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2019**



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Roche Harbor is a historic seaside resort on the northwest side of San Juan Island. Pg. 20



Take an in-depth tour of some of the latest styles, trends and floorplans for the new model year in our huge New for 2019 motorhome roundup. Pg. 30

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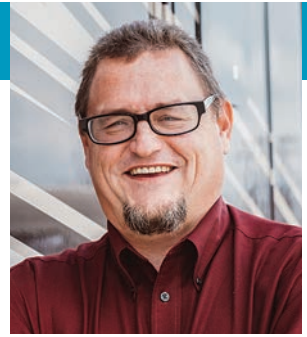
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So, which new motorhome is just right for you? Check out our special section to see the latest and greatest that motorhome manufacturers have to offer for 2019.





By Kristopher Bunker

## Building a Better Motorhome

**B**y far one of the most common questions we hear from readers is “Which motorhome should I purchase?” And if you are, in fact, one of those who has posed that question, be it by phone, on paper or via email, please do not mistake our silence for neglect.

Selecting the perfect motorhome is a personal decision on so many levels. How will you be using it? What are your plans for storing it while not in use? Is it for full-timing or for extended weekend trips? How large is your crew? And about a hundred other qualifying queries.

Perhaps we’re too close to the subject to play favorites. We live and breathe all things motorhome, from the chassis to the tires to the entertainment options to the RV parks. We replace components, we kick the tires, we visit offbeat destinations and, most importantly, we listen to those who share our lifestyle with us. And, two people from two entirely different walks of life may love the same motorhome for entirely different reasons. Or they may prefer one brand over another for exactly the same reasons. Whatever the backstory, no two people are truly alike; nor are any two motorhomes identical.

Back to the question at hand: Which motorhome should you purchase? Well, we’re short on crystal balls here, and we’ve never been

any good at reading minds. To us, all motorhomes are wonderful in their own way. Some may be flawed in one area, but excel in another. And they may do so for reasons that can only be ascribed to the person reviewing them. Class A, B or C? There is simply no right (or wrong) answer to that age-old question.

What we can do is offer expert insight into as many models as possible, all in one place, and all in an easy-to-read format. And we have done that in this issue on a much grander scale than ever before within the pages of this magazine. “New for 2019,” beginning on page 30, represents the most comprehensive effort we have ever presented to help you answer your own questions about the perfect new motorhome. We went to shows, visited dealerships, and contacted the manufacturers, and have selected an exhaustive cross section of new-for-2019 motorhomes to help you on your quest. Combining more than a century’s worth of experience between the staffs of *MotorHome* and *RVBusiness*, our roundup of more than 40 models

should give you much more than just a head start on selecting a new motorhome for purchase.

And what we found is that bunkhouses, exterior entertainment centers, full-wall slides, multiplex wiring, tag axles, LED lighting, quartz countertops, power king beds, diesel pushers, substrate construction and residential appliances are always a treat, and always make us smile. But so do versatile floorplans that can sleep up to eight people, optional 4WD, rear-vision cameras, electric fireplaces, whole-coach water filters, seamless fiberglass exteriors, upgraded suspensions and proprietary chassis.

Chances are some of the above are exactly what you’re looking for in a new motorhome ... and some, not so much. And that’s the point, isn’t it? That many of those components can be found in one single motorhome, or that you can find a motorhome that contains virtually none of the above, but is just right for the needs of you and your family. You already made the decision to join (or continue) the sweet life in a motorhome. Everything beyond is just icing on the cake.

And the best part? As the “New for 2019” feature proves, there are very few limitations in building a better motorhome today. Imagine what tomorrow may bring ... **M**

### Contributors | February



**Ann Eichenmuller** is a Virginia writer who loves traveling with husband, Eric, in their Minnie Winnie. Ann is the author of four books, including her recent mystery, *The Lies We Are* ([www.hightidepublications.com](http://www.hightidepublications.com)).



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**Mary Zalmanek**, and her husband, Jim, enjoy touring in their 2019 Winnebago Vista LX when they are not at home in Monument, Colorado. Mary is the author of *The Art of the Spark* ([www.adventuresoftheheart.com](http://www.adventuresoftheheart.com)).

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*MotorHome* (ISSN 0744-074X) is published monthly by GS Media & Events (a division of Good Sam Enterprises, LLC), 2750 Park View Ct., Ste. 240, Oxnard, CA 93036. Periodicals postage paid at Oxnard, CA 93036 and additional mailing offices. The annual subscription rate is \$19.97 per year in the U.S. For Canadian and International subscriptions, add \$12 per year. U.S. funds only.


**Postmaster** Send address changes to *MotorHome*, P.O. Box 5860, Harlan, IA 51593-1360.

**Canadian Return Address** GS Media & Events, 4960-2 Walker Road, Windsor, Ontario N9A 6J3. Publication Sales Agreement #40012332.

Printed in the United States.

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## Do you think campgrounds should charge extra for pets? Why or why not?

Those are the questions we asked in the November 2018 issue, and here are some of the responses we received.

### Earn Your Deposit

Yes, RV parks should charge extra. People love their pets, but they are not always respectful of campers without pets. As a non-pet-owner, I would like to see parks actually enforce the rules in regard to pets and the pet areas. Perhaps a substantial deposit should be charged, and if no one complains about your pet, you get your deposit back; if someone complains about excessive barking, or you're not cleaning up after a pet, the deposit is forfeited.

**Dana Larson | Ocean Shores, Washington**

### Advantage: Campgrounds

We should not have to pay extra for our fur babies. I would think any additional costs to the campground to accommodate pets are much less than those associated with children. I have seen more damage done by unsupervised children than by supervised pets. I feel that some campgrounds are taking

advantage of the camper with pets.  
**Karen Patterson | Mount Dora, Florida**

### Dog Days

I think campgrounds should charge even more for pets! At least for dogs that is, as they likely cause 95 percent of pet issues in campgrounds. Unfortunately, a surprising number of pet owners are blind to the nuisance that their pets can be to the other paying guests, as well as the campground staff who have to deal with the pet issues. Campgrounds have to set aside valuable space for dog runs, continually pay staff to clean up dog droppings from inconsiderate owners, pay increasingly higher insurance rates to protect against dog-bite liability and deal with the inevitable noise/barking complaints from unhappy guests at all hours. Unruly dogs (and there are plenty of them out there) can cause a significant expense to campgrounds,

as well as degrade the camping experience for the rest of us campers who would rather not sleep in a kennel.  
**Scott Wilson | via email**

### Supply and Demand

The simple fact is that charging for pets, or for additional people staying in your rig, is a revenue generator. It is no different than some airlines charging for a carry-on bag. Businesses do it because they can. Take a look at your next automotive repair bill. You will see a charge for "shop supplies" or an "environmental fee" or some such charge. It's done because consumers accept it. I am in the service business, and we add those ancillary charges to invoices as well. Over time, these charges can bring thousands of dollars to the bottom line. Are the charges proportional to the actual cost? No, they far exceed the real-life additional cost. As the RV industry continues to

## Featured Letter

### My Pet, My Problem

I do not believe campgrounds should charge extra for pet fees. We travel with several dogs in the motorhome while en route to dog shows, and I have not encountered this fee, and would not be open to paying for it. I understand hotels charging the fee, as many pets shed, which results in additional cleaning time, and pets may have "accidents"

that result in damage to carpets, etc. At a campground, my pets are in my motorhome. The campground is not incurring any additional work or facing potential damages. That said, pet owners: Please make sure you're a good camper, and clean up after your pet!

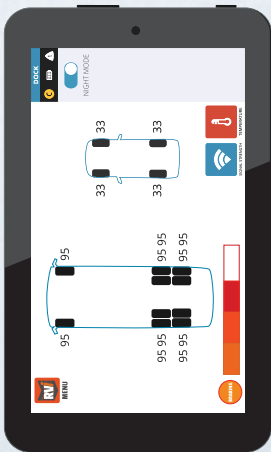
**Diane Stille | via email**



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## P.O. BOX

experience exponential growth, the demand is outstripping the supply of places to stay. As that happens, the cost will go up. Sometimes we are the victims of our own success.

**Mark Manfredi | DeBary, Florida**

### A Resounding No!

One of the reasons we started RVing is because it was getting so expensive to either board our dogs or pay extra in motels. I can see why motels charge extra, as dogs could do damage, deposit fleas, urinate on the carpet, cause disturbances, etc. But what is the extra charge for at RV facilities? It makes no sense, and I hope someone out there will enlighten us RVers on why they are charging us.

