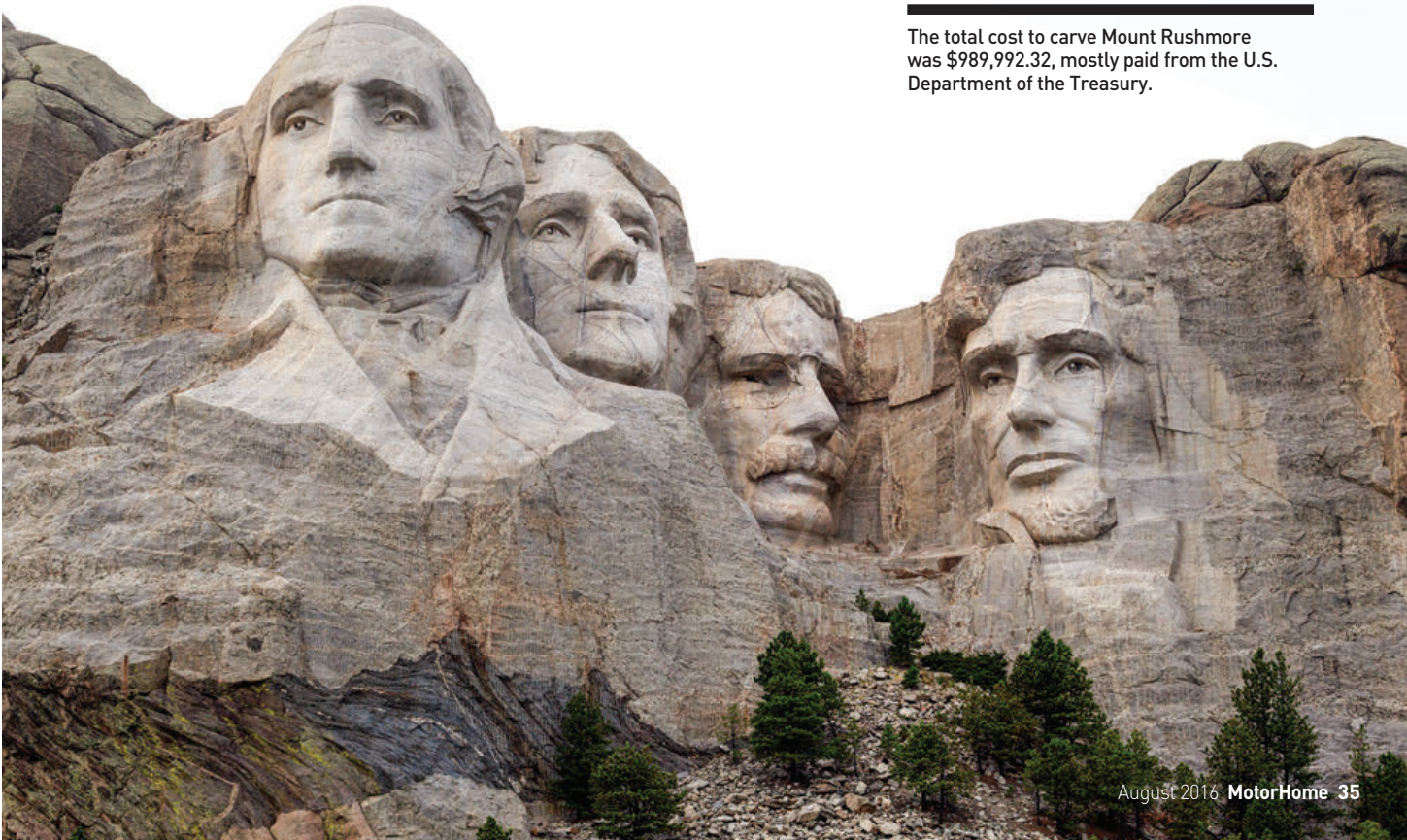
Mount Rushmore National Memorial, located in the Black Hills of South Dakota, features the faces of U.S. Presidents George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, Theodore Roosevelt and Abraham Lincoln carved into 5,725-foot-high Mount Rushmore. Sculpted in a remote and rugged location, on an

obscure mountain during the nation's Great Depression, the monument's progress was often stalled due to inadequate funding and harsh winters. Despite these obstacles and controversies over land use, sculptor Gutzon Borglum was determined to create the towering tribute known as Mount Rushmore, the "Shrine of

Democracy." Today, his famous masterpiece, evoking a profound sense of patriotism, lures nearly 3 million visitors every year.

Mount Rushmore's 75th anniversary of completion officially takes place October 31, 2016. Coinciding with the National Park Service's 100th anniversary this year, it's the perfect time to celebrate this great American sculpture. So, check out the following facts about the famous mountain, then climb in your motorhome and head for the "Paha Sapa" — the Lakota name for the Black Hills.

The total cost to carve Mount Rushmore was \$989,992.32, mostly paid from the U.S. Department of the Treasury.





**1 Do you know why it's named "Mount Rushmore?"** During the 1880s, long before the carving of the mountain began, an attorney from New York named Charles Rushmore was assessing mining claims in the Black Hills area. When he asked his guides the name of the mountain, they said it had no name, but one guide added, "We will name it now, and name it Rushmore Peak." Also known as Rushmore Rock and later Rushmore Mountain, it was during the carving of the historic sculpture more than 40 years later that the mountain was officially recognized as Mount Rushmore.

**2 What about the Wild West heroes?** In the 1920s, South Dakota's state historian, Doane Robinson, had a novel idea. South Dakota had just become a state in 1889, and Robinson wanted to create something spectacular to lure tourists from all over the world. He envisioned the granite needles in the Black Hills chiseled into Wild West heroes. The towers of stone would be transformed into famous icons of the American West, including such notables as the Sioux chief, Red Cloud; explorers Lewis and Clark; and the colorful showman, Buffalo Bill Cody.

Robinson contacted the sculptor, Gutzon Borglum, who believed the needles weren't suited for carving. Borglum traveled by horseback to three mountains in search of the perfect location. He found it at Mount Rushmore. It was made of the hard rock, granite, and the southeastern exposure of the broad mountain would provide dramatic light. Instead of focusing on regional heroes, Mount Rushmore inspired the artist to make a sculpture of national significance.

**3 Out of all the presidents, why does Mount Rushmore feature these four?** They symbolize the founding, growth, development and preservation of the country. Washington, the first president of the United States, was the first carved on Mount Rushmore and represents founding. His figure was dedicated in 1930, on the Fourth of July. Growth is characterized by Jefferson, who purchased the Louisiana Territory, doubling the size of the country. Theodore Roosevelt, one of the early leaders of the National Park Service idea, represents development. He was a conservationist and oversaw the building of the Panama Canal. Preservation of the country is expressed in the figure of Abraham

The Crazy Horse Memorial does not accept any state or federal funding. When completed, the 563-foot-high sculpture will dwarf Mount Rushmore's 60-foot faces.

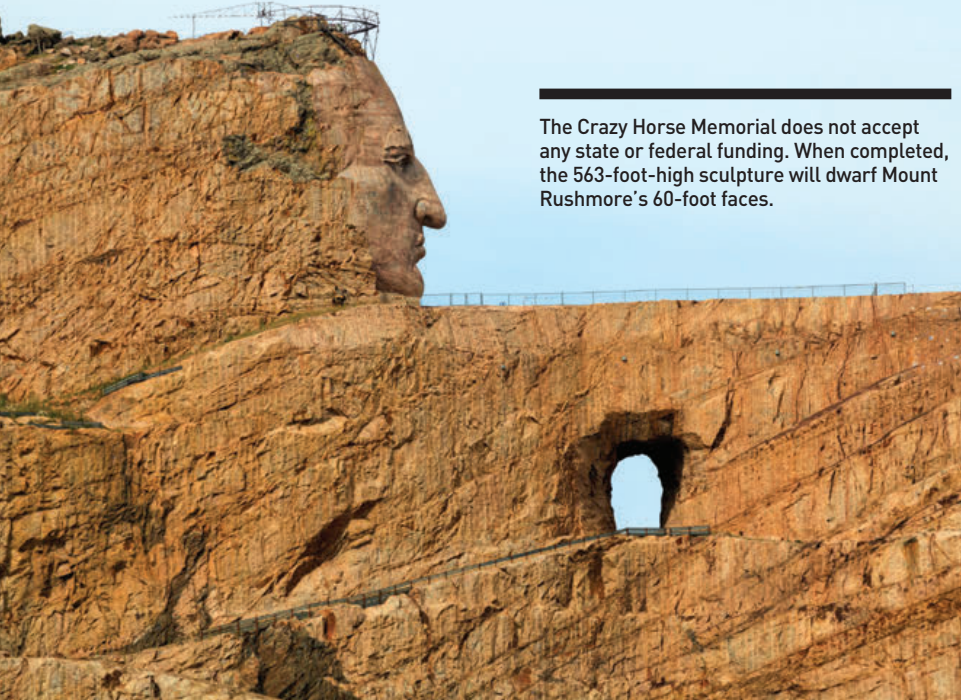


More than 90 percent of Mount Rushmore was carved using dynamite. Workers used jackhammers and hand chisels to complete the sculpting. Here in this close-up of President Lincoln, notice the detail that makes his eyes sparkle. Despite the dangerous work, there were no fatalities in the carving of the monument.

Lincoln, who served as president during the Civil War, and who is credited with keeping the country united.

**4 Did you know that in an attempt to obtain federal funds for the carving, President Calvin Coolidge was invited to vacation at nearby Custer State Park, and every night, workers secretly stocked the stream outside of his room with trout?** An avid fisherman, Coolidge extended his 1927 stay by two months. It was enough time to persuade him to allocate funds for the memorial and for Borglum to convince the president to officially dedicate Mount Rushmore on August 10. Carving began on October 4, 1927. The Mount Rushmore bill was passed in 1929, providing federal matching funds, one government dollar for every private dollar contributed.

**5 Why did the sculptor hire workers who could play baseball but had no idea how to use jackhammers or dynamite to carve the mountain?** Mount Rushmore sponsored a baseball team. Since Borglum and his son, Lincoln, were so competitive, the majority of the new workers were hired because they knew how to swing a bat.





**6** Was there really a time clock on top of the mountain? In a word, yes. Borglum had to depend upon “untutored miners” and settlers to carve his enormous work of art. Though most had come to the Black Hills in search of gold, the 400 men — about 30 at a time — labored in a variety of ways, from blacksmiths forging tools to powder men cutting sticks of dynamite. In a testament to workers’ skills, they used dynamite to sculpt within 3 to 5 inches of the final faces. Since the project often ran out of money, the men would be laid off and find other jobs. When work resumed, they quit those jobs and returned to Mount Rushmore, where they climbed 700 stairs every morning to the top of the mountain to punch a time clock.

**7** You can thank Gutzon Borglum for your morning coffee break. According to local legend, the first coffee break started on a cold morning on top of Mount Rushmore. Borglum saw the carvers huddling together and warming themselves with hot coffee. He told his foreman that at 10 a.m. sharp the next day, the foreman was to have coffee and donuts for everyone.

**8** What happened to the missing room? Carved behind Lincoln’s head lies a doorway and a hall, but the

hidden room Borglum planned was abandoned when Congress stopped the project. Located in a restricted area of the memorial, Borglum intended to build a grand staircase from the blasted rocks, leading to a Hall of Records. He envisioned a rotunda holding the country’s greatest historical documents, the Declaration of Independence, the U.S. Constitution and the Bill of Rights, plus information about the four presidents, a record of the nation’s history and the reason why Mount Rushmore was built. The hall was never completed. In 1998, Borglum’s daughter, Mary Ellis Borglum Vhay, buried a box filled with 16 porcelain panels containing copies of all the documents; it’s buried at the hall’s entrance.

**9** Why was there a writing contest to build a sculpture? Borglum’s plans included a 120-foot-high-by-80-foot-wide stone tablet in the shape of the Louisiana Purchase. Americans were invited to submit inscriptions about the history of the United States to be etched onto the tablet.

**10** For 18 months, the sculpture featured President Jefferson to the left of President Washington (from the viewer’s perspective); why is he now to the right of Washington? After spending precious resources of both time and money sculpting President

## 🕒 WHEN YOU GO

Visitor facilities are open all year, seven days a week, except December 25, when grounds remain open but buildings are closed. The grounds open at 5 a.m. daily and close at 11 p.m. mid-March through September (9 p.m. the remainder of the year). Most buildings are open at 8 a.m., with seasonally adjusted closing times.