**Terry Rose | Viera, Florida**

### Pay to Play

Our family travels with a dog. He is small and relatively low-maintenance. I feel if a park is going to charge a fee for a pet, there should be some type of service or facility that the fees support. Things like doggie bags and waste containers. I really get disappointed when there are extra fees for kids. As a family with five kids in tow, \$5 per day, per kid, begins to add up quickly. Again, if the park has great facilities/equipment for them, we don't mind, but often that stuff is an extra charge anyway (i.e. a bike-cart rental). So, I guess it comes down to value exchange — my money for some type of facility or service, not just an inconvenience fee.

**Jeremey Jukes | via email**

### What's In It for Fido?

I've been RVing for more than 20 years and I always take my dogs with me. If I know in advance there is a charge for my dogs, I will usually avoid the RV park. I've stayed at some campgrounds that don't charge for dogs and have excellent dog parks where dogs can really run around and play with other dogs. I've been to other campgrounds that charge for dogs and they usually have nothing for the dogs. If they have a dog park, it's so small that it will not hold more than

two dogs and they certainly can't run. After a day of traveling, my dogs need exercise just like I do. I'll avoid any RV park that charges extra for dogs and gives them nothing in return.

**Alden Whitehead**

East Northport, New York

### Anonymous

No! Why don't they charge extra for my wife? She barks more than my German shepherd.

**Name withheld for obvious reasons**

### Maximum of Two

Yes, I think that campgrounds should charge extra for pets! I like pets, but think they are out of place at a campground where people are in close proximity to each other. And, most pet owners do not pick up after their pets even though they say they do.

If the parks charge extra for the pets, then maybe [park staff] will pick up after the owners who do not. I also think there should be a limit on the number of pets allowed for each campsite. Maybe two maximum? I've seen campers bring as many as six dogs in one small RV. It was not pleasant to camp near them because of the waste and the noise.

**Larry F. | via email**

### Ruff Crowd

I don't think there should be a charge for pets, but I do think there should be enforced rules for dogs, i.e., they must be leashed, limit the barking and, especially, clean up after them. We have two very small dogs that are up to date on their shots and are very well-behaved. We do not stay in parks that charge for pets. We are seniors who prefer quiet campgrounds. We never use the RV park amenities; we just want a place to plug in and veg.

**Bonnie Calhoun | via email**

### No Reason

Campgrounds should not charge extra for pets. We sometimes RV with a small dog, but having our pet with us brings absolutely no additional burden on the campground.

**Glenn Petty | via email**





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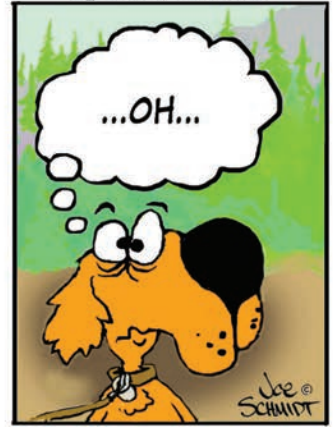
Visual Letter to the Editor



That's like saying... "ONLY PETS" go POTTY in OTHER CAMPSITES while their WALKER PRETENDS not to see it, or BARK & HOWL, or GROWL, NIP & BITE, or ILLEGALLY GO ON TRAILS, or are LET OFF-LEASH, or... or... UHHH...



by Joe Schmidt



**Cat's Meow**

I find this policy very unfair. It may have started due to some inconsiderate dog owners who don't pick up after their pets, but to charge everyone is ridiculous. We have two cats that don't go outside of the RV. Why should we have to pay extra for them, when they have absolutely no negative impact on the campground or our neighbors?

Walt Alsegg | via email

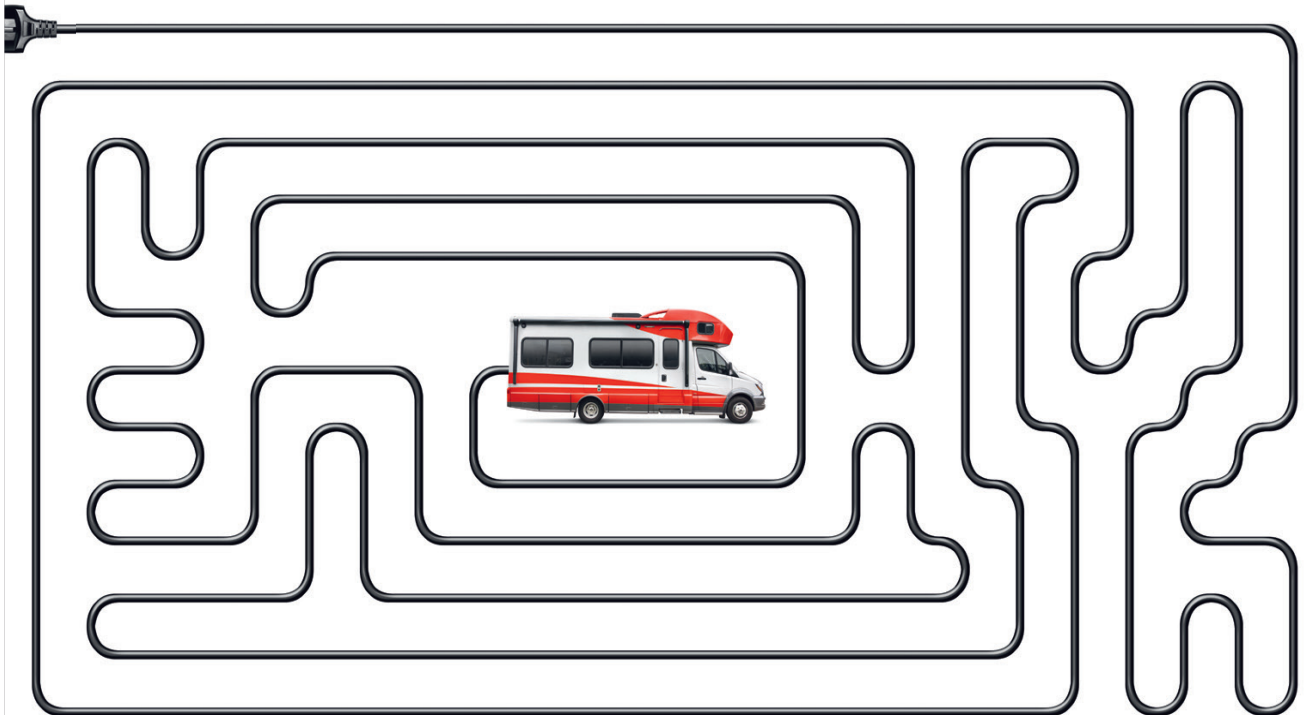
**I Can't Unsee That**

Absolutely! We have had several bad experiences due to campers and their pets. Even though campgrounds have rules about pets, enforcement of these rules is rarely addressed. Not only does the relentless barking destroy a peaceful day, but watching the poop squad in front of the dining area is a picture imprinted forever in your mind.

Joe and Jane, previous dog lovers | via email

**Money Maker**

I think it's ridiculous to charge an extra \$3-10 a night for pets. We have two small dogs and always use our own baggies to clean up after them. They don't drink enough water to make a difference, either. We have stayed at very nice RV resorts and they all charge extra. It's kind of like auto insurance; the honest people who clean up after their pets (have insurance) have to foot



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the bill for those who don't (uninsured). But, now that they have made money off the RVers, it's very unlikely they will ever drop the fee.

**The Allmans | Battle Creek, Michigan**

### Campground's Choice

Whether or not campgrounds should charge extra for pets is a matter for each campground management team, [and should be based on] the amenities they offer to their guests — two-legged and four-legged. When campgrounds offer fenced areas for pets they incur expenses, and we as pet owners should be willing to help cover those expenses as long as the facility is well-maintained.

**Rich, Brenda and four-legged family member, Maya | Virginia**

### RV Warranties and Quality Control

Well, Hallelujah! I just read the October 2018 issue, and I see that maybe, just maybe, standard RV warranties (and therefore improved manufacturer quality control) might be changing for the better.

We've owned motorhomes and travel trailers for almost 12 years. The trailer and second motorhome (now 4 years old), we bought new. I found that my bad experiences due to poor manufacturer quality control were typical among every purchaser of new RVs who I've talked to. In discussing our negative experiences regarding the quality of our new RVs, every owner I've talked to has told of numerous quality problems with their new rigs — every single one.

We have all agreed that what is needed is for a foreign manufacturer to come in with high-quality products to force American manufacturers to upgrade their quality control, as the Japanese did to our domestic-car manufacturers years ago. Now, thanks to the Japanese, the quality of our American-made automobiles has been hugely improved. In the previously mentioned October issue, I see that Hymer, a new (to the U.S.) and member of the motorhome manufacturing family, is offering a 6-year warranty on its units.

Hymer must think much more of its products than American manufacturers that only offer the industry standard of (usually) a 1-year warranty. This improved warranty says, to me, that its products offer improved quality versus the American "standard" of quality. Maybe this will pressure U.S. manufacturers to follow suit. Thank you, Hymer, for a much-needed prod to our homegrown RV manufacturers. Thank you, *MotorHome*, for your quality publication and your commitment to our enjoyment of the "mobile life."

**Dean Miller | Kilgore, Texas** 

### Question of the Month

**Is the length of warranty a major factor in your new-motorhome purchasing process? Why or why not?**

**Send your comments to:**

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By Guardian

## Fisher Towers

Named for a miner who lived nearby in the 1880s, the area surrounding Fisher Towers, just east of Moab, Utah, has hosted numerous Western movies and TV commercials. Remember the 1964 advertisement with a Chevy convertible perched on Castle Rock? This is the place! Few commercials are filmed here anymore; the rock formations have been taken over by climbers and hikers. Fisher Towers National Recreational Trail winds past the rock climbers to a point high over the canyon to catch some incredible views of Castle Valley and the Colorado River. The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) operates the area around Fisher Towers, including a small campground (no RVs) located at the end of a 2.2-mile gravel road off SR 128. There are plenty of BLM campsites along the Colorado River on SR 128, including some that will accommodate large motorhomes. — *Morey Edelman*

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By Chuck Graham

## Gearing Up: Atlas Packs

**S**corpion Rock, just off Santa Cruz Island in California, was weathering another wave-battered, wind-driven day sweeping across Channel Islands National Park. Guided kayak tours were finished for the day, but the best, late-afternoon light was about to arrive on this early winter evening.

Clambering up steep, volcanic gullies to reach a lofty perch overlooking the seabird-guano-covered rock outcropping, I observed hordes of Western gulls, elegant terns and California brown pelicans swooping above Scorpion Rock.

I dropped my camera pack and unzipped my new Athlete, made by Atlas Packs. I easily accessed a camera, wide-angle lens and my tripod. It was chilly, so I pulled my down jacket on, changed into some warm pants and wool hat and let the late afternoon light do its thing. Puffy clouds, whitecapped seas and to the southeast, Anacapa Island, enhanced the pelagic moment.

A few months prior, I was in desperate need of a new camera pack — a piece of gear that has become an extension of my body. My old one had become too pliable; 10 years of hardcore use had taken its toll, so my camera gear was moving around too much while hiking in the mountains or was banged around during rafting or kayaking trips. I was on the lookout for a new one and I finally found it.

A sturdy camera pack was what I was after, but I always wished they were also designed and built with just enough space for a night or two

**“I observed hordes of Western gulls, elegant terns and California brown pelicans swooping above Scorpion Rock.”**

out in the backcountry. Atlas Packs has designed two packs that allow for plenty of camera gear, but also ample space for a small, single-person tent, sleeping bag and pad to maximize time spent in the field to take advantage of what nature has to offer.

Allan Henry is the owner and designer of these versatile packs. An amazing photographer himself, these packs are allowing me, and other photographers, to comfortably carry two cameras, four lenses, an external hard drive, a 15-inch laptop and an assortment of extras, including filters, batteries and film. They also allow for just enough camping gear to potentially overnight on that remote granite slab or deserted beach to catch that magical morning light creeping across stunning horizons.

This is due to Atlas Pack’s development of its “Origami Camera Core,” which allows photographers to reconfigure and shift space between the camera and non-camera sections of the pack. By letting out the compression straps on either side of the pack and pushing the Origami pocket in, this allows more space for camera gear. By pushing it back out, the Athlete still retains small-to-medium sets of camera gear, but it transforms the Athlete into a 30-liter pack.

Also beneficial is Atlas Pack’s internal aluminum frame that really enhances the durability of the pack and rigidity of the Origami Camera Core, thus not allowing it to become too pliable. Because of how the Athlete is constructed, I’m now carrying a heavier load that feels lighter, making photography in the field much more efficient and enjoyable.

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🧢 **ScentLok Carbon Alloy Knit Cuff Beanie** features microfleece lining to keep heads warm. Carbon alloy technology in the lining combines activated carbon, treated carbon and zeolite to deliver maximum odor absorption. Outer fabric is treated to wick away moisture, while microfleece interior combines with rolled cuff design for total head and ear coverage. One size fits most. MSRP: \$19.99. Gander Outdoors | 888-542-6337, [www.ganderoutdoors.com](http://www.ganderoutdoors.com)



🧥 **Kadema Men's Company Jacket** features multi-zone heat elements to deliver instant warmth. Powered by a rechargeable lithium-ion battery, the elements (two at the chest and one at the back) can be activated by using integrated touch control button or via Bluetooth-enabled wireless control. Durable nylon outer shell features Wind-Shark technology for maximum weather protection. Quilted synthetic down core provides additional warmth. Rib-knit trim on the collar and wrist cuffs, plus a full-length front zipper, help seal in body heat. MSRP: \$199.99. Gander Outdoors | 888-542-6337, [www.ganderoutdoors.com](http://www.ganderoutdoors.com)



🔭 **Vanguard Endeavor ED 10 x 42 Binoculars** are designed with Extra-low Dispersion (ED) glass with MultiGuard coating for sharp images in even low light. ED glass reduces color dispersion while enhancing resolution and contrast. Open-bridge design features wide viewing angle. Anti-reflection coating on lenses improves visibility. Binoculars are nitrogen-charged and O-ring sealed, making them fog- and waterproof. MSRP: \$299.99. Overton's | 800-334-6541, [www.overtons.com](http://www.overtons.com)



🎒 **Atlas Athlete camera pack** features a thin 7-inch profile and front shell that can expand from 10 to 30 liters. It's constructed using an air-vented mesh back panel, a sturdy harness and a suspension system for comfort. An Origami camera core allows the camera section to be reconfigured for additional versatility. A 2-liter water bladder pocket is built in, while a dedicated pocket fits up to a 15-inch laptop. A camera tripod can be easily stored on either side of the pack. MSRP: \$385. Atlas Packs | 602-345-1444, <https://atlaspacks.com>





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One of the biggest concerns a motorhome owner has while towing is the state of the dinghy vehicle's brakes. Are they even being applied? Or, are they being applied continuously, causing drag and excessive brake/tire wear? Roadmaster's new Universal Wireless Brake Monitor and Switch System helps motorhome owners keep tabs on the dinghy vehicle's auxiliary brake system. The system features a brake signal receiver that plugs into the motorhome's 12-volt DC outlet, a dinghy-mounted transmitter that requires only positive/negative/brake signal leads, and a 12-volt-DC-powered infrared stop light switch that attaches to the dinghy's brake-pedal arm with 3M tape and nylon cable ties. The switch measures the distance between the floorboard and brake pedal using a cone of light, and when the brake pedal moves, it sends a signal to the receiver in the motorhome, alerting the driver of its function. Included are low-battery, extended-braking (drag) and breakaway alerts. MSRP: \$282.

**Roadmaster Inc. | 888-669-9690, roadmasterinc.com**

## Slick Oil

Shell Lubricants introduces Shell Rotella Gas Truck full synthetic engine oil to provide protection for gasoline-powered motorhomes, trucks and SUVs. The oil is available in three viscosity grades: 0W-20, 5W-20 and 5W-30. The 0W-20 and 5W-20 full synthetic motor oils help protect engines in extreme temperatures and conditions and are formulated to prevent sludge and other damaging deposits. Both oils meet API SN PLUS and API SN-Resource Conserving and are said to be ideal for modern turbocharged engines. The 5W-30 is designed for vehicles that may experience more extreme conditions including driving with a heavy load, in dusty conditions, stop-and-go driving, frequent short trips, extreme hot or cold temperatures and extensive idling. The oils will be available in 1- and 5-quart containers in the U.S., and 5-liter containers in Canada. MSRP: N/A at press time.

**Shell Rotella | www.rotella.com**



## Battery Upgrade

Trojan Battery Co. announces the Trillium line of Intelligent Lithium batteries. With life expectancy of more than 5,000 cycles, Trillium batteries maximize total energy throughout and lower lifetime operating costs, according to the company. Trillium batteries feature automotive-grade safety components, CAN-bus communication and an integrated state-of-charge indicator. Microprocessor-based intelligence allows for real-time state-of-charge, state-of-health analytics and enhanced control algorithms. Trillium's electronic controls allow for the use of most existing lead-acid chargers, according to the company. Contact local Trojan dealers for pricing.