There is no entrance fee, but there is an \$11 per vehicle parking fee for cars, motorcycles and RVs.

Jefferson, undetected fractures in the rock caused the stone to be too weak. Jefferson’s likeness was dynamited off and carved on the other side of Washington. The shift moved Lincoln’s head into the area planned for the tablet. Similarly, in order to find solid rock for Roosevelt, the workers had to cut 80 feet into the mountain.

**11** What makes the eyes look so lifelike? At 11 feet wide, the presidents’ eyes are extraordinary, not just in size, but in the technique used to create them. As the carvers sculpted the eyes, they left 2-foot-long

A seasonal patriotic tribute is offered at the memorial that includes a dramatic evening lighting of the massive monument. The ceremony includes inviting all military personnel and veterans in attendance to gather and be personally recognized for their service.

## BONUS TIDBIT

Did you know a 1937 bill introduced in Congress proposed that another figure be added to the Mount Rushmore carving? The proposal fell through due to an existing bill limiting federal funds to those carvings already started. Who was the figure? Social reformer and women’s suffrage activist, Susan B. Anthony.

shafts of granite in the middle of each pupil. When the sunlight bounces off the exposed shaft point, it makes the presidents' eyes twinkle.

**12** Why does the park have a 3-D digital scan, within a centimeter of accuracy, of the entire mountain? In order to protect the monument from damage, Borglum sealed natural cracks with a mixture of linseed oil

and granite dust. Today, they're sealed with silicone sealant and camouflaged with granite dust. If there's ever a disaster that significantly damages the monument, the park has the 3-D scan to re-create it.

**13** If mountain goats aren't native to South Dakota, why are there wild ones at Mount Rushmore? The mountain goats were given to nearby

Custer State Park by the government of Canada in 1923. After the climbers escaped from their pen, they headed for the hills.

**14** Why was a large-scale model of Mount Rushmore built in a Hollywood studio? When South Dakota wouldn't allow filming on Mount Rushmore, film director Alfred Hitchcock had the model built for a climactic chase scene in his 1959 thriller movie, "North by Northwest."

**15** If 2016 is the anniversary of Mount Rushmore's completion, why isn't it finished? Early in 1941, Congress cut all funding for Mount Rushmore. Gutzon Borglum died a week later. Lincoln Borglum oversaw the final touches to his father's masterpiece. Congress declared the monument complete on October 31, 1941. However, Gutzon Borglum had allowed 3 extra inches on all the features of the presidents to allow for natural weathering. He said, "Three inches would require 300,000 years to bring the work down to the point that I would like to finish it. In other words, the work will not be done for another 300,000 years, as it should be." **M**



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US PATENT 6,644,761 ; 7,699,406, PATENTS PENDING

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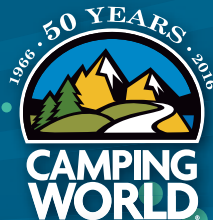
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By E. Don Smith

# POWER PLAYS

Testing your motorhome's battery systems increases overall performance and longevity

**A** motorhome is a complicated set of mechanical and electronic systems, and the heart of most of those systems is power. When plugged in at a resort, power comes from the electrical connection and all is well. However, as you start your coach, or operate various devices while unplugged, the battery bank does the work. Without these batteries you could not start your motorhome's chassis engine, run the exhaust fan or power the TV. Since dead batteries are one of the most common problems with motorhomes, we are going to discuss how to properly test and maintain the batteries in order to reduce the chances for problems while on the road.

A typical motorhome has independent chassis and house (or coach) batteries. The chassis batteries (also called starting batteries) are usually one or two 12-volt batteries (wired in parallel) that deliver the power to start the chassis engine. These batteries are designed to deliver a large amount of current over a short period of time to start the engine, and are recharged with the alternator as you drive. Depending on the particular

motorhome, the batteries can be wet cell (flooded lead acid), gel or absorbed glass mat (AGM) varieties. The most common are flooded lead acid, and these are the type with removable caps that allow the user to maintain the electrolyte level inside. Gel and AGM are considered Valve Regulated Lead Acid (VRLA) and are maintenance-free.

The other batteries in a typical motorhome are the house, or coach, batteries. These deep-cycle batteries

can range in number from as few as two to up to as many as your coach can carry. Often (but not always), coach batteries are 6-volt batteries, wired in series that produce 12-volt power to the coach. Some new motorhomes, notably those with powerful inverters and significant 120-volt AC-powered accessories, have larger house battery banks consisting of up to 16 6-volt batteries, but most normal-size motorhomes have between two and four. These batteries are most commonly flooded lead-acid batteries or AGM due to the amp-hour capacity they offer, in addition to their deep discharge/recharge abilities. Lithium batteries are also becoming more popular as the prices continue to drop. These batteries are super efficient and can be discharged to a deeper point without damaging the cells.

Wet-cell batteries demand the



most maintenance and require the most steps for testing. Maintenance procedures for these batteries are watering, specific gravity testing of the electrolyte and voltage (state of charge) testing. These wet-cell batteries can also be more prone to corrosion, so it's important to keep the terminals clean. Though they do require more maintenance, wet-cell batteries are also long-lasting and economical, and they offer high amp-hour/reserve capacity, all of which make them a common choice for house batteries in a motorhome.

Some manufacturers include sophisticated multistage or so-called "smart" chargers, so in many cases you already have the necessary equipment to charge the coach batteries. Highline coaches may have a charger for the chassis batteries, either a separate charger or a charging circuit that diverts power from the coach batteries as needed. Of course, you must have the motorhome plugged in to shorepower or have the generator running for these chargers to function.

Maintaining your motorhome's batteries is pretty simple, and is something you can perform yourself if you are even remotely familiar with a voltmeter. Testing wet-cell batteries can be done in one of three ways, but if you want the whole picture of your battery's health you need to perform all three. If you are maintaining a gel or AGM battery, then you can skip the electrolyte testing and electrolyte-level monitoring, as gel and AGM batteries are sealed and do not require watering or specific gravity testing.

Before you dive into the battery bay, make sure you have the proper protective gear for yourself. Batteries contain sulfuric acid, which is quite dangerous to your skin and eyes. Always use



[1] Make sure you are wearing protective gloves and goggles when working around wet-cell batteries, as the acid is very dangerous and can cause serious skin and eye damage. We used latex gloves topped by rubber-coated gloves. When using conductive wrenches and other tools around the battery posts, make sure you do not allow them to cross between the positive and negative cables or posts. Wrap the handles of your tools in electrical tape as an added measure of protection. [2] Before we started disconnecting the battery wiring, we first disconnected both battery banks from the motorhome by turning the disconnect switches off. If equipped, these are usually located in the battery bay. You should also make sure the generator is off, and that you unplug the coach from shorepower. [3] We began our battery testing with the chassis starting batteries, which are in the back of the battery bay on this motorhome. These batteries are Trojan Transpower ST1000 AGM batteries. We took a smartphone photo and drew a battery position diagram to use as a reassembly reference, then disconnected the batteries from each other and the coach.



[4] In order to photograph the process, we completely removed the house batteries, but this is not a requirement. Here you can see both chassis batteries are completely disconnected from each other and the motorhome. [5] Before taking a voltage reading the batteries were allowed to "rest" for 12 hours to remove the surface charge, since they were plugged into the onboard charger beforehand. We then tested the voltage of each battery individually. The voltage was 12.84 volts, which indicates the starting batteries were at 100 percent charge.



[6] We also connected each 12-volt starting battery to a battery load tester for 10 seconds. This subjects the battery to a high current draw, after which the condition is reported. [7] Next we turned our attention to the four 6-volt house batteries, which in this coach are Trojan T-125 flooded lead-acid batteries. The Trojan Hydro-Link system allows easy watering of the batteries by using these special valved caps and tubing with a hand pump that draws from a jug of distilled water. When opening caps to test the electrolyte, use caution to avoid splashing. The plates should be completely covered as a minimum, and ideally the water level should be at 1/8-inch below the bottom of the plastic fill tube in each cell. If needed, add distilled water. If it is necessary to add water to any of the batteries, you will need to completely recharge them before you continue with the rest of the testing. [8] In order to test each house wet-cell battery, disconnect them from each other and from the coach just as with the starting batteries. Make sure you have a photo or diagram to rewire them. Then remove the cap from each battery in order to test the electrolyte. This test is **ONLY** performed on flooded lead-acid batteries.

protective gloves and goggles when working with batteries. If you are exposed to battery acid on your skin or eyes, immediately flush the affected area with water and/or seek medical attention.

When batteries are being charged, especially during the equalization phase (if so equipped), they produce hydrogen gas, which is explosive, so make sure the area is properly vented and you should definitely refrain from smoking. Following the procedures outlined in your owner's manual is critical with regard to the proper procedure for venting.

## Methods of Testing

The first and most common test is the open-circuit voltage of the battery. Voltage testing can be done on all battery types. Since these batteries are usually part of a battery bank, you will have to disconnect them from each other and unplug the motorhome from shorepower or turn off the generator to ensure there is no charging being performed at the time of testing. If you just finished charging the batteries you will need to allow them to "rest" 12 hours before testing, or else the results will be incorrect. You can also take the surface charge down by running a couple of incandescent lights for a few minutes. This is not exact, but is close enough for practical purposes.

Before disconnecting the batteries, it is always a good idea to either draw a chart of the battery wiring or to take a photo so you can rewire them properly after you finish. Checking the



6



7



8

Percentage of Charge	Specific Gravity Corrected To	Open-Circuit Voltage 6v	Open-Circuit Voltage 12v
100	1.277	6.37	12.73
90	1.258	6.31	12.62
80	1.238	6.25	12.5
70	1.217	6.19	12.37
60	1.195	6.12	12.27
50	1.172	6.02	12.1
40	1.148	5.98	11.89
30	1.124	5.91	11.81
20	1.098	5.83	11.66
10	1.073	5.75	11.51

voltage of a 6-volt or a 12-volt battery will require a voltmeter. On the left is a chart of the battery condition based on the voltage and specific gravity.

The second way to evaluate a battery's condition (wet cell only) is to measure the specific gravity of the battery acid inside each cell. Since wet-cell batteries are the most common type used for house batteries, it is likely that your motorhome came with this type of battery from the factory. Recently, however, some manufacturers have begun offering low-maintenance AGM batteries as an option or even standard equipment. This test can only be done on wet-cell batteries that have removable caps; be sure to use caution when removing the



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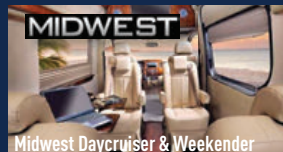
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Leisure Travel Serenity



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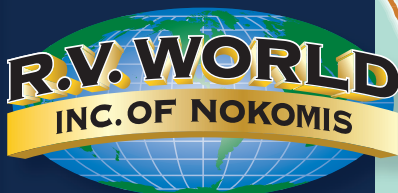
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9



10



11

caps in case there is some splash from the electrolyte. This test involves using a hydrometer, which is widely available at most auto parts stores for about \$10. To ensure better accuracy, use a slightly more expensive temperature-correcting hydrometer.

The final evaluation method — and perhaps one of the most important for starting batteries — is a load test. This type of test measures the voltage of the battery while delivering a large current into the battery test device. Not everyone has a load tester (sometimes called a toaster tester), so if you don't have one, you can purchase it for less than \$50 at most auto-parts stores. If you prefer, you can remove the battery(ies) from the coach and take it/them to an auto-parts store or battery dealer

[9] Next we used a bulb-style hydrometer to test the cells of each 6-volt battery and recorded the specific gravity. Do not add any water before performing this test unless you plan on charging them first. Since the electrolyte temperature was not 80 degrees Fahrenheit, we had to use a correction factor, which is to add 0.004 for every 10 degrees above 80 degrees, or to subtract 0.004 from the actual reading for every 10 degrees below 80 degrees. Only then can the true specific gravity be obtained and compared to the chart (on page 44). All of the cells tested in the "good" range. [10] We used a voltmeter to test the open circuit voltage (state of charge) of all the 6-volt batteries. They ranged from 6.485 to 6.505, which means they are at 100 percent charged according to the voltage method of testing. This test can be performed on all battery types. [11] We used a load tester to check the condition of each starting battery.

for testing. These locations generally use a much more sophisticated computerized load tester that will give a complete test of each battery.