**Trojan Battery Co. | 800-423-6569, www.trojanbattery.com**

## Doctor's Orders

TankTechs Rx is an all-natural holding tank treatment designed to eliminate odor, digest solid waste, kill mold, and prevent harmful sludge and buildup. TankTechs Rx contains probiotics, which are actually living bacteria that can thrive in all weather conditions. The treatment uses fermentation and select microbes (good bacteria) to break down waste into a healthy, wetter, odorless antioxidant, which allows for quicker tank draining and longer life for the seals, according to the company. The microbes are said to destroy E. coli and coliform bacteria and produce beneficial antioxidants, leaving any residue left behind healthy for the environment; the longer it's in the tank, the cleaner the tank gets, says TankTechs, which also maintains that a 1/2-ounce treatment is sufficient for holding tanks of any size. Available in 8-ounce (\$15.99), 16-ounce (\$24.95) and 1-liter (\$39.95) bottles.



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## Northwest Diversions

Vancouver, British Columbia, and Washington's San Juan Islands are so much more than just stopovers on the way to Alaska

By Mary Zalmanek

**M**any RVers who want to tour Alaska by land and sea begin their journey in Vancouver, British Columbia. The city receives more than 230 cruise ship calls annually, and the Port of Vancouver is where many Alaskan cruises start or end. We flew into Vancouver early before we headed out on our cruise to Alaska so that we could explore the city, which offers plenty of reasons to stay in the area longer.

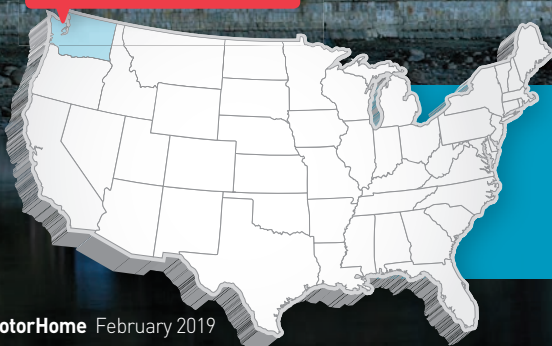
Nearly one quarter of the world's temperate rainforest is in British Columbia; the lush, green forests are filled with towering, centuries-old trees, and receive plenty of rainfall. Although, during our visit there wasn't a drop of rain — which made it a perfect day to explore the ecosystem in Capilano Suspension Bridge Park and Stanley Park.

The suspension bridge, originally built in 1889, stretches 450 feet across and 230 feet above the Capilano River. We joined the mass of people making their way across the bridge, all of us taking time to admire the view. Anyone who might be nervous walking on a wobbly bridge can take comfort in knowing the bridge can “hold up to 96 full-grown elephants.” The park covers 27 acres, with attractions on both sides of the river. As we exited the suspension bridge, we found ourselves in the Treetops Adventures, a series of seven suspended footbridges that allowed us a “squirrel’s-eye view” 110 feet above the floor of the rainforest. These bridges are attached to eight 30-ton, 250-year-old Douglas firs. The viewing platforms at each tree are held in place with an innovative tree collar system designed to accommodate the growth of the trees. No nails or bolts penetrate the firs. At Nature’s Edge, a walkway along the edge of the rainforest, we had intermittent views of the Capilano River. After we returned to the east side of the river, we explored the Cliffwalk, 700 feet of cantilevered and suspended walkways along the granite cliff face of the Capilano Canyon.

Stanley Park, a 1,000-acre natural West Coast rainforest, is a short 15-minute drive from Capilano Suspension Bridge Park. There are several ways to see the park: take a guided tour in a horse-drawn carriage, drive through



SAN JUAN ISLANDS



### ← Getting There

Surrounded by the Salish Sea, the San Juan Islands are nestled between Seattle, Washington; Vancouver, British Columbia; and Victoria, British Columbia. Of the 172 named islands in the San Juans, three main islands — Lopez, Orcas and San Juan — have lodgings, attractions and amenities for visitors.



Roche Harbor on Washington's San Juan Island is a picturesque resort town with the historic Hotel de Haro, restaurants, shopping opportunities and a marina.

in a car, or ride a bicycle. Since we didn't know much about the park, we opted for a ride in an old-fashioned carriage pulled by two beautiful horses. Our entertaining guide told us about the sights in the park, including the totem poles, Vancouver Harbour, horse stables, coastal red

cedar forest and gardens. Since this hour-long tour whetted our appetite for more, we walked back to the rose gardens, then explored the area by car. If we hadn't been short on time, we would have rented bicycles to ride around the park on the 5.5-mile Seawall loop.

### **Return to Vancouver**

After our Alaska cruise, we disembarked in Vancouver and spent another day touring the city before heading to Washington's San Juan Island for six days. Just a ferry ride away from Anacortes, Washington, the San Juan Islands entice visitors to enjoy the



Seemingly in stark contrast to the lush rainforests, the dramatic skyline of Vancouver is impressive in its urban setting, befitting exploration of its own.

beauty and recreational activities in this island paradise.

Our first stop in Vancouver was VanDusen Botanical Garden. This 55-acre garden has more than 7,500 plant species from around the world. My favorites were the monkey-puzzle tree, native to Chile and Argentina, and the giant rhubarb plants, which have some of the largest leaves of any plant in the world. The flowering gardens were ablaze with color. Just when we thought things couldn't get any better, we found the Elizabethan Maze, made from 3,000 pyramidal cedars, planted in 1981. We entered it and got hopelessly lost. Some kids were running through it, trying to beat their previous times. We decided it was in our best interest to follow them out.

We were eager to pick up our motorhome, which we'd left at Pantec Mini Storage ([www.pantecblaine.com](http://www.pantecblaine.com)), a fully fenced, secure storage lot in Blaine, Washington, during our cruise. While in Blaine, we stopped for dinner at Drayton Harbor Oyster Co., a small oyster bar featuring scrumptious, fresh mollusks. We ordered oysters with several different toppings and devoured them all.

### Setting Sail to San Juan Island

Taking a motorhome to San Juan Island — the most populous of the San Juan Archipelago — requires some planning since there are only a few RV



Photo: Mary Zaimanek

camping spots on the island. Lakedale Resort at Three Lakes has five RV sites with water and electric hookups, as well as cabin and "glamping" options. The 82-acre resort has three lakes and offers a wide range of outdoor activities. Another camping option is at the San Juan County Fairgrounds, which has eight RV spaces, all with water and electric hookups. There is no dump station on-site and there's a maximum stay of 10 days. Advance reservations are highly recommended.

It's also wise to make round-trip reservations for the Washington State Ferry ([www.wsdot.wa.gov/ferries](http://www.wsdot.wa.gov/ferries)) in advance. We arrived at the ferry terminal in Anacortes an hour before

our scheduled departure to Friday Harbor, only to find out we would have a four-hour delay due to mechanical problems on one of the ferries. In addition to planning, island life also requires patience.

Most of the visitors we talked to on board the ferry were looking forward

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Above: Capilano Suspension Bridge, originally built in 1889, stretches 450 feet across and 230 feet above the Capilano River. Below: On South Beach in American Camp National Historical Park on San Juan Island, a swath of driftwood provides a makeshift shelter on the beach.





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**GETAWAY**  
NORTHWEST DIVERSIONS



Clockwise, from above: Vancouver's 55-acre VanDusen Botanical Garden has more than 7,500 plant species from around the world, with outdoor sculptures placed in various locations. The San Juan Archipelago is just a short ferry ride from Anacortes, Washington. Charlie Zalmanek explains that if a crab's abdomen (the flap of shell that folds under from the rear) is narrow, it's a male; if it's wide and rounded, it's a female.



to lots of outdoor adventures on San Juan Island, especially biking, kayaking and whale watching. On previous visits to San Juan Island, we had biked and kayaked — we even saw whales breach right next to our boat, but this time we wanted to unwind and spend time with family. My brother-in-law, Charlie, and his wife, Roxanna, live near Friday Harbor — a quaint, walkable town lined with hanging flower baskets, sculptures, boutiques, galleries and restaurants.