After conducting these tests, you should have a very good idea of the condition of your batteries and will be able to determine if they need additional charging or replacement. If the batteries do need charging, follow the instructions for the charger and then retest the batteries again after

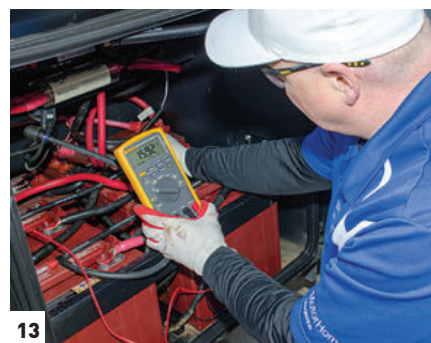
the charging is complete.

The batteries we used for this article are the same ones we installed in December 2011 and that were featured in the July 2012 *MotorHome* article "Put Power in Its Place." This makes the batteries just over 4 years old. When not in use, they have always been connected to a multistage charging system and the four coach batteries have been refilled with distilled water as needed. **M**

[12] If your coach batteries need to be equalized, refer to the owner's manual for the charger to initiate the process. Follow the instructions for your specific house battery charger carefully. Retest the batteries after they have finished equalization and have been allowed to rest again. [13] During equalization charging the batteries are charged at a very high voltage to reverse the buildup of sulfate crystals on the plates and to redistribute the concentrated acid that sometimes settles at the bottom of the battery. Make sure all 12-volt DC appliances are off, the battery caps are loose and the battery bay vented if you perform equalization. [14] This is a typical low-amp charger that is pre-installed in some motorhomes to keep the 12-volt starting batteries topped off while plugged into shorepower or when the generator is running. No action is required, as these are usually automatic chargers. [15] After rewiring the batteries to the coach, it is a good time to protect the terminals from corrosion. Remember it is very important to connect the wires exactly as before. Spray a small amount of terminal protector on each post and cable end to protect it from any corrosion. If there is already a lot of buildup evident, use a battery-acid cleaner or baking soda to remove it first.



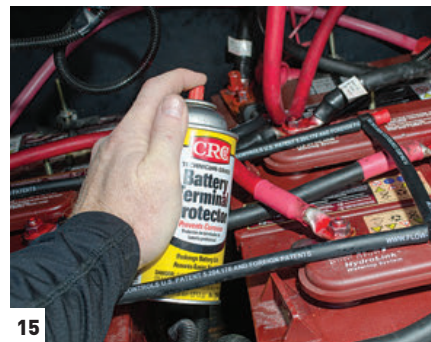
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# The Latest Trend

Winnebago goes a different direction for 2017 by adding a slideout to its popular compact Class C motorhome

By Donya Carlson

**T**he destination kept changing but the motive didn't. We wanted sun, water and hiking possibilities, all of which we have here in Southern California, but we wanted them somewhere else. A good vehicle to take us there — one that is not too big, not too small, but just right — is the latest Trend Class C by Winnebago. This floorplan, the 23D, has veered in a new direction for 2017 by adding a slideout, a first for this model. At 24 feet, the Trend is compact enough to go just about anywhere, yet it offers roominess and everything needed to keep up to four people content, if one or two of them are small, for lengthy getaways. Introduced in 2014, the Trend is built on the Ram ProMaster chassis with a 280-horsepower 3.6-liter V-6 gasoline engine and front-wheel drive.

We climbed into the cockpit to

rest on the cloth-covered captain's seats for our 300-plus-mile trip to Arizona. The dash-mounted shifter and easily discernable HVAC controls got two thumbs-up; ditto for the three functional cup holders within easy reach, and large folding powered side mirrors with integrated turn signals that provided a good side and rear view.

The Trend is equipped with Fiat Chrysler's user-friendly Uconnect multimedia system, which includes a 5-inch LCD color touch screen for the AM/FM MP3 radio with CD player, navigation, USB port, Bluetooth hands-free phone functionality, steering-wheel-mounted audio controls and voice texting and reply capability (not compatible with iPhones). In addition, Winnebago tosses in a complimentary one-year subscription to

SiriusXM radio. The screen for the backup camera with a color rearview monitoring system is incorporated into the rearview mirror.

Safety features include air bags, traction and electronic stability control, hill-start assist, electronic roll mitigation, anti-lock brakes with panic brake assist and tire-pressure monitoring.

Visually, the Trend is somewhat of a contradiction in styling, contrasting an aerodynamic front and large cutting-edge angled skylight against a boxy-looking rear, which is reminiscent of a toy hauler. Two rows of LED taillights, a ladder and trendy (no pun intended) decals gussy up the rear. And the LT225/75R16 tires look funky aesthetically, specifically in the rear because it looks like the Trend should be outfitted with dualies rather

**ABOVE:** Built on the Ram ProMaster chassis, the Trend features an aerodynamic front end and boxy rear end that is reminiscent of toy-hauler styling.



than singles. This, in fact, was one of the things on which most onlookers commented.

We stopped near Palm Springs to walk a couple of miles of the Pacific Crest Trail. On this April day, the desolate trail was busy; we came across four different groups and one lone hiker, all of whom had been hiking for weeks or months, carrying their gear on their backs and living off freeze-dried food. The solo hiker looked longingly at the Trend as he passed by, which probably looked like a resort hotel to him ... and it struck us that we were truly traveling in luxury.

While underway at freeway speeds, conversation in the Trend's cockpit can be held at a normal level, though wind noise from the motorhome's skylight is noticeable. The route we were traveling is popular with freight trucks, and the Trend's suspension was bumpy over the punished pavement. Through the desert we hit high winds and the Trend plowed on through, feeling stable. When climbing grades, the roar of the engine was quite pronounced as it pulled the 8,420-pound vehicle steadily with little falter.

We crossed into Arizona from California and temperatures rose as gas prices dropped. Our destination was Lake Havasu City, but the Colorado River looked so inviting that we stopped 30 miles short to spend a night — which turned into two — in Parker at a county campground. After spending 10 hours on the road, with a few stops, we noted how comfortable the captain's seats had been, but we

**BELOW:** We made use of the captain's chairs' ability to swivel and face the living area, which benefits from an additional 19 inches of galley depth thanks to the slide. The Flex Bed System offers a choice of dual twin beds or a single 52-by-87-inch sleeper (bottom). We were pleased that the lav with an outward-opening door remained fully accessible with the bed in place.



were ready to set up camp.

Inside, with an interior height of 6 feet 7 inches, there was plenty of headroom, even with the ceiling-mounted Coleman-Mach air conditioner cutting off a couple of inches in the walkway between the beds. Opening the slide, which worked smoothly, added 19 inches of depth to the galley. The slide houses the 5.26-cubic-foot double-door refrigerator/freezer and High Pointe microwave convection oven above and sofa directly behind the driver's seat. The thickly padded sofa, the only furniture in the RV, is extremely comfortable, and accommodates tall folks with 22 inches from the seat to the floor and a high back. We swiveled the captain's chairs around and set up one of the two pedestal tables for a homey feel, and the galley was then transformed into

a living room where four could sit and dine with enough elbowroom. There are also two places to anchor tables between the twin beds.

The Flexsteel sofa is what Winnebago calls a Fold N Tumble: It converts to a 44-by-72-inch bed and has seating and seatbelts for two. I spent two nights on that bed, and actually found it more comfortable than the rear twin beds. The width of it puts the bed somewhere between a twin and double, so it could accommodate two children. The three-way refrigerator with touch control was so quiet, the only time it was noticeable was when my head was next to it while sleeping on the sofa bed.

The refrigerator is situated 2 inches off the floor, leaving a gap that was wide enough to swallow up a sandal that we accidentally kicked underneath. This got us thinking that



**Left:** The bathroom offers plenty of storage options and a lofty 6-foot 8-inch shower height. The high-rise faucet looks great, but we had to keep a towel handy to mop up water runoff.

the gap could be a hazard because items could get trapped in the slide as it's moved in and out. The gap extends around the left side of the refrigerator as well, so we rolled up towels to fill in the space; a simple fix, but something that Winnebago should address.

Since we wanted to watch the sunset, we moved the party outdoors to enjoy the view across the river to the California side of the border, and entertained ourselves by watching folks go back and forth for a two-minute boat ride into another state. Then, as bats came out and flitted about, catching their dinner, we moved back indoors to make our dinner.

As we pulled food, plates, cooking utensils and pans out of the cabinets, it struck us, as it did when packing up, that even though there's no pantry, there's an abundance of cupboard space in the galley with two overhead cabinets, a large cabinet below the sink and two deep drawers under the range. We nicknamed the cabinet over the range "Grand Slam" because when we opened, it slammed into the wall and sliding privacy divider to the right of it. A horizontal rail on the top shelf keeps spices and small items from rolling out when the door is opened, though shorter people may have trouble reaching into the back of the top shelf.

The cabinet below the stainless-steel sink houses a water-filtration system, and hot water is instant thanks to the Girard tankless on-demand water heater with wall-mounted control. The curvy two-burner range

with a glass top not only looks good, but the clever design is a functional use of space, leaving a little island between the stainless-steel sink and range to set a pan or a coffee pot. A glass shield attached to the bottom of the cabinet over the range protects the cabinet from grease splatters, and a flip-up countertop extension adds needed food-prep space. The extension deploys in the doorway, yet there was still room for us to scoot around it when exiting and entering.

An attractive contoured acrylic backsplash protects the walls around the sink and range. Flip on the "mood lighting" switch and the backsplash lights up to look like waves, while a row of LEDs cast soft light above the cabinetry. Corner shelves at the head of the twin beds light up as well and have USB ports.

When it's time for bed, there are a couple of options. The aforementioned twin beds on either side are equipped with individual Froli 3¾-by-3¾-inch specialty springs under the foam mattresses. Each mattress is sectioned at the top to accommodate a wood-slatted headrest operated by a ratcheting system that allows for multiple height adjustments. Raise your head to the desired height — flat for sleeping, if you wish, or raised for watching TV or reading.

But, wait, there's more: The 23D is equipped with a Flex Bed System that turns the two beds into one larger one with a cross-aisle sleeping arrangement. Each bed has a ledge anchored

### WHAT'S HOT

Easy to maneuver, well-laid-out cockpit controls, bright floorplan, comfy Fold N Tumble bed, storage in galley and lav.

### WHAT'S NOT

Gap under the fridge, galley cabinet door slams into the wall, faucet location in lav, small opening to exterior storage.



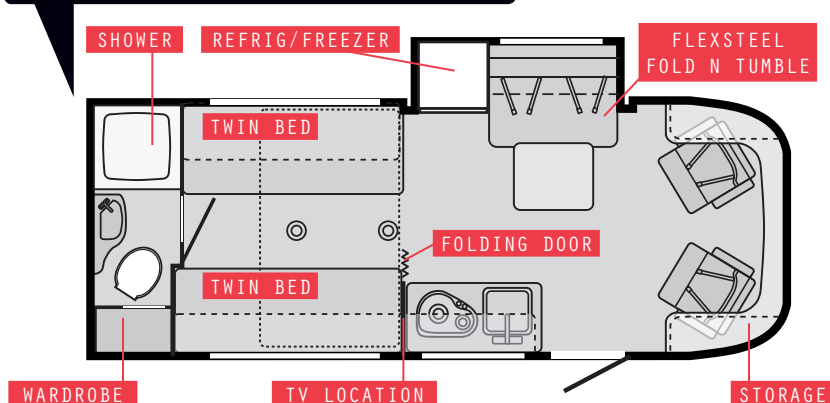
to the outside of the structure that holds the two tables. Lay the tables in place, use the two back cushions as the mattress and you've got a 52-by-87-inch bed.

Housed in a cabinet over the passenger-side bed are the systems monitor panel and a Jensen home-theater system with a DVD player, surround sound and connectivity to Bluetooth for smartphones and tablets. A 28-inch LED HDTV swivels out for viewing from anywhere in the motorhome. After pulling down the MCD blackout shades and climbing under the covers to watch a movie, the remote to shut off/turn on the MaxxAir roof fan became our favorite accessory since we were too lazy to get up.

Storage in the bathroom is plentiful, with a wardrobe, deep sliding drawers and a medicine cabinet. The shower is roomy and, with the skylight, there's 6 feet 8 inches total height, which can accommodate tall people, but you'll need to remove the drip rod. A retractable shower screen squeegees off the water while it's being closed. A fiberglass sink is molded into the countertop, but we found that the fixed faucet was so close to the edge of the sink that water could drip down between the sink and shower when washing our hands. A powered fan worked well to pull steam out of the bathroom while showering.

The aforementioned sliding privacy divider that separates the galley from the bedroom was a nice touch when my early riser husband, Bill, lounged in the galley while I slept. But when he,

### WINNEBAGO TREND CLASS C







Above: The Trend makes the most of its limited counterspace thanks to the glass top and flip-up counter extension, both of which add valuable square inches to the food-prep area.

in his 6 a.m. quest for coffee, pushed the igniter switch for the range, I was startled awake by the loud sound.

After two nights of dry camping and relying, in part, upon the optional 100-watt solar panel (\$805) and 2,800-watt Cummins Onan LP-gas generator, we moved on to Lake Havasu City. The High-Gloss Marbella Cherry wood overhead cabinets have a press-to-release feature that keeps the cabinets tightly shut during travel. The two drawers in the galley were a different story, however, as they opened and closed during travel when turning. Fingerprints also showed up prominently on the gloss-finished cabinetry.

Driving over London Bridge brought us to an RV resort on the small island. London Bridge, which formerly spanned the River Thames in England, was falling down, or rather it was sinking, so the city of London put it up for auction and it ended up in Lake Havasu City, where it's a popular attraction. The RV resort was packed with snowbirds, most of them in RVs larger than ours.

We ended up in a spacious lot facing the lake with the sunlight streaming into the Trend from the skylight. The skylight is over the cab and brightens the galley. It has a pleated shade that allows owners to roll it open or closed as much or little as they want. Dual-pane Euro acrylic

windows (a \$2,240 option) help with thermal efficiency in the motorhome.

Later, while relaxing under the powered 14-foot awning (with LED lighting) and enjoying music through the exterior speakers, we watched magnificent boats cruise by. The Trend has a barbecue grill hookup near the entry door, and an outside shower hookup on the opposite side. There's lockable outside storage as well, good for stashing hoses and such, but with a 33-by-10-inch door to access the deep compartment, it wasn't large enough to fit our camp chairs.

We left Arizona's playground as the sun was setting. During our trip we spent time in a variety of camping situations, from dry camping at a county park to staying at a five-star RV resort with hookups. We were impressed with the Trend's agility and tight turning radius. Fuel economy averaged 12.46 MPG, with a high of 13.33 and a low of 11.59.

The Trend 23D has a cheerful, inviting feel to it, with a well-appointed floorplan that is open and bright, and good interior storage space. With its big feel in a manageable size, we felt like we could take it almost anywhere. It was just right for the two of us who like to wander off in search of new places. **M**

#### Winnebago Industries

641-585-3535, [www.winnebagoind.com](http://www.winnebagoind.com)

## Specifications

### Chassis

Model	Ram ProMaster
Engine	3.6-L V-6
SAE Hp	280 @ 6,400 rpm
Torque	260 lb-ft @ 4,175 rpm
Transmission	Six-speed automatic
Axle Ratio	3.86:1
Tires	LT225/75R16
Wheelbase	159"
Brakes	Four-wheel disc with ABS
Suspension, Front/Rear	McPherson with Stabilizer Bar/solid axle with leaf spring
Fuel Capacity	24 gal
Fuel Economy	12.46 mpg
Warranty	12 months/15,000 miles
Engine	5 years, 100,000 miles

### Coach

Exterior Length	24'
Exterior Width	7' 6"
Exterior Height	10' 2"
Interior Width	7' 3"
Interior Height	6' 7"
Construction	Aluminum framing, laminated fiberglass side walls, one-piece fiberglass roof, block foam insulation
Freshwater Capacity	29 gal
Black-Water Capacity	40 gal
Gray-Water Capacity	35 gal
Water Heater Capacity	On-demand
LP-gas Capacity	13 gal
Air Conditioner	13,500 Btu
Furnace	20,000 Btu
Refrigerator	5.26 cu-ft
Converter/Charger	45 amp
Battery	Group 31 12-volt
AC Generator	2.8 kW LP-gas
MSRP	\$94,156
MSRP as Tested	\$97,906
Warranty	12-month/15,000-mile basic, 36-month/36,000-mile limited warranty on structure, 10-year limited parts-and-labor warranty on roof skin

### Wet Weight

(Water & heater, fuel, LP-gas, tanks full; no supplies or passengers)

Front Axle	3,360 lbs
Rear Axle	5,060 lbs
Total	8,420 lbs

### Chassis Ratings

GAWR, F/R	4,630/5,291 lbs
GVWR/GCWR	9,350/11,500 lbs
ROCCC	930 lbs

GAWR	Gross Axle Weight Rating
GVWR	Gross Vehicle Weight Rating
GCWR	Gross Combined Weight Rating
ROCCC	Realistic Occupant and Cargo Carrying Capacity

By Bob Livingston

# LAUNDRY DAY

After installing a Splendide stacking washer and dryer, the chore of washing clothes becomes almost seamless

**T**raveling in a motorhome gives us the sense that we're getting away from the daily routine, leaving behind many of the responsibilities and chores that diverted us to the RV lifestyle. In reality, some things just can't be left behind, like washing clothes. While some people consider their trips to the laundry facility an extension of their social life, lugging bags of clothes — and the soap and spot removers — to and from is not a pleasurable experience for everyone. And it's expensive, to boot; we spent \$6 a load (wash and dry) at the last RV park we visited.

A great alternative is an onboard washer/dryer, and Splendide Laundry Centers offers a number of products designed for RV installations including its latest offering, a stacking system that incorporates new technology to enhance performance while taking the chore out of washing and drying clothes.

Unlike the combo units, which technically get the job done but require lots of patience, the new stackers more closely emulate home units, with the exception of the ultimate capacity found in residential models.

Newer motorhomes are often outfitted with the water faucets, drain plumbing and power in a closet where space is allocated for a stacking washer and dryer. Older models may only have space reserved for a combo, which is exactly what we encountered when a friend wanted to add a washer and dryer to his rig. We decided to take the plunge and modify the closet, which meant giving up some storage space, but the owner was willing to make the sacrifice for the added convenience.

We chose the Ariston by Splendide



[1] The closet in the test rig was prepped by the factory to accept a combo washer/dryer. It was previously used as a storage area. [2] After removing the two lower drawers (not shown), additional framing was screwed into the sides to support a new floor. [3] Retained wood from the original structure was used to build the new floor.





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ARWXF129W washer (\$897) and matching TVM63X dryer (\$719) for this project because of the company's sterling reputation in the industry, and we knew these units are designed specifically for RVs and thus can take the pounding on the road. Features like stainless-steel drums supported by heavy-duty springs, shock absorbers and a reinforced housing help ensure against damage. We also considered the units' nice looks, modern controls and, of course, the fact that they do a good job of washing and drying clothes.

The washer weighs 147 pounds and measures 32 7/8-by-23 1/2-by-22 3/4 inches; the dryer weighs 67 pounds and has virtually the same dimensions. Although the washer and dryer are rather bulky and fitting them into a confined space may initially seem difficult, the opposite is true. Since the width is just shy of 24 inches, we had enough room in the closet, where the allocated space was slightly wider to accommodate the combo unit.

We started the installation by making the necessary modifica-

tions to the assigned closet. Shelves and drawers were removed, and the space reconfigured to make way for the stacking washer and dryer. Once the way was cleared in the closet, the vent kit was installed, which required drilling a 4-inch hole in the side wall. You only get one shot at getting it right, so measuring accurately and making sure there are no obstructions inside the wall are very important.

An optional drain-pan kit was employed as additional insurance in case of a leak or washer overflow, which is almost always traceable to user error. The pan is screwed into the floor in the closet and a hose is then routed to a drain pipe that leads to the gray holding tank. After mounting the brackets that attach to the dryer, the washer is lifted into the closet, which took three guys to maneuver without damaging the adjacent woodwork. The water and drain hoses were then hooked up and the dryer placed on top of the washer. Eight-foot hot- and cold-water hoses and a 5-foot drain hose are provided with the washer. For this installation,

[4] A section of the back wall was cut out to provide better access to the hot and cold faucets and drain pipe. [5] The drain-pan kit was prepared before attaching to the floor. Here a fitting is threaded into the edge of the pan and a hose connected using a clamp. The hose was routed through a hole drilled in the floor and [6] tied into a gray-water drainpipe using a "Rube Goldberg" method of connecting [plenty of sealant].



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[7] Four protective screws — used for transporting the washer — were removed during unpacking using a socket wrench. [8] When loose, the long screws are simply pulled out and discarded. [9] The holes are closed off using plastic plugs that just snap in place.

access to the hot- and cold-water faucets was pretty tight; to facilitate easy access to these valves, we cut an opening in an adjacent cabinet and added a piece of Plexiglas to cover the hole but still give us a view of the connections.

The final step, configuring the closet door, proved to be a lot more problematic than predicted. That's because

after modifying the closet, the original door was too small. Another factor was providing adequate ventilation when using the machines. Most RVs are fitted with louvered doors when the washer/dryer-prep option is elected. In this case, the door was solid and installing custom louvered doors would have boosted the project cost sub-

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## STACKING LAUNDRY CENTER



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**11**

stantially. To solve both issues, we had a local cabinet shop cut a matching piece of wood to serve as a single door. Hinges were added and a sealer and lacquer were used to protect and enhance the wood surface. The only caveat is the need to keep the door ajar when using the washer and dryer, which proved to be no problem.

Installing a washer and dryer in a closet that's ready for the stacking system is a pretty simple affair for do-it-yourselfers. If modifications are needed, the process can be more complicated and time-consuming, as it was in our case; we devoted a number of hours over two days. If the motorhome was not prepped for a washer and dryer, then the job is much more difficult and should be left to the professionals.

Unlike the older laundry systems that shook the interior like a vibrating

bed in sleazy motels of yesteryear (without having to add quarters), the Splendide Laundry Center units are a lot less invasive to your senses. You can tell it's running, but the system is relatively quiet and smooth, thanks to a proprietary vibration-dampening and noise-reduction system. An Automatic Balance System detects an out-of-balance situation, which causes the motor to adjust speed or stop the drum completely so that the load can readjust as necessary.

A number of features packed into the washer and dryer are similar to those found in some of the better home units. For example, there are 13 wash cycles with specific instructions for handling all clothes, from everyday wear to delicates and towels and sheets. The washer spins from 600 to 1,200 RPM, which provides cleaning versatility, including a drain cycle for silk.



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[13] Vent-pipe flange is lined with butyl tape before it is pushed through the hole in the wall [14]. Once in place, the vent is attached to the wall using stainless-steel screws. [15] Excess butyl tape is carefully trimmed using a putty knife. Metal putty knives can easily scratch the gelcoat, so use caution here. [16] Plastic shroud is used to cover the vent pipe and attached to the wall using stainless-steel screws. This shroud can be painted to match exterior graphics. [17] Inside, a plate is mounted on the wall around the vent pipe for a clean look. [18] A template is used to determine the correct locations for the installation brackets.





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Maximum load is 15 pounds, which is a good amount of clothing and/or towels. Bulk is also a consideration; we found that one set of king-size sheets, for example, makes one full load.

Wash time depends on the cycle, but the washer can be set for 15 minutes for a few slightly soiled pieces of clothing; 30 minutes for a smaller load (up to around 6 pounds); or whatever time is necessary to wash a full load. We found that it takes about 103 minutes to handle a typical full load (cycle No. 2, warm water and 1,200 RPM to wring out really well). Full-load washing times range from 114 to 135 minutes depending on soiling and fabric. Everything comes

[10] Hot- and cold-water hoses are attached to their respective locations in the back of the washer before moving to the closet. Eight-foot hoses are provided with the washer. The drain pipe (not shown) is attached to the washer from the factory. [11] Installation of the vent requires finding a spot in the back wall that will clear the dryer and other obstructions. A small hole is drilled through the inside and outside wall to locate the vent. [12] A 4-inch hole is drilled through the outside wall using a common hole saw. Don't scrimp here; the use of a cheap hole saw can easily result in a very untidy installation.

out nicely because the rinse cycle is so efficient. There's even a delayed start that can be programmed for up to 24 hours. The washer is Class A-rated and has an Energy Star listing. Water usage is between 7.5 to 16 gallons.