During our time on the island, we sampled the local food whenever possible. Westcott Bay Shellfish Co.,

located on the north end of the island near the village of Roche Harbor, is an aquaculture farm that hand-raises Pacific oysters, Manila clams and Mediterranean mussels on the tidelands in Westcott Bay. There's no restaurant, just a retail outlet where we picked harvested shellfish out of saltwater

Vancouver offers visitors a variety of ways to enjoy the fruits of the sea, from cruise ships to fishing charters to whale-watching excursions to boat rentals and more.





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## GETAWAY

### NORTHWEST DIVERSIONS

tanks. If you want to eat your oysters raw, you can shuck them yourself at picnic tables, otherwise you can take them home to prepare. Even though I generally prefer cooked oysters — especially in land-locked states — these were so fresh that I enjoyed every slurp. Charlie and Roxanna are avid sailors, and keep their boat in Roche Harbor on the northwest side of the island, so we headed there next.

Roche Harbor is a picturesque resort with a historic hotel, several restaurants, shopping and a marina. The Hotel de Haro is the state's oldest continually operating hotel, hosting guests since 1886. Fragrant lilies were in full bloom in the hotel's gardens. We enjoyed lunch at Madrona Bar and Grill, a casual restaurant that extends over the water. Roxanna and I browsed the Village Artist Booths at Roche Harbor Resort & Spa, admiring the photography, jewelry, pottery and other fabulous creations by local artists, including Michael Bertrand. His photographs of the San Juan Islands, tulips in Skagit Valley and the night sky filled us with awe.

After Charlie readied the sailboat, we motored out to the bay. Roxanna loaded two bait boxes with a rotisserie chicken carcass, salmon heads and a leftover tamale, attached the bait boxes to crab traps, and threw them into the water. Over the next several hours, we caught 34 crabs, but only five of them stayed for dinner. The other 29 were tossed back into the bay to live another day. They were either too small, lucky enough to be born female (only the males can be kept), or too hard to eat (Japanese rock crabs aren't nearly as meaty as Dungeness). We ate the keepers for dinner that night. Yum!

Since the San Juan Islands Sculpture Park and Nature Preserve is near the marina, we stopped there on the way home. Founded in 1998, and originally called the Westcott Bay Institute for Art & Nature, the park is run entirely by volunteers. More than 150 pieces of outdoor art are displayed in the 20-acre park, the

largest sculpture park in the Pacific Northwest. The exhibition changes frequently as new pieces are installed, existing pieces are sold and pieces rotate out after a two-year display. In addition to the outdoor art, the park honors the written word. Beside the five trails in the park, there are 56 signs with short poems by David M. Jenkins. My favorites were "IN THE WILD, the sick never complain, lest

Did you know that San Juan County is the country's first Leave No Trace County? To learn more about the San Juan Islands' 7 Principles of Leave No Trace, go to [www.visitsanjuans.com/leave-no-trace](http://www.visitsanjuans.com/leave-no-trace)

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Wildlife at San Juan Island's American Camp National Historical Park includes marine animals, deer, Pacific Harbor seals and foxes, to name a few. Lakedale Resort at Three Lakes is one of the rare places on San Juan Island that offers RV sites. The resort has five campsites with partial hookups.



Photo: Shelley Campbell Bogaert

they be overheard," and "SCIENCE 102, if you find what you were looking for, you weren't looking hard enough."

Pelindaba Lavender Farm, 6 miles west of Friday Harbor, is a beautiful place to visit; acres of lavender are accented with graceful metal sculptures by local artist Micajah

Bienvenu. It's also a great place to shop for more than 250 lavender-based products. Essential oils are extracted from flowers grown in organically certified fields. The flowers and essential oils are used to make botanical, culinary, personal-care,

therapeutic, household, and pet-care products. I've been using their culinary lavender to make lavender pepper steaks for years. On this trip, we tried their delicious lavender ice cream for the first time. They also offer lavender teas, oils, vinegars, chocolates and coffee.

On our last full day, we walked on South Beach in American Camp National Historical Park. We marveled at a broad swath of driftwood that had washed up on the beach and we spotted a bald eagle soaring overhead. The wind in my hair and the waves lapping at the shore seemed the perfect goodbye to our island getaway. **M**

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**FOR MORE INFORMATION**

**Capilano Suspension Bridge Park**  
604-985-7474, [www.capbridge.com](http://www.capbridge.com)

**Lakedale Resort at Three Lakes**  
800-617-2267, [www.lakedale.com](http://www.lakedale.com)

**Pelindaba Lavender Farm**  
866-819 1911, [www.pelindabalavender.com](http://www.pelindabalavender.com)

**San Juan County Fairgrounds**  
360-378-8420, [www.sjcfair.org/p/our-facilities/237](http://www.sjcfair.org/p/our-facilities/237)

**San Juan Islands Sculpture Park and Nature Preserve**  
<http://sjsculpturepark.com>

**San Juan Islands Visitors Bureau**  
888-468-3701, [www.visitsanjuans.com](http://www.visitsanjuans.com)

**VanDusen Botanical Garden**  
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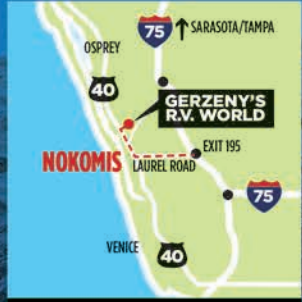
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# NEW FOR 2019

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**S**o, you want to buy a new motorhome? Or, maybe you're just curious about the latest trends to reach the market this year. Either way, we have you covered. While conducting our search for all things new for 2019, we hit the pavement, scoured the shows and dealerships, and called the

manufacturers — resulting in the most comprehensive list of new model-year RVs in *MotorHome's* history. Whether you're looking for a Class A diesel pusher, smooth-driving Class B or a family-friendly Class C, the following top debuts for 2019 will shed some light on your search for a new motorhome.



## 5 MARS IMAGINE

One of the more unique new-motorhome options for 2019 comes courtesy of Quebec-based 5 Mars. According to manager Samuel Robitaille, the Canadian upfitter has a contract with Fiat Chrysler Automobiles North America to acquire and modify vehicles such as the Pacifica and Grand Caravan with pop-up roofs

and different levels of RV-oriented equipment.

"We contacted a business to design molds to make the roofs, and we use these molds to make our roofs, which follow the exact curves of the vehicle," Robitaille said, adding that the waterproof replacement roofs can increase headroom by up to 4 feet in the front and 18 to 20 inches in the rear. Depending on the order, production can end with only slight interior modification. "We remove all the original seats and install our own seats to make up a foldable bed with two seat belts in the back so you can still travel with four people." Or, as in the Imagine, 5 Mars goes the full motorhome route. Built on the RAM ProMaster 1500, the Imagine

includes cabinets, a two-burner stove, refrigerator, table, sink and 7-gallon water tank. MSRP starts at \$94,900.



Photos: Shawn Spence, Rick Kessler and courtesy of the manufacturers

# 19



**SUPERSIZED**  
Large Class C's like the Dynamax Isata 5 30FW often feature residential amenities.



## AIRSTREAM INTERSTATE NINETEEN

Airstream's motorized division made some big waves by going small. After all, "Small is the new big, right?" asked Bob Wheeler, president and CEO of Airstream. The new Interstate Nineteen, built on the Mercedes-Benz 2500 Sprinter chassis, is a compact Class B designed to take the stress out of the driving experience. "This is the first time we've built on the 144-inch wheelbase since we started building Sprinters," Wheeler explained. The shorter wheelbase results in a 19-foot, 5-inch-long motorhome that drives like a passenger vehicle, according to Wheeler, also making the search for

larger parking spaces and facilities a non-issue. The Nineteen is powered by a 3.0-liter turbodiesel V-6 and boasts an estimated fuel economy north of 18 mpg on the highway. Naturally, the Nineteen features the usual Mercedes goodies, including collision prevention, lane-keeping assist, side and rear cameras and electronic stability control.

Inside, equipment includes a power rear sofa that converts to a 66-by-73-inch bed, ultraleather furniture, wet bath, Truma furnace/water heater, fully equipped galley and a multimedia entertainment system. MSRP: \$149,240 (base).

## AMERICAN DREAM 42Q

After a brief hiatus, REV Recreation Group has brought back a revamped American Dream as the (relatively) entry-level diesel pusher in its American Coach luxury diesel line. The American Dream enters 2019 with three bath-and-a-half floorplans, including the 42Q. Janeen Gerke, who oversees the American Coach and Monaco lines, said the 42-foot-long 42Q, which features a 450-hp engine (the 45-foot model jumps to a 600-hp powerplant) is highlighted by three slideouts, including a nearly full-wall streetside slide, as well as gray wood tones throughout. Other features include a Firefly electronics command system, abundant storage and a steerable tag axle. "With the

re-launch of the American Dream, we're trying to make it a high-end coach again," Gerke said. "For 2018, we kind of lost focus and took the American Dream to a lower price point to try to get a more entry-level customer when, in fact, the American Coach buyer is not a [standard] entry-level buyer. So we redesigned the coach to give a higher-end feel." MSRP: \$530,000 (base).