We were intrigued by the Splendide Foam Removal system that measures the amount of soap during the rinse cycle and removes the excess to protect the internal parts from being damaged. That point led to our experimentation with the company's laundry detergent, which turned out to be much better than expected. Not only did it do a good job of cleaning the clothing and towels, it controls the suds. The auto foam removal will come

[19] After taping the template to the top of the washer, a hole punch is used to dimple the locations for drilling pilot holes for the bracket screws. [20] A piece of electrical tape is used to mark the depth of drill bit to prevent damaging the washer. Once the pilot holes are drilled, the brackets are attached. These brackets [21] are used to position and stabilize the dryer when it's placed on top of the washer.



19



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## STACKING LAUNDRY CENTER



22



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24

in handy for those who mistakenly use too much detergent or a liquid product.

A self-cleaning, recirculating pump eliminates the need to clean a filter; the small amount of lint passes through the pump. If you happen to forget to remove items from pockets, like keys and coins, they will be trapped in a pre-chamber that is easy to access.

The dryer has an extra-wide front door that leads to a 4-cubic-foot stainless-steel drum that provides enough space around the load to promote faster drying times without creasing the contents. Maximum dryer capacity is 13 pounds, so it's best to limit the amount of clothing in the washer to match the rating of the dryer. A nice feature is the air timer, which can be set to fluff clothes and limit wrinkles for easy ironing or dry at low heat. We were impressed with how nicely the clothes came out of the dryer, and most were ready to wear. An Auto Dry cycle stops the dryer automatically

[22] After the prep work is done, the washer is placed in the plastic drain pan and sealant is applied to the edge before attaching the front lip. This makes it easier to slide the washer into position without lifting, which can be difficult in such a confined compartment.

[23] Front lip is secured with stainless-steel screws. [24] Before the washer is pushed into its final place in the closet, the water hoses, drain pipe and power plug are connected.

when the load is dry. Both machines feature a safety lock that prevents the doors from being opened during inopportune times, and a self-diagnosis system should anything go wrong.

Obviously, the convenience of an onboard washer and dryer is best served in a campground with hookups. And while you might miss the camaraderie of hanging out in a laundry room, you won't miss lugging bundles of clothing to those public machines, nor the cost of using these facilities. **M**

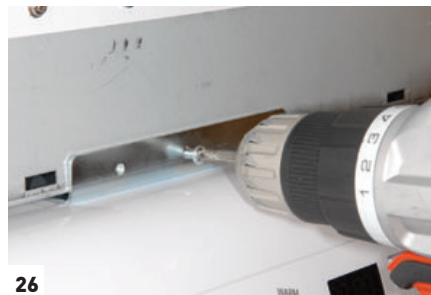
### Splendide Laundry Centers

800-356-0766, [www.splendide.com](http://www.splendide.com)

[25] Flexible ducting is attached to the vent pipe just before lifting the dryer into position. A large hose clamp keeps the ducting in place. The other end is attached to the dryer before mounting on the washer [26] using the installation brackets that were attached to the washer. [27] Washer and dryer fit snugly into the modified compartment and can be concealed by the custom-made door.



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By Ann Eichenmuller

## 1991 BLUE BIRD WANDERLODGE

EQUIPPED WITH NEARLY EVERYTHING THE OWNER COULD HOPE FOR, THIS ICONIC COACH CONTINUES TO SHINE



Darrell Beaton gives a thumbs-up to his turbocharged 450-horsepower 8V92A Detroit Diesel engine.

*This article is the second in a series looking at motorhomes that have stood the test of time. They may have miles under their wheels, but they can still make dreams come true. Each has earned the right to be called "the classic ride."*

**W**hat do former President Jimmy Carter, Johnny Cash and King Hussein of Jordan have in common with Darrell Beaton, a retired pipefitter from Michigan? All have been the proud owners of a Blue Bird Wanderlodge. This iconic Class A motorhome has been a favorite of the rich and famous from its inception in the 1960s until its last production in 2009, competing in the luxury motorhome market against brands such as Marathon and Newell.

Perhaps because of its timeless design and its celebrity appeal, owners have been slow to part with these Blue Birds, making them a sought-after commodity in the preowned motorhome market.

"It took me three years to find mine, looking on the internet every day," Beaton says, with the air of a man who still can't believe his good luck.

When we first saw Beaton's 40-foot 1991 Wanderlodge at a campground in Georgia, we



▲ 1991 40-foot Blue Bird Wanderlodge

# The Classic Ride



From above left: The galley features solid-surface countertops complete with a built-in blender. The large L-shaped sofa offers a feeling of spaciousness. Smartly placed mirrors in the bathroom make the already ample space feel even larger.

assumed it had been freshly painted. We were surprised to find that everything — from the exterior paint to the pristine penthouse-like interior — was completely original. Beaton picked up this collector's classic in 2013, with only 80,000 miles on the 450-horsepower turbocharged Detroit Diesel engine, for the incredible price of \$50,000. Lucky, indeed.

There is no way to overstate the quality workmanship that went into the making of the Wanderlodge. Blue Bird was the fourth-largest manufacturer of school buses in the United States before its entrance into the motorhome market. This background in heavy-duty steel construction is one key to the Wanderlodge's success. With a 20-gauge steel roof; 14-gauge steel floor, roof bows, headers and stringers; and 16-gauge steel side panels, this

motorhome is nearly indestructible. In the rare case that anything should need repair, most of the Wanderlodge's parts are shared by Blue Bird's bus fleet, so they are relatively inexpensive and readily available.

But while it may be built like a bus, the Wanderlodge certainly does not look like one. Its interior rivals any new-production motorhome. When Beaton's unit was built, more than 200 options were available, including floorplan choices, wood cabinetry, flooring, lighting and counters, so his Blue Bird has a distinctive, custom look. The cockpit includes cream leather, power seats and an instrument panel that so closely resembles an airplane that, as a pilot, I felt right at home. One drawback for some RV buyers might be the lack of slideouts, but the layout of

this coach makes such optimal use of every one of its 102 inches of width that this was barely noticeable. The Swedish-modern décor, evoked by the white-birch woodwork with an ebony inlay and recessed lighting, gives the impression of space, as does the open floorplan that centers on a large, L-shaped sofa surround. The galley is spacious and uncluttered, featuring bar seating, an ivory solid-surface Corian countertop with a double sink and built-in blender, a two-burner LP-gas stove, convection microwave and a large Dometic refrigerator.

The bedroom on this model is located in the rear and is accessed through the unit's single large bathroom. This includes a spacious heated-tile shower with glass doors and a solid-surface vanity, and it is separated from both the kitchen/dining area and the bedroom with heavy solid-wood sliding doors. The bedroom includes a queen-size bed,

## THINK YOU MIGHT LIKE YOUR VERY OWN BLUE BIRD?

Be aware that the wide-body (102-inch) Wanderlodge was not introduced until 1988. Wanderlodes from the early 1990s average between \$65,000-\$75,000, though they can be found for as little as \$40,000. Newer models (some including slideouts) range from \$85,000 for a late '90s unit to more than \$300,000 for a coach produced in the mid-2000s. The best place to start your search is one of the Blue Bird-only sites like Vintage Birds ([www.vintagebirds.com](http://www.vintagebirds.com)) or Bird Connection ([www.birdconnection.com/showroom](http://www.birdconnection.com/showroom)).

► Stout construction materials include a 20-gauge steel roof, 14-gauge steel floor and 16-gauge steel side panels. The original exterior paint continues to shine.







end tables and a wall of drawers, shelves and closets for storage, in addition to a built-in safe. There is even a protection system that can be activated from the bedroom, allowing the owner to turn on exterior lights around the motorhome as well as sound an alarm.

The Wanderlodge isn't just pretty; it's also well-equipped. Redundancy is key to Blue Bird's design. There are dual 160-amp Delco alternators, dual-system independent air brakes and even dual heating systems — an LP-gas hydronic system, which includes a heat exchanger and electric forced air. The heated basement, which has auto-locks on all compartment doors, includes a secondary refrigerator and a freezer. The Wanderlodge is also equipped with eight house batteries and a 15-kW Kubota AC generator. Finally, for ease in setup, the unit has auto-leveling jacks and a backup camera with microphone.

Beaton, a veteran RVer who has owned seven other Class A's over 30-plus years, has yet to find something about this coach that he doesn't like. "With all of my other motorhomes, I had a wish list, things I wanted to change. With the Wanderlodge, there's nothing."

This is not to say that the motorhome does not need a few minor updates. One feature he liked was that the TV rose remotely from within the center console in the cockpit; un-

fortunately, it was still the original, old-fashioned tube type. He has since removed it and is in the process of refitting the space with a new flat-screen TV. The sound system is also scheduled for an update. And while the wall-to-wall carpet is still in good condition, he would like to replace it with a light hardwood flooring.

"That would be better for Georgia Brown," he says, referring to his traveling companion, a chocolate Labrador retriever.

As impressed as I was with the Wanderlodge, I had to wonder how it handled on the road. We all remember the bumpy ride of our elementary school bus; with all of its refinements, was this Blue Bird any different?

Beaton laughed. "You won't believe this, but it floats. It has air suspension, 10 air bags — you can't feel a thing."

He added that the Wanderlodge basically drives itself, and went on to note that, with a dry weight of more than 40,000 pounds, even passing semitrailers has no effect. At the same time, he has been pleased with the unit's acceleration. Recently retired, Beaton has made the trip between Florida and Michigan twice since purchasing the motorhome, doing some sightseeing in the mountains en route. He found that the Wanderlodge has plenty of power in all types of terrain, and that it tows his Jeep effortlessly.

It is easy to see why Beaton feels that the Wanderlodge was worth the wait.

"I used to be like other RV owners, always talking about my next motorhome," he said. "Not anymore. I'll have this one until I die. There is just nothing to upgrade to."

A design that needs no improvement — this is what makes the Blue Bird Wanderlodge a classic ride. **M**

Do you, or someone you know, have a classic motorhome that you'd like to see featured in *MotorHome* magazine? If so, email Ann Eichenmuller at [aceichenm@gmail.com](mailto:aceichenm@gmail.com) with your suggestion and a brief description. Please include "The Classic Ride" in your subject line.

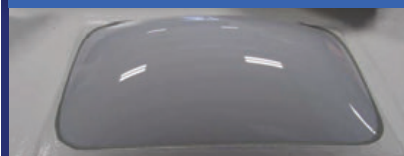
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## Grime Be Gone

In the past I have had difficulty keeping the telescoping arms of my dinghy's tow bar clean. Even though I periodically use a degreaser and lubricant, road grime still builds up over time, making it hard to extend and retract the arms. After needing to have the tow bar refurbished by the manufacturer, I now keep the arms clean by covering them with the foam insulation used on 1-inch hot-water pipes [the diameter may vary based on the tow-bar model]. To keep them in place I use straps made of hook-and-loop fastener. I was able to make three sets of covers for less than \$10.

**Larry Stone | Woodland Park, Colorado**



## Cheers!

Cleaning the black holding tank can be difficult, especially on motorhomes without a flushing system. I've found the best way to be certain our tank is clean is to visually verify it is empty.

To do this, I use a sturdy plastic cup I modified to hold the toilet valve open. I cut the bottom off the cup and drilled holes in the side just above the level where the valve is when the cup is placed to hold the valve open.

With the valve open, I then dump a bucket of water down the trap while connected to the RV park's sewer connection. By using the cup to hold open the toilet valve, I can look through the opening to ensure the tank is clean [the toilet dumps directly into the black tank]. This also allows me to dump a bucket of water directly down the toilet opening, which further helps flush the tank.

**Don Callahan | Fairbanks, Alaska**



## A Bigger Bin

My husband and I love our new Class B-plus 25-foot motorhome, but found the 6-quart trash can for the galley's built-in countertop garbage chute did not meet our needs. To increase the trash capacity, my husband cut the top 3 inches off the plastic trash can, and I placed a tall kitchen garbage bag (13 gallons) through the trash can top and into the empty cabinet space below. The top of the bag gets folded over the trash can, which is then set in the counter opening, holding the bag in place.

We substantially increased our galley's garbage capacity, utilizing the difficult-to-access space in the back corner of the cabinet. And, instead of discarding the cutoff bottom portion of the trash can, it fits nicely under the vanity in the bathroom.