The American Dream 42Q features a jackknife sofa and a 77-inch sofa bed with queen air mattress for additional sleeping options.



### COACH HOUSE PLATINUM III

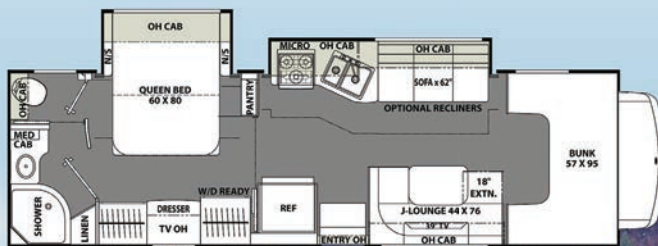
Coach House RV, the factory-direct Class C manufacturer out of Nokomis, Florida, has introduced the Platinum III. While the III retains Coach House's patented one-piece molded fiberglass shell, it's paired with the Ford Transit cutaway chassis powered by a 3.2-liter inline five-cylinder Power Stroke turbo-diesel engine. Available in either a 250 DT or 250 ST floorplan, both models offer the same galley, twin beds and large rear three-piece bath, but the DT features a convertible dinette up front, while the ST boasts a power sofa bed.

"Our goal has always been to build the best," said Coach House owner Steve Gerzeny. "We're probably one of the most expensive coaches out there, but there are reasons why I tell people if you buy a product in this industry based on price, you had better be a mechanic. The less-expensive the motorhome, the cheaper [built] it is." Other highlights include the Truma AquaGo water heater, full-body exterior paint, ducted 15,000-Btu air conditioner, Firefly multiplex wiring system, full-length inner-spring mattresses, three-year 36,000-mile warranty and an optional 170-watt solar panel. MSRP: \$160,000 (base).



### COACHMEN FREELANDER 32DS

As with anything, the first step is the most important one to take. Novice motorhomers who are just getting their feet wet in the lifestyle are just who Coachmen is aiming at with its new Freelandler 32DS. "It's a unique floorplan that includes a rear bath with a private toilet room, a residential refrigerator, and an available amidships exterior TV and outside kitchen. It's a Coachmen original," says Mike Bear, Coachmen Class C general manager. The 32DS is a dual-slideout floorplan with a master bedroom suite in the rear and the aforementioned bathroom against the rear wall, which features a corner shower on the passenger side, and a separate toilet room on the driver's side. It's a somewhat flexible space: The shower, sink and toilet can be open to the bedroom, the toilet can be its own segregated space, or the whole bath can be one space segregated from the bedroom. In typical Class C fashion, the 32DS can sleep up to eight in the standard configuration, but the sofa can be replaced with optional recliners across from the J-lounge dinette. The galley features a pantry, oven and three-burner cooktop, microwave and double-bowl kitchen sink. All Coachmen fiberglass RVs feature Azdel backing, which the manufacturer says virtually eliminates delamination caused by leaks on the side walls. MSRP: \$99,433.



### COACHMEN SPORTSCOACH SRS 339DS

More power. That's what Coachmen is hanging its hat on with the Sportscoach SRS 339DS, a new 36-foot diesel pusher designed to offer more oomph to a luxury motorhome at a more palatable price. "The fact that it has 340 hp is huge for us because our competition in this price point's going to be 300-hp," said Joe Mullen, East Coast sales representative for Coachmen Sportscoach Diesel. But a closer look reveals a more robust design. "We

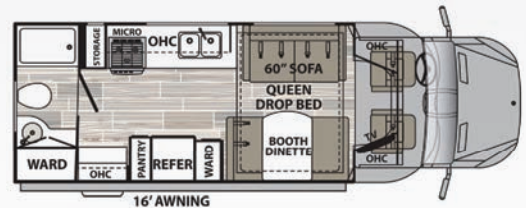






## DYNAMAX ISATA 3 24RB

With slideouts continuing to be utilized in most new motorhomes, it comes as a surprise when a new floorplan without slides is introduced. The new slide-free Isata 3 24RB Class C from Dynamax is built on a Mercedes-Benz Sprinter chassis, making it easier to handle than the "Super C's" the company is so often associated with. Previously offered as the Rev model, Dynamax streamlined the selection process for 2019 Isata 3s. "The Rev was built on a RAM ProMaster, but we discontinued ProMaster to [simplify the buying process]," said Tony Anagnos, sales manager for Forest River Dynamax. The 24RB comes in at less than 25 feet and features a sofa and Murphy bed amidships, while the large rear bathroom runs the entire width of the motorhome. Options include a second sofa in place of the dinette and a cocktail table that makes the cockpit seats part of the entertainment layout. MSRP: \$128,916.



are a true diesel-pusher build, which means we're not taking an entry-level gas motorhome and setting that box on a diesel chassis," said Mullen. "We're going to have gelcoat side walls, 17-inch bus mirrors and aluminum slam-latch baggage doors. It's a true build that way." The Cummins ISB 6.7-liter is mated to an Allison 2100MH automatic transmission, as well as full air brakes and air suspension, while a 6.0-kW diesel genset and 2,000-watt inverter ensure comfort on the road and when living without hookups. Inside, the 339DS is indeed all luxury, with a farm sink in the galley, soft-close doors throughout and residential appliances. Coachmen has even made it easy for CPAP users to route their devices through the center cabinet over the king bed. MSRP: \$225,000.

### LOOK SHARP

Coachmen's Sportcoach utilizes Azdel side walls, gelcoat finish, and front and rear fiberglass caps to enhance the appearance.





**LAP OF LUXURY**  
 Isata 5 features premium vinyl flooring, soft-touch ceiling and LED lighting.



**DYNAMAX ISATA 5 30FW**

“The hottest Class C on the market is our Isata 5, which is built on the Dodge platform,” said Anagnos. “It comes with a Cummins engine that makes 325 hp and 750 lb-ft of torque.” Like other Isata 5 models, it is available in two- or four-wheel drive, which can make reaching out-of-the-way campsites easier than ever. The 30FW model we toured features a full-wall slide that incorpo-

rates the sofa and Dream Dinette in the living area, as well as the queen bed in the rear. Built on the RAM 5500 SLT chassis, the 30FW features gelcoated fiberglass walls, aluminum framing, fiberglass caps and a custom full-body paint package. MSRP: \$189,000.



**DYNAMAX FORCE HD 34KD**

Dynamax has upped the ante on its Force lineup by introducing the Force HD, a beefed-up version of the coach that’s already known for performance with luxury living. “We discontinued the standard Force that was on a 28,000-pound GVWR chassis with a 6.7-liter in it,” said Anagnos. “We’re now going to build on the HD, which is an 8.9-liter Cummins/Allison 32,000-pound GVWR chassis with a six-speed push-button transmission. It also has 350 hp, 1,000 lb-ft of

torque and 20,000 pounds of towing capability.” The new 34KD floorplan is a dual-slideout configuration with a king bed in the rear, a split-bath amidships, and a Dream Dinette and L-shape sofa bed in the living area. Solid-wood cabinets are located throughout, and a flip-up extension in the galley increases workspace. Already renowned for its attractive exteriors, Dynamax has also introduced three new paint schemes to the Force HD lineup: Cabernet, Admiral Blue and Magnetic. MSRP: \$286,000.



## ENTEGRA CORNERSTONE 45Y

With the 45X and 45Y, Entegra Coach, a division of Jayco, has introduced two new quad-slide, mid-bath floorplans to its lineup of high-end 45-foot diesel pushers. The single-bath models differ from the 45A, 45B, 45F and the 45W, which are all bath-and-a-half motorhomes, while the entire lineup features a Cummins X15 turbocharged 605-hp engine with 1,950 lb-ft of torque powering a Spartan K3 raised-rail chassis. "We've noticed a trend of some folks wanting to go away from the bath-and-a-half unit because they don't want to give up that square footage," said Brian LaPray, Entegra's national sales manager. "You have that half-bath for the folks who want the bath, but it's 16 square feet of living space you can never get back, just to have that extra toilet. Having that mid-bath unit also gives you a flush floor all the way through the coach. That rear-bath unit, you have to step up into the bathroom. Those folks who are getting up in the middle of the night don't have to worry about stepping up into the bathroom and then stepping back out of the bathroom when they go to bed." The 45Y, LaPray added, is a "great couples coach" in that the split bathroom has dual sinks and a large shower to go along with the rear bedroom with opposing slides, king bed, rear wardrobe and washer/dryer. The living area is just as spacious with a second set of opposing slides. The driver's side slideout houses the refrigerator, pantry and entertainment center/fireplace, sandwiching either a dinette or freestanding table and chairs, while the passenger-side slideout houses the kitchen and either an L-shaped sofa or three-seat theater sofa. MSRP: \$785,000.