**Debbie Robinson | Manasquan, New Jersey**



## Have an Idea?

Quick Tips is looking for submissions. Please send your DIY ideas to: *MotorHome* Quick Tips, 2750 Park View Ct., Ste. 240, Oxnard, CA 93036, or email [letters@motorhomemagazine.com](mailto:letters@motorhomemagazine.com). Be sure to include any photos, illustrations or drawings. If your tip is selected for publication, you will receive \$35. All payments require an FEIN or SSN.



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\*After 3 months you will be billed \$15/mo unless you call to cancel. HBO® and related channels and service marks are the property of Home Box Office, Inc. Offer ends August 3, 2016.

\*\*Important Terms and Conditions: All prices, fees, charges, packages, programming, features, functionality and offers subject to change without notice. **Installation/Equipment Requirements:** Monthly fees and limits on number and type of receivers will apply. All charges, including monthly programming, pay-per-view and equipment upgrades, must be paid in advance; failure to pay by due date will lead to service disconnection within 24 hours. **Miscellaneous:** Offers available for new and qualified former customers. Offers subject to terms of applicable Promotional and Residential Customer agreements. Taxes or reimbursement charges for state gross earnings taxes may apply. Additional restrictions may apply.



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DISH Network, Circle 129 on Reader Service Card

# Easy Expansion

Let's Go Aero's collapsible shelter connects to the motorhome's doors and provides protection from the elements

By Kevin Livingston



Above: With the door and screen zipped into place, the shelter is complete and can be used as an extra room or an outdoor sanctuary protected from the elements.

## ACCESSORY

Cost: **\$429**

Time: **30 minutes**

Difficulty: **2/10**

**M**any of us would like to believe that we're equipped and prepped for nearly anything Mother Nature tosses our way. But, as is often the case, the weather can throw a curve ball when we're getting ready to eat outside or lounge around

the RV site. Now there's a unique product that mates a portable canopy that attaches to the motorhome and provides extra outdoor space that's protected from the elements.

Let's Go Aero has developed a tentlike shelter, the ArcRV Side Room, that turns into a portable extension when tethered to its RV Connector. Attached to the motorhome, the ArcRV Side Room becomes a completely sealed 6-by-10-foot shelter (measured at the base) that offers almost 9 feet of headroom. The shelter is made of 2,000 mm coated polyester and rip-stop nylon, which is very strong and weather-resistant. The fabric, much like a tent, is held in place with steel and fiberglass poles and a number of shock cords with C-clips.

As simple a concept as this shelter seems to be, reading the instructions is mandatory. If you don't, you'll be reminded of how much "fun" it is to erect a tent that you haven't used for years.

The process begins by connecting the lower portion of the frame via the two G-labeled poles and setting up the tapered structure. This is followed by adjusting the webbing straps to match the taper and locking them in place between the notch rivets. From here, continue working with every intersecting pole except B, C1 and D, which will be used right after the tent cover is installed.

At this point, the door/screen panel and the RV Connector can be applied to their respective ends. The door/screen is attached by way of zippers, which adds security and stability. The RV Connector attaches to the rear framing poles from inside using all of the integrated C-clips. Once it is clipped into place, the straps are adjusted and the buckles are applied where necessary.

The giant elastic 5-by-7-foot Stretch Sleeve is then pulled over the lower edge of the motorhome. Apart from driving in the included stakes for additional stability, that's it.

The ArcRV Side Room and RV Connector are made of good materials and the build quality is excellent; as a result, they command a hefty price tag of \$429. The ArcRV, which weighs 27 pounds and comes with a handy carry bag, was originally designed for use on Sprinter-based Class B motorhomes, and while there are patents pending for the product and its intended use, the collapsible room can be adapted for other RV types as well, so long as the height requirements are met.

Having the ArcRV in place allowed us to extend our time outdoors, whether to escape the harsh midday sun or to block the wind during the evening. It's fantastic as a mobile mud room, and is also a fun space for kids who prefer to sleep outdoors. **M**

**Let's Go Aero**, 877-464-2376, [www.letsgoaero.com](http://www.letsgoaero.com)



**[A]** Assembling the ArcRV Side Room is like erecting a tent, using poles and straps to form the nylon structure. The process is less difficult if time is made beforehand to read and follow the assembly instructions. **[B]** Once the basic structure is in place, the RV Connector kit is used to mate the shelter to the motorhome. A stretch sleeve is pulled over the entry steps for stability.



# Good Sam Finance Center

## Questions & Answers



**Now is the time to purchase a new or used RV or refinance your existing RV loan. Check out some of our frequently asked questions to see how the Good Sam Finance Center can get you out on the road!**

### Is refinancing at a good rate still possible?

Yes! Now may be a good time to refinance your current RV loan and lower your monthly payments. And remember, our loans have no pre-payment penalties if you decide to pay the loan off early.



### How do I know I'm getting a good rate?

We offer a range of loan terms from five to 20 years, depending on the loan amount and age of the RV. Our short term loans with lower rates have become popular, helping customers pay off their loans more quickly.



### Do you finance private party RV loans?

Yes! You can purchase a 2008 model year or newer rig from a private party seller in your town or from across the country. We'll pay off the seller, put the new registration in your name and handle all necessary paperwork.

### I'm a Full-Timer. Can I get financing for my RV?

Yes! Good Sam Finance Center offers financing to purchase or refinance the perfect RV to call home.



### Are your rates the same for new and used RV purchases?

Yes! Our rates are the same whether you purchase a new or used rig from a dealer or a private party seller across town or across the country.

APRs\* AS LOW AS

**3.89%\*\***  
on loan amounts of \$50k+

**3.99%\*\***  
on loan amounts of \$25k to \$49,999

**5.99%\*\***  
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APR is fixed for the life of the loan. Other rates with different loan terms are available. Rates are accurate as of May 19, 2016.  
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**RV Loans**

\*Estimated APR (Annual Percentage Rate). Subject to consumer loan program requirements and credit approval. Certain fees, closing costs, and restrictions may apply.

\*\*Rates and terms may vary with market conditions and are subject to change without notice. APR applied to the loan is the APR in effect on the date the application is received and is valid until 30 days after the loan is approved. APRs may vary with loan term. For a refinance request, RV must be 2006 model year or newer. For a purchase request, RV must be 2008 model year or newer. Maximum loan to value is determined by the following: credit score and model year, with collateral value being established per NADA Used Wholesale Base Trade-in value. Maximum loan term may vary based on model year, loan amount, loan type and lender guidelines. Example of a recreational use RV loan: A 7 year fixed-rate \$55,000 loan. Based on an APR of 3.89%, this loan has 84 monthly payments of \$749.00 each.

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EQUAL HOUSING LENDER

# Price Hike?



When an Illinois reader opened her mailbox to find bills for pay-as-you-go satellite TV service that far exceeded the advertised price, she asked us for help. She wrote:

“Two years ago we bought a portable satellite TV antenna. We were attracted to it because of the ease of setup and DISH’s advertised pay-as-you-go programming. After getting reasonable monthly bills, I suddenly received bills for \$69.99 and \$92.55. This is not the pricing that was advertised. Claims such as “Pay only for the months you use” and “No charge to start or stop monthly service” rang false. We have since canceled this service, and don’t feel we should have to pay the inflated fees.

**Sue Fordyce | New Lenox, Illinois**

We contacted a DISH representative at Pace International, a partner of DISH, seeking compensation for Fordyce, and we received the following reply from the company:

We are working with DISH to have the fees removed. Fordyce’s account was paused, not disconnected, and that’s the reason she was charged. The customer said she is going to give DISH another chance and will call Pace directly to make sure everything is done correctly in the future.

**Matt Catlin**

Vice President of Sales and Marketing  
Pace International  
Rochester, Minnesota

## Pre-authorization Pains

Upset after discovering he would not receive a warranty reimbursement for the new air conditioner installed on his RV, a reader turned to Hot Line for assistance.

“I purchased my RV in May 2014. In April 2015 a new Coleman 48000 series Airxcel air conditioner was installed to replace the original unit. Four months later, the new unit was not working properly. On September

8, I called Coleman to find a dealer or repair service who would come to the RV resort at which I was staying. I was given several numbers for several dealers, but no one I contacted would come to the park.

A repair service finally agreed to check out the unit, and found that it was low on coolant. We made the decision to install a new unit on September 16 for a cost of \$990.

Once I returned home, I contacted Coleman to resolve this issue and receive reimbursement for the cost of the replacement of the unit. Coleman refused to help with any of the expense, stating that the work required prior authorization.

**Gerry Navarre | Sulphur, Louisiana**

One of the most frequent subjects we deal with at Hot Line is pre-authorization for repairs under warranty. If a warranty requires pre-authorization before any work is completed, 99

times out of 100 a claim will be denied because the process was not followed correctly.

Airxcel wrote:

We are in receipt of Hot Line’s letter concerning Gerry Navarre. Mr. Navarre’s first call was to Jennie on September 8 for phone numbers to authorized service centers. She gave him several options, and informed him that the service center would need to contact us for prior authorization.

On September 15, Jennie received another call from Mr. Navarre, who then wished to speak with a supervisor [me]. I gave him more options and told him if anyone on our list was unable to assist him in a timely manner, he was more than welcome to use an unauthorized servicer, but told him the person he found would need to call us for prior authorization and to work out the payment details. The only cost Navarre would have to cover was the service call to his location.

The next time we received any notification from him was on September 22, when he called to get reimbursed for a replacement air conditioner that he took upon himself to have installed, ignoring our earlier conversations.

I apologized to him for the difficulties he was having with the air conditioner; however, by choosing to replace his air conditioner without our involvement, he voided his warranty and we could not reimburse him for the expenses incurred.

**Janet Savoy**

Customer Service Manager  
RV Products, a division of Airxcel Inc.  
Wichita, Kansas M

## Take Action

## Contact Hot Line for Help

Hot Line assists in mediating conflicts between consumers and RV dealers and manufacturers, accessories suppliers and service providers. After exhausting all other resources, send typed letters to MotorHome Hot Line, 2750 Park View Court, Suite 240, Oxnard, CA 93036 and enclose copies of appropriate bills and correspondence, plus a self-addressed, stamped envelope. Selected letters will be edited and published unless otherwise requested.



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Limit 1 coupon per customer per day. Save 20% on any 1 item purchased. Cannot be used with other discount, coupon or any of the following items or brands: Inside Track, Club membership, extended service plan, gift card, open box item, 3 day parking lot sale item, compressors, floor jacks, saw mills, storage cabinets, chests or carts, trailers, trenchers, welders, Adrenal, Ballard, CoverPro, Dayton, Diablo, Earthmate, Franklin, Genie, Hot, Super, MaxPro, Portland, Predator, Slick-Rak, Standard, Union, Vanguard, Viking, and value on prior purchases. Non-transferable. Valid through 11/27/16. Limit one coupon per customer per day.

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**3-1/2" SUPER BRIGHT NINE LED ALUMINUM FLASHLIGHT**

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10 FT. x 20 FT. PORTABLE CAR CANOPY

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#### SUPER COUPON

**16 OZ. HAMMERS WITH FIBERGLASS HANDLE PITTSBURGH**

Customer Rating

LOT 69006 shown  
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SAVE 77%

**\$3.99**

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**PACIFIC HYDROSTAR 1650 PSI PRESSURE WASHER**

Customer Rating

LOT 66333/65923 shown  
69488 shown

SAVE \$70

**\$79.99**

comp. at \$149.99

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**72" x 80" MOVING BLANKET**

Customer Rating

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SAVE 66%

**\$5.99**

comp. at \$17.97

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**3 GALLON, 100 PSI 3 LESS PANGAKE AIR COMPRESSOR**

Customer Rating

LOT 65275 shown  
60657/60616

SAVE 43%

**\$4.99**

comp. at \$8.99

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**12 VOLT MAGNETIC TOWING LIGHT KIT**

Customer Rating

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69826/62517

SAVE 71%

**\$9.99**

comp. at \$34.95

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**4-1/2" ANGLE GRINDER**

Customer Rating

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69645 shown

SAVE 40%

**\$1.99**

comp. at \$20.26

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**25" 16 DRAWER ROLLER CABINET**

Customer Rating

LOT 61609/67837 shown

SAVE \$623

**\$329.99**

comp. at \$952.99

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**STEP STOOL**

Customer Rating

LOT 62515/66911 shown

SAVE 60%

**\$22.99**

comp. at \$58.55

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**1-1/4 GALLON HOME AND GARDEN SPRAYER**

Customer Rating

LOT 61280/63124/63145 shown

SAVE 33%

**\$9.99**

comp. at \$14.97

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**1 TON CAPACITY FOLDABLE SHOP CRANE**

Customer Rating

LOT 69445/61803 shown

SAVE \$165

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comp. at \$269

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**THERMOMETER WITH LASER TARGETING**

Customer Rating

LOT 96461/60725 shown

SAVE 64%

**\$24.99**

comp. at \$69.99

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**700 RUNNING WATTS 2 HP 6.5 G3 2 CYCLE GAS RECREATIONAL GENERATOR**

Customer Rating

LOT 60338 shown

SAVE \$78

**\$89.99**

comp. at \$168.97

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**900 PEAK 12 VOLT MAGNETIC TOWING LIGHT KIT**

Customer Rating

LOT 63100 shown  
69826/62517

SAVE 71%

**\$9.99**

comp. at \$34.95

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**16 OZ. HAMMERS WITH FIBERGLASS HANDLE PITTSBURGH**

Customer Rating

LOT 69006 shown  
60775/60714

SAVE 77%

**\$3.99**

comp. at \$17.99

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**72" x 80" MOVING BLANKET**

Customer Rating

LOT 66537 shown  
66506/62418

SAVE 66%

**\$5.99**

comp. at \$17.97

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**3 GALLON, 100 PSI 3 LESS PANGAKE AIR COMPRESSOR**

Customer Rating

LOT 65275 shown  
60657/60616

SAVE 43%

**\$4.99**

comp. at \$8.99

Limit 1 - Good at our stores or HarborFreight.com or by calling 800-423-2567. Cannot be used with other discount, coupon or prior purchase. Coupon good at our stores, HarborFreight.com or by calling 800-423-2567. Other good with supplies list. Shipping & handling charges may apply if not valid through 11/27/16. Limit one coupon per customer per day.

**12 VOLT MAGNETIC TOWING LIGHT KIT**

Customer Rating

LOT 63100 shown  
69826/62517

SAVE 71%

**\$9.99**

comp. at \$34.95

Limit 1 - Good at our stores or HarborFreight.com or by calling 800-423-2567. Cannot be used with other discount, coupon or prior purchase. Coupon good at our stores, HarborFreight.com or by calling 800-423-2567. Other good with supplies list. Shipping & handling charges may apply if not valid through 11/27/16. Limit one coupon per customer per day.

**4-1/2" ANGLE GRINDER**

Customer Rating

LOT 95578 shown  
69645 shown

SAVE 40%

**\$1.99**

comp. at \$20.26

Limit 1 - Good at our stores or HarborFreight.com or by calling 800-423-2567. Cannot be used with other discount, coupon or prior purchase. Coupon good at our stores, HarborFreight.com or by calling 800-423-2567. Other good with supplies list. Shipping & handling charges may apply if not valid through 11/27/16. Limit one coupon per customer per day.

**25" 16 DRAWER ROLLER CABINET**

Customer Rating

LOT 61609/67837 shown

SAVE \$623

**\$329.99**

comp. at \$952.99

Limit 1 - Good at our stores or HarborFreight.com or by calling 800-423-2567. Cannot be used with other discount, coupon or prior purchase. Coupon good at our stores, HarborFreight.com or by calling 800-423-2567. Other good with supplies list. Shipping & handling charges may apply if not valid through 11/27/16. Limit one coupon per customer per day.

**STEP STOOL**

Customer Rating

LOT 62515/66911 shown

SAVE 60%

**\$22.99**

comp. at \$58.55

Limit 1 - Good at our stores or HarborFreight.com or by calling 800-423-2567. Cannot be used with other discount, coupon or prior purchase. Coupon good at our stores, HarborFreight.com or by calling 800-423-2567. Other good with supplies list. Shipping & handling charges may apply if not valid through 11/27/16. Limit one coupon per customer per day.

**1-1/4 GALLON HOME AND GARDEN SPRAYER**

Customer Rating

LOT 61280/63124/63145 shown

SAVE 33%

**\$9.99**

comp. at \$14.97

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By Ken Freund

## Crashworthiness

**Q** We've been looking to purchase a motorhome, but are not sure which class yet. I have been unable to find any government crash testing of motorhomes and between manufacturers. My assumption would be that Class B and Class C motorhomes would be safer because of the crumple zones and air bags in the cab structure.

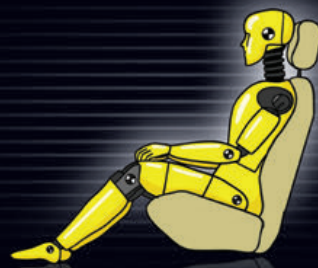
**Michael Hersey | Via email**

**A** Motorhomes are exempt from testing. Heavy and large vehicles are at a great advantage in collisions with smaller vehicles thanks to the laws of physics. However, not all Class A motorhomes would fare the same in various types of crashes, nor would all Class B or C motorhomes. Large diesel motorhomes built on a truck chassis with a conventional truck-style cab that have the engine in front are likely to provide the most occupant protection, followed by large diesel pushers. Air bags can certainly help in frontal crashes, but so can

tons of steel, which can prevent intrusion from other vehicles or objects into the cab area. Of course, seat and shoulder belts up the safety factor as

well. The extra mass a Class C has behind the cab might help in a glancing impact with another vehicle compared to a lighter Class B with the same cab. However, the extra mass of the C would not be an advantage if both the Class B and C with the same cabs impacted an identical immovable object such as a big tree at the same speed and angle.

Rollover crashes really depend on the strength of the structure. Rear-enders usually don't seriously injure belted-in motorhome occupants. So as you can see, it really depends on what kind of crash you are in, as well as the type and construction of the motorhome.



## Starting Engines in Storage

**Q** I have a question that has bothered me for years. We have a 2006 Winnebago Navion on a Sprinter chassis with a Mercedes-Benz five-cylinder diesel engine. It's kept inside, and we don't drive it in winter from November through April. Should the engine be started at all during that time, or not at all?

**Jerry Moore | Hudson, Michigan**

**A** This is a question that is certain to stir up debate. Some owners start their engines occasionally, typically monthly, and say they have good results. Others don't start them, and say they have good results.

I prefer to put fuel stabilizer in the tank and run it so it gets into the filters and injectors. Then prior to shutdown I like to spray some marine fogging oil into the air intake (after the air filter) to protect the cylinder walls from rust. I then leave it as is for the winter without starting it. I

also recommend that the oil and filter be changed before going into storage, so that there's less chance for sludge to form and for acids in the old oil eating away at the engine's innards. Old oil may also contain moisture, which can form rust inside the engine. When you start an engine, the cold combustion forms moisture, which fouls the oil and condenses in the exhaust system to form a mild acid, which eats away the metal. If you choose to start the engine, you should drive it and get it fully warmed up, rather than just letting it idle for a few minutes.

## Humming Jayco

**Q** We have a 2015 Jayco Precept 31UL. Jayco placed the AC power converter under the bed on this unit. The unit hums continuously, all night long. Jayco's fix was to have holes or vents placed under the bed to reduce the time the fan motor runs. But the problem is that the unit hums even

when the fan is not running. On the Jayco Owner's Forum I have found other people who have this problem. A couple of the correspondents stated that the problem is a "faulty transfer switch solenoid relay." Others, including myself, were told by RV service centers that the hum is normal. Can you provide any insight into this situation? If I had been allowed to spend one night in this motorhome before purchase, I would not have bought it.

**Joseph Fischer | Via email**

**A** I'm a light sleeper, and a noise like this would bug me too. Some sleep like a log, and this is probably what Jayco was hoping for when choosing this location. I don't think you have a faulty transfer switch solenoid relay. Many power converters contain a transformer that operates on 120-volt AC power at 60 Hz, and by their nature they buzz at this frequency. This is also related to price: A lower-quality converter will probably make more noise than a higher-quality



unit. You can't change that — unless you make a scientific breakthrough. So what can you do? Surrounding it with sound-deadening material would insulate it, but you don't want to do that because it will overheat. So, the best thing to do is move it. Have an electrician remount it in a place where it's fairly close to the power panel, but far enough from sleeping areas to avoid this noise problem in the future. Depending on the type of converter you have, you could also consider replacing it with a better-quality converter with the so-called "smart charging" feature that we frequently refer to on these pages. Your battery(ies) will thank you!

## Freshening the Water System

**Q** Last year I bought a Winnebago Minnie Winnie Class C motorhome. My only problem is that I can't get the smell out of the plumbing system. I thoroughly sanitized it, had it winterized, sanitized it again, used a deodorant for the freshwater tank, etc., and it still has an odor. It was most prominent from the water heater. But if I haven't used a faucet for a while, such as in the kitchen, even the cold water has that awful smell. Any suggestions?

**Darlene Nelson | Spokane, Washington**

**A** From your description, it seems like the hot water may be the culprit. First, consider your water source, particularly if it is well water. Water with high sulfur content can cause this problem. A change of the water source will often cure the problem. Otherwise, drain the tank into a large bucket. Check the anode rod in the hot-water tank (if equipped) because it's probably just about gone. Replace if necessary. Add chlorine bleach to the freshwater tank, using about 1 cup per 40-gallon capacity. Using the onboard water pump, run this mixture through the water system, including the faucets and water heater. Let it sit overnight to sanitize the tank. Drain the tank and refill with fresh water. Add a cup of baking soda by mixing it in a bucket and pouring it into

the tank. Run this mixture through the system as before, making sure you open each faucet to flush the bleach water from the system. This should freshen things up, and you can then drain the baking soda water and refill with fresh water. You can also leave the baking soda water in place because it's harmless and will be diluted as you add more water to the tank.

## Leveling Jack Care

**Q** I have a 2012 Thor Challenger 37KT Class A motorhome. What is recommended for cleaning and lubricating the motorhome's leveling jacks?

**O.D. Dearman | Eatonton, Georgia**

**A** You didn't mention what brand you have, but HWH has a free Adobe PDF file online (<http://www.hwhcorp.com/ml47149.pdf>) that discusses the company's recommendations. In part it reads: "If the jack is extended, use soap and water or WD-40 on the jack rod then wipe the rod dry with a clean cloth. Do not use a dirty rag to wipe the jack rod or do not wipe the jack rod if it is coated with dirt. This could scratch and damage the rod. Make sure to use water or WD-40 to loosen any dirt before wiping the jack rod."

## Modifying a Camera

**Q** We have a 2016 Winnebago Trend with a rearview camera mount on the mirror. Can it be adapted to be a dash camera and rearview monitor? It would need enough memory to keep at least six hours of replay.

**Daniel Lefebvre | Toronto, Canada**

**A** I'd say the short answer is no. But I checked with Winnebago tech services and got contact information for the company that provides the video equipment you mention. It is River Park Distributing, which has a toll-free number, 800-442-7717. You could call the company and perhaps find out if an adapter harness is available, which would allow a second video signal. Most dash cams have their own internal

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## COACH & POWERTRAIN

memory for recording the video, so I doubt this is feasible. The good news is dash cams are plentiful — and cheap.

### Freightliner Brake-Drum Concern

**Q** I am concerned with the front axle hub and drum assembly on my 2016 Cascadia coach on a Freightliner chassis. To me it isn't safe, as the holes in the brake drum are bigger than the wheel studs. Freightliner says it is safe because the four shoulders on the hub center the drum, and with 650 FT-LB of torque on each lug, nothing will move. I think you can get to higher-up safety authorities than me. Can you check this out with some sort of safety council? It's this way on all three axles.

**Ernest Lindgren | Dixon, Arizona**

**A** This design has been working well for a very long time and has proven itself in millions — probably billions — of miles traveled with heavy motorhomes and commercial vehicles all over the world. Therefore, if you have not experienced any sort of problem related to this design, as the old saying goes: "Let sleeping dogs lie." You

actually have as much pull with safety authorities as I do, or more, because you own the vehicle in question. So if you are still determined to say something, go online to [www-odi.nhtsa.dot.gov/recalls/recallprocess.cfm](http://www-odi.nhtsa.dot.gov/recalls/recallprocess.cfm). Here you can learn how to report a safety concern and file it. This, however, is not a safety concern, so it probably won't go far with the authorities.