## ENTEGRA QWEST 24L

Entegra Coach has added the 24L to its Qwest brand of Class C motorhomes, this one built on the Mercedes-Benz Sprinter 3500 chassis. Featuring full-body paint, an automotive-bonded windshield in the front cap, modern European curved cabinetry and woven vinyl flooring, the Emblem is a luxury motorhome through and through, and the 24L certainly builds on this distinction. Featuring a full-wall slide on the driver's side, the 24L packs a lot of livability in its 25-foot footprint, and its luxury features include a Girard cantilevered awning, seamless fiberglass roof, 3.6-kW Onan LP-gas (or optional 3.2-kW diesel) generator and a porcelain toilet. "The full-wall slide gives you a ton of room," said Eash, who pointed out the slideout's large U-shaped dinette, pantry, wardrobe and walk-around queen bed in the rear. A fully functional galley featuring high-end Tecnoform cabinets and a three-piece bath are found on the passenger side of the unit. MSRP: \$135,000 (base).



## ENTEGRA EMBLEM 36H

It's been a little more than a year since Entegra Coach debuted the Emblem brand of high-end gas-powered Class A motorhomes, and for 2019, the manufacturer has added a third floorplan to the lineup. Like the other full-body paint Emblem models, the 38-foot, 8-inch 36H is built on the beefier 24,000-pound GWR Ford F-53 chassis with plenty of carpeted, pass-through basement storage. Ryan Eash, director of product development for Jayco Motorhome Group, said the Emblem's appeal is that, while it's a gas coach, it has the look and the feel found in Entegra's luxury diesel-pusher brands. As for the single-bath 36H, one of its three slideouts is a passenger-side full-wall slide, while the other two house the king bed in the rear master suite, and the residential-style recliner and sofa in the living area. The sofa can be swapped out for optional theater seating. Moving from front to back, the full-wall slide contains a dinette; well-appointed galley complete with plenty of storage and a 21-cubic-foot residential refrigerator; and wardrobe cabinets and a TV in the rear bedroom. MSRP: \$175,000.



## ENTEGRA REATTA 39T2

The Reatta represents a new diesel-pusher line for Entegra Coach. Built on a Spartan K1 360 raised-rail chassis with independent front suspension and paired with a 360-hp Cummins ISB engine with 800 lb-ft of torque, the Reatta is available initially in three models. These include the quad-slide, mid-bath 37MB, the 39T2 and 39BH, the latter two of which are 39-foot, bath-and-a-half, triple-slide units. Like the 39BH, the 39T2 has a full-wall slide on the curbside, spacious rear bath for the master suite with king-bed slide, and a wide-open living/kitchen area. While the Reatta may be relatively short in length, LaPray said it's long on features including four premium exterior paint choices; two interior designs; solid hardwood cabinets; and a galley that features a Whirlpool residential refrigerator with icemaker and water dispenser, induction cooktop, 1.5-cubic-foot convection microwave oven, solid-surface countertops and stainless-steel sink. Other highlights include a Versatouch Lyra touchpad command center with integrated app, polished tile flooring, and an entertainment system featuring a 50-inch LED TV with a soundbar and Blu-ray player in the living area. Other entertainment offerings include a 32-inch LED TV in the bedroom and an exterior 39-inch LED TV. MSRP: \$293,000.



### FLEETWOOD DISCOVERY 38W

Like its sister motorhome, the Holiday Rambler Endeavor 38W, the Fleetwood Discovery 38W is a new diesel pusher coming in at 40 feet. It's built on the Freightliner XCM Power Bridge chassis, and motivated by a 360-hp Cummins ISB 6.7-liter engine paired with a six-speed Allison 3000 transmission. The 38W floorplan features three slideouts, including a nearly full-wall slide curbside, as well as one of the largest rear bathrooms on the market with dual sinks, room for a stackable washer/dryer, and a large shower with integrated seat. "We're going for a very modern and contemporary feel," said Doug Miller, who oversees the Fleetwood and Holiday Rambler diesel-pusher lines. "We have light floors and nice bright colors. We have true stone facing on our fireplace, with a mantle, down the wall to give it more of that modern feel. It's just a nice, very warm and inviting coach."

Other features include a Firefly electronics control system, 48-inch exterior TV with entertainment center, LED lighting, safety view camera system, four-point automatic leveling, dual-glazed frameless flush-mount windows and four exterior full-body paint options. MSRP: \$330,000 (estimated).



### FLEETWOOD JAMBOREE 30F

After a one-year hiatus from manufacturing the Jamboree, REV Recreation Group has reintroduced a Fleetwood Jamboree 30F, built atop the Ford E-450 chassis, as part of an all-new Class C motorhome lineup that includes the Sprinter-based Fleetwood Pulse, and the Holiday Rambler Prodigy and Augusta. At 31 feet, 8½ inches long, the Jamboree 30F features a full-wall streetside slide, 72-by-75-inch king bed, multiplex wiring, four-point automatic leveling, 15,000-Btu air conditioner with heat pump, 30,000-Btu furnace, Onan 4.0-kW MicroQuiet generator, and is pre-wired for solar. Noting that another floorplan is in the works, Barb Knight, REV's Class C regional sales manager for the East Coast, said designers sought to give the Jamboree a "nice facelift" that is not only functional and aesthetically pleasing, but unlike other Class C motorhomes in the market. "Basically everything on the coach is standard. A three-burner range oven, GPS system and outside entertainment center are the only three options that we have available on the Jamboree," Knight said. MSRP: \$131,595.





## FLEETWOOD PACE ARROW 35 QS

Among the many all-new and revamped motorhomes from REV Recreation Group is the Fleetwood Pace Arrow 35 QS Class A, the first-ever quad-slide unit in the model lineup. At 37 feet, 7 inches long, the 35 QS, which is powered by a 340-hp Cummins ISB 6.7-liter engine atop a Freightliner Power Bridge chassis with V-Ride suspension, makes optimal use of all four slides, with two sets of opposing slides providing a large bedroom in the rear and a large galley space and conversational seating in the living area. With a king bed in the streetside slide and built-in dressers in the curbside slide, the rear bedroom also features a bank of wardrobe closets along the back wall. Other features include a drop-down bed over the cockpit, four LED TVs, residential refrigerator with 2,000-watt pure sine inverter, 50-amp service, frameless dual-pane tinted windows, induction cooktop and Illumaplex multiplex system. Options include washer/dryer, theater seating, freestanding dinette with credenza, and a technology package that offers an exterior Bluetooth speaker with porch light, Wi-Fi extender, cell booster, 160-watt solar panel and a collision-avoidance system. MSRP: \$268,759.

"BASICALLY, EVERYTHING ON THE COACH IS STANDARD. A THREE-BURNER RANGE OVEN, GPS SYSTEM AND OUTSIDE ENTERTAINMENT CENTER ARE THE ONLY THREE OPTIONS ON THE JAMBOREE."



### FOREST RIVER BERKSHIRE XLT 45B

Drawing, in part, on its extensive buying power, Forest River is able to offer the luxurious new Berkshire XLT 45B at an attractive price point, especially for a 45-foot diesel on a Freightliner XCR chassis. “We have the ability to buy in bulk per se, if you want to look at that aspect of it,” said Tim Cunningham, national sales and product manager, Forest River Diesel Motorhomes. But it goes beyond the

buying process. “At our diesel plant, all we do is build diesel motorhomes. So our warranty is under one roof, our parts are under one roof, most of the assembly and construction’s under one roof. That allows us to go above and beyond on both ends — the production side and the servicing side on the backend, too.” The XLT 45B comes standard with a steerable tag axle from Freightliner. “We put a large walk-in rear wardrobe on the

tag,” said Cunningham. “With a tag, a lot of time you associate [that layout] with full-time RVers. So we wanted to make sure we had an abundance of wardrobe space and storage overall.” Other highlights include heated floors, Aqua-Hot hydronic system, premium flooring, multiplex wiring, hardwood cabinetry and soft-touch furniture. MSRP: \$410,000.



### FOREST RIVER GEORGETOWN FR3 33DS

The Georgetown FR3 is billed as Forest River’s crossover utility vehicle (CUV), making it a popular choice for owners who want a motorhome that drives more like a Class C while retaining the livability of a Class A. That popularity also means that keeping up with the latest in comfort and technology is especially important. That’s why the newest floorplan, the FR3 33DS, is decked out with all the



### FOREST RIVER GEORGETOWN GT3 33B3

Forest River has given its Georgetown 3 Series GT3 lineup an extensive makeover for 2019. "We did a new redesign on our 3 Series," said Wagner. "We've got a new front cap, which also has a chrome package. It's got chrome mirrors, chrome front headlights, chrome bezels. There's also a new LED package, and new graphics." This year, the GT3 line also added the 33B3 floorplan, a bunkhouse model designed for RVing families. The new models also feature comfort upgrades over previous years that include redesigned dinettes and optional theater seats, plus a 12-cubic-foot refrigerator, a larger microwave and a new stovetop configuration with three burners. Standard appointments include automatic hydraulic leveling jacks, color side and rear cameras, bedroom and main living-area LED TVs, custom countertops and a Pioneer dash entertainment system. MSRP: \$138,984.



bells and whistles a family could want for entertainment and residential luxury. "It's got the large 50-inch TV, a fireplace, a huge bathroom, washer/dryer prep and a true king-size bed," said Michael Wagner, sales trainer for Forest River's Class A Gas Motor Homes. The 33DS also replaces the sofa

The FR3's galley features a 12-cubic-foot residential fridge, microwave oven and three-burner cooktop. A large 50-inch LED TV is standard, while a washer/dryer option is available.

bed in the living area with theater seating, and includes a large four-door refrigerator, residential microwave and three-burner stove in the galley. Outside, the gelcoat side walls, one-piece fiberglass roof and front cap should help keep the motorhome looking new for years to come. MSRP: \$141,116.

### FOREST RIVER GEORGETOWN GT5 34H5

Forest River has a completely new floorplan in its Class A gas Georgetown GT5 lineup. The 34H5 is a bath-and-a-half floorplan with a full bath in the rear spanning the entire width of the motorhome. The king bed in the master resides in one of the three slideouts, allowing for an open bedroom with a wardrobe, storage closet, dresser and washer/dryer option. The galley area occupies another slide, resulting in an impressive amount of prep space. The final slide is home to the spacious dinette and powered theater seating, situated for optimal viewing of the 40-inch LED TV above an electric fireplace. Also of note is the use of Precision-Plex wiring for smart control of electronics. Like all Georgetown GT5 models, the 34H5 rides on the Ford F-53 chassis and is powered by the Triton V-10 gas engine; GVWR is 22,000 pounds. MSRP: \$163,345.





### FORETRAVEL IH-45

Foretravel has been manufacturing luxury motorcoaches for more than 50 years, so it's not surprising that the company's offerings for 2019 continue to raise the bar in terms of livability and overall quality. The flagship ih-45 is built on Spartan's Foretravel TravelRide III chassis, and is made to order from there, outfitted with most anything you could think of. Coaches #6651 and #6652 show the versatility afforded by being a part of the custom-building process. Both bath-and-a-half footprints feature four slides, a large rear full bath with dual vanities, a motorized king bed curbside in the bedroom and a galley with an expandable countertop. The 6651 is equipped with dual recliners with a wine chiller within an arm's length in the living area, while the 6652's layout benefits from a large queen sofa bed and places the wine chiller on the other end of the galley. It's a subtle touch that changes a theater-room to a homier living room, and is exactly why Foretravel believes that one size doesn't fit all. Both coaches are powered by a Cummins X15 605-hp engine, with air bags added on the front, drive and tag axles for additional comfort. Appliances are all top-shelf, including a Bosch stacked washer/dryer, dish drawer and Aqua-Hot hydronic heating system. Countertops are quartz, slides are all flush when retracted and home-theater components bring the boom to movie night. MSRP: \$1,437,030 (#6651); \$1,432,410 (#6652).

**CUSTOM COMFORT**

The ih-45 is available in just about any configuration buyers can think of.



### HYMER AKTIV S

Designers of the Hymer Aktiv S say the Class B motorhome is truly European in every sense of the word. Part of the Aktiv line "imported" by Erwin Hymer Group North America (EHGNA) from its Germany-based parent company, the Aktiv S differs from the ProMaster-based Aktiv and Aktiv 2.0 as it's built on the Mercedes-Benz Sprinter platform. "We've got a German interior, German floorplan and now we have a German chassis, so now this is purely a German-engineered motorhome," said Mike Snell, EHGNA's vice president of sales and service, who noted the unit will also be available in four-wheel-drive models. Offering a floorplan



similar to other Aktiv models, Aktiv S features include second-row bench seating, full galley on the passenger side, full bathroom with shower and cassette toilet, and a flip-up bed with spacious storage. The interior color palette is also new for the Hymer lineup, featuring warm gray tone fabrics mixed with the light buttercream cabinets, similar to the styling available in Europe. MSRP: \$145,000.

### MIDWEST AUTOMOTIVE DESIGNS PASSAGE 144

Luxury Sprinter RV van, meet Mad Max. Officials at Midwest Automotive Designs, a division of REV Recreation Group, were hearing from potential customers who said they wanted a more aggressive look, so the company created what it calls its "rugged interior," reported Jason Sullivan, Midwest Automotive's product development manager. "They want to get more aggressive, so we've got new high-wear flooring, and this is our entrance into more of the outdoor sports market with our vans, whereas historically, we've catered to luxury buyers," Sullivan explained. That new look is further exhibited on the Passage 144 by its



Sprinter-based Class B exterior profile that's painted flat black, has blacked-out trim, black wheels and even a black roof rack basket. "But this is luxury that you can go out and beat up. The matte black paint, a \$5,000 option, is done in-house by Midwest," Sullivan stated, noting that the matte finish is a dull-gloss clear coat, so it is as durable as a high-gloss finish. MSRP: \$130,000 (base).







## NEWELL COACH #1659

Newell's slogan is "Where Power Meets Luxury," which is a statement that's hard to dispute with offerings like Coach #1659. With four slides, a mid-entry door and a rear master bath "suite," Coach #1659 is outfitted with just about every luxury offering imaginable, from premium leather seating to quartz countertops to four air-conditioning units to heated floors and indirect lighting. A half-bath is located amidships across from the professional-grade galley, which features a Wolf two-burner cooktop, GE Monogram residential refrigerator, GE Profile microwave convection oven and

Fisher & Paykel dishwasher drawer. There's even a built-in coffee-maker, plus a garbage disposal. The rear full bathroom houses a large closet, impressive-size shower and a stackable Whirlpool washer/dryer. The bedroom is highlighted by a queen-plus extendable bed, dual nightstands and a 49-inch curved Samsung LED 4K TV above a dresser that is flanked by dual closet areas. With the 605-hp Cummins X15 engine, plus a steerable tag axle, active suspension and leveling system, the on-the-road capabilities of Coach #1659 likely veer toward divine. MSRP: \$2,017,230.

## NEWMAR DUTCH STAR 4328

Newmar has turned its attention to versatile livability in the all-new 2019 Dutch Star lineup. Available on the Freightliner XCR or Spartan K2 tag axle chassis, the Dutch Star offers what the company calls "more furniture arrangements than ever before." The 4328 is outfitted with recliners that can sit opposite either a jackknife or Fold-N-Tumble sofa. A configuration with two storage ottomans and a bunk sofa is also available on select layouts. Whichever they choose, buyers will find themselves surrounded by a carved backlit fascia and dual-pane windows for a wide view of the surrounding area. The interior is highlighted by the carved Feature Ceiling above porcelain tile flooring. A modern cockpit houses a digital instrument panel and wireless charging pad, while Rand McNally navigation and a 360-degree camera system are available to join the standard side- and rearview display. Entertainment in the living area is courtesy of either a retractable or overhead-mounted Sony 4K TV with Blu-ray player and Bose soundbar. A Girard power side awning and LED lighting round out the package. MSRP: \$413,757.





### NEWMAR ESSEX 4551

When searching for a new home, it's pretty common knowledge that the biggest sellers are the kitchen and the bathroom. Newmar knows the same is true for luxury coaches, so the company delivers on both fronts with the 2019 Essex. Both locations (all three, if you count each bathroom) feature Super Polished solid-surface countertops and maple hardwood cabinets with raised panel doors with a matte finish. The amidships galley is

highlighted