### Frosty Fridge Finale?

In response to Thomas McCall's Frosty Fridge question in the May issue, I can recommend a real fix. We have a Newmar Class A with a Dometic refrigerator that would frost up so bad in 10 days that it wouldn't cool below 45 degrees Fahrenheit on the highest setting, so we had to defrost (daylong project) on a weekly basis. In November 2014 I ordered a Fridge-Fix from Smart RV Products ([www.smartrvproducts.com](http://www.smartrvproducts.com)). It took me 10 minutes to install (so simple), and there's no more frost. Not only have we not defrosted the fridge in a year and a half, we had to turn it down to keep it from freezing the contents — and now the things on (continued on page 73)

## Save Money: Clean Those Expensive Polishing Pads

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Its stiff, durable bristles remove excess wax and polishing compound, leaving the pad fluffed and ready to be put back to use, according to the company. The Pad Cleaning & Utility Brush is also designed to clean upholstery, mats, vinyl and canvas, and has a spot scrubber built onto the handle.

When the job is finished, it's time to wash the pads. Once mixed with water, Serious Pad Cleaner breaks down polishes and waxes that are embedded in the fibers. This concentrated citrus cleaner is environmentally friendly and biodegradable. After soaking in Serious Pad Cleaner for 15-30 minutes, lightly soiled pads are ready to be rinsed and dried. For those with thick, heavy clumps, a quick brushing with the mixture will bring them back to life. Serious Pad Cleaner works on wool, cotton, foam, microfiber and blended materials. Shurhold's Serious Pad Cleaner is \$14.98 for a 12-ounce tub and the Pad Cleaning & Utility Brush is \$4.98.



**Shurhold Industries, 800-962-6241, [www.shurhold.com/rv](http://www.shurhold.com/rv).**





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## COACH & POWERTRAIN

(continued from page 68)

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 city and state). Selected letters will be  
 answered in the magazine, but time does  
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#### LEGAL NOTICE

### If You Own or Owned a Norcold 1200 Series, N6 Series, or N8 Series Gas-Absorption Refrigerator or Cooling Unit, You Could Get Benefits From a Class Action Settlement.

There is a proposed settlement in two class action lawsuits against Norcold, Inc., Thetford Corporation, and The Dyson-Kissner-Moran Corporation ("Defendants") concerning three models of gas absorption refrigerators (1200, N6 and N8 series) for use in recreational vehicles ("RVs"), such as motorhomes, travel trailers, and boats. Those persons included in the settlement have legal rights and options and deadlines by which they must exercise them.

The United States District Court for the Central District of California authorized this Notice. The Court will have a hearing at the Santa Ana courthouse on September 16, 2016 at 2:30 p.m. to consider whether to approve the settlement so that the benefits may be paid.

**What Are The Lawsuits About?** The lawsuits claim that Defendants' 1200, N6 and N8 series gas-absorption refrigerators share a safety related defect in the cooling unit which, in certain circumstances, causes the boiler tubes to corrode and leak flammable gas, exposing consumers to the risk of fire. The lawsuits seek compensation for economic losses related to the purchase of Norcold Gas Absorption Refrigerators or Cooling Units. The lawsuits do not allege class claims for personal injury, wrongful death or damage to property other than the allegedly defective Norcold Gas Absorption Refrigerators or Cooling Units themselves. Defendants deny any wrongdoing and have denied all allegations in the Complaint and asserted many defenses. The Court did not decide which side was right. Instead, the parties decided to settle the class claims.

**Who Is Affected?** Subject to certain limited exclusions, you are included in the settlement if you:

- **Currently own, or formerly owned, a Norcold 1200 Series Gas Absorption Refrigerator or Cooling Unit that was manufactured between January 1, 2002, and October 1, 2012; OR,**
- **Currently own a Norcold N6 Series Gas Absorption Refrigerator or Cooling Unit, or N8 Series Gas Absorption Refrigerator or Cooling Unit, that was manufactured between January 1, 2009, and December 31, 2013.**

This settlement does not involve class claims for personal injury, wrongful death or damage to property other than to the Norcold refrigerator they own, owned, or may own in the future. Such claims are reserved.

**What Does The Settlement Provide?** The proposed settlement provides for an "all-in" Common Fund totaling \$36,000,000 to resolve all eligible class claims of 1200 Series, 800 Series and 600 Series gas absorption refrigerator owners and to fund all administrative and legal costs associated with the proposed settlement. To receive a share of the Monetary Fund you must submit a Claim Form by August 26, 2016. Payments will vary depending upon several factors, such as the number of claims submitted and other adjustments and deductions in accordance with the Allocation Plan described more fully in the detailed Notice and Claim Form available at [www.NorcoldClassAction.com](http://www.NorcoldClassAction.com). In addition, Defendants will provide, at Defendants' sole expense, a three-year extended warranty to class members who own N6 and N8 Series gas absorption refrigerators manufactured between January 1, 2009 and December 31, 2013, for a cooling unit that fails due to a leak.

**What Are Your Options? Submit a Claim.** If you don't exclude yourself, you may submit a Claim Form by August 26, 2016 to receive any benefits for which you are eligible. **Do Nothing.** You will remain in the Class and will not be able to sue Defendants about the issues in the lawsuit, but you may not receive certain benefits for which you may be eligible. **Exclude Yourself.** If you do not want to be part of the settlement, you must exclude yourself by August 26, 2016. You won't be able to get any settlement benefits, but you keep the right to sue Defendants about the class claims in the lawsuit. **Object.** You can object to all or part of the settlement by August 26, 2016, if you don't exclude yourself. **Enter Appearance.** Enter an appearance through your own lawyer at your own expense. Otherwise you will be represented by court-appointed Class Counsel, Zimmerman Reed LLP.

A detailed Notice and Claim Form containing everything you need is available online at [www.NorcoldClassAction.com](http://www.NorcoldClassAction.com). You may also call 1-877-449-8550 to request a copy. The detailed notice describes how to exclude yourself, submit a Claim Form and/or object to the proposed settlement. We encourage you to read and review it in detail.

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## Drooling in Detroit

If you're a car lover, the rolling car show that is the Woodward Dream Cruise will have you salivating

By Alan Rider

**C**onfession time: I know I tend to go on a bit when extolling the virtues of the open road (passion for a subject will do that). But there are some stretches of asphalt in particular that really do deserve to have their praises sung.

You'll find these singled out for special recognition by the folks at America's Byways ([www.byways.org](http://www.byways.org)). There are 150 of these byways, the majority of which are two-lane blacktops that wind through landscapes of great natural beauty (as an aside, if you ever find yourself stumped by where to go on your next motorhome trip, this website should provide plenty of inspiration).

This month, however, I want to tell you about what the organization has dubbed an All-American Road, a 27-mile stretch of pavement that cuts straight as an arrow through Detroit, Michigan, and its suburbs. What it lacks in scenery, it more than makes up for in automotive history and, at this time of the year, full-on spectacle.

I'm talking, of course, about Woodward Avenue. A place where the distinctly American art of automotive cruising was born, thanks to cheap gasoline and a post-war generation of teens with nothing better to do than drive up and down Detroit's main drag on a Saturday night.

That tradition lives on today in a little thing they like to call the Woodward

Dream Cruise, an event where 40,000 collector cars, customs and hot rods are brought out of mothballs to stretch their legs on a 16-mile route in front of 1.5 million appreciative fans.

As far as what you're likely to see rolling down Woodward, well, it might be easier to tell you what you won't see. Stand at the curb long enough and I'm convinced you're likely to witness just about every form of wheeled conveyance known to man, from muscle cars to motorized bar stools.

If this sounds like fun, I suggest you get out your calendar and block out Saturday, August 20, from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. And while the Woodward Dream Cruise is technically a one-day event, here's my hot tip: The festivities actually start up the Monday before the big day with car shows, concerts and

more, so make a point of arriving at least a couple of days early.

As for experiencing the main event, don't be surprised if you find yourself forgetting minor matters like eating once the action heats up. In fact, at the peak of the Woodward Dream Cruise I found it hard to take my eyes off the street for fear I'd miss something really interesting.

Most of the cars making their way down the two curbside lanes reserved for cruisers were born in the good ol' U.S. of A., but foreign brands that run the gamut from Rolls Royce to Messerschmitt are not uncommon. And it's precisely this seemingly endless variety that gives the Woodward Dream Cruise its appeal.

Perhaps the most surprising thing about the event, which is considered the largest one-day automotive extravaganza in the world, is just how family-friendly the whole thing is. The local gendarmes crack down on driving stunts like tire-smoking burnouts and consumption of alcohol outside licensed establishments to make sure things stay safe for everyone.

All of which leads me to suggest you slip into your comfiest pair of walking shoes and stake out your place on the curb. Because the Woodward Dream Cruise is one of the most entertaining detours you'll ever find along The Road Ahead. **M**

**“... at the peak of the Woodward Dream Cruise I found it hard to take my eyes off the street for fear I'd miss something really interesting.”**

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Photos: Alan Rider



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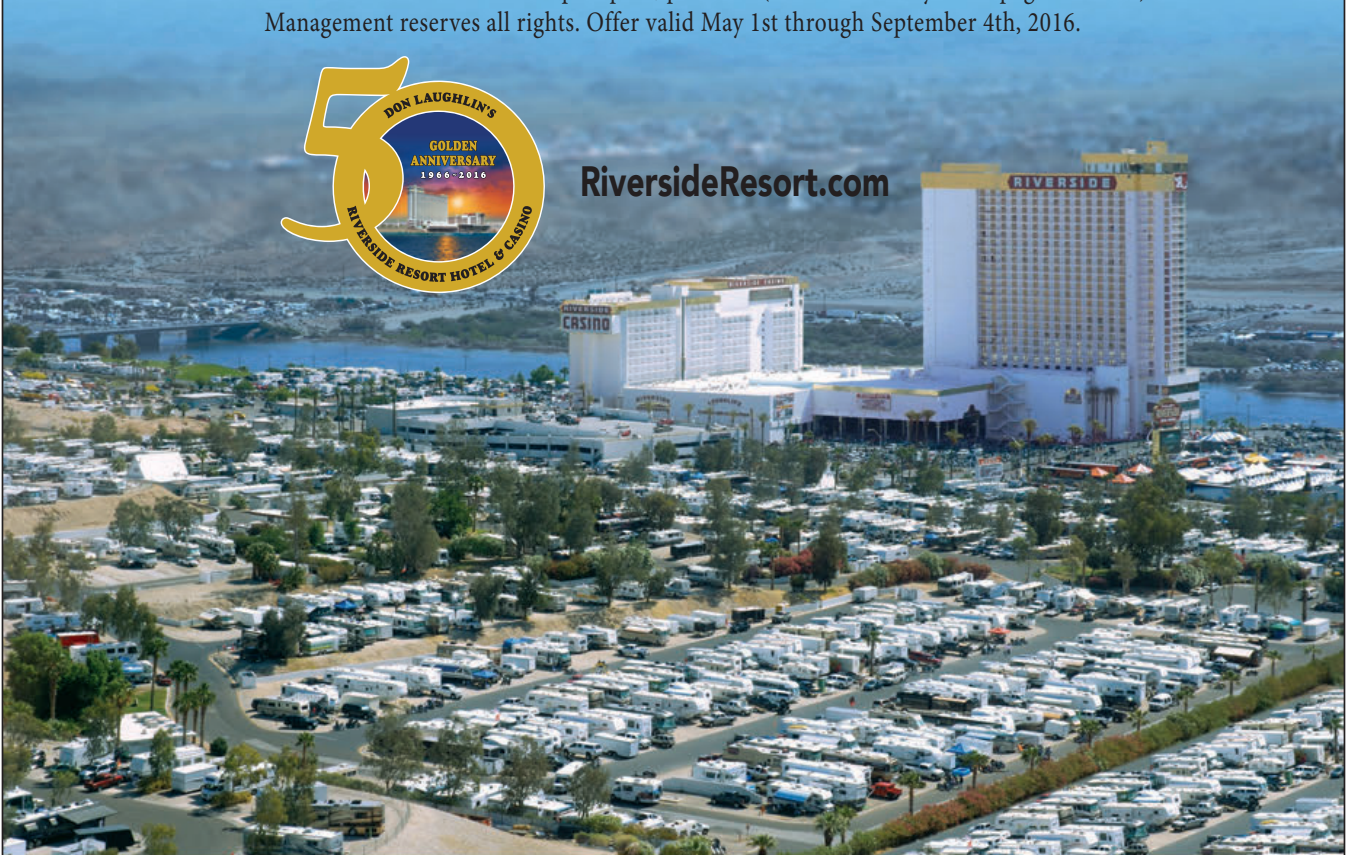
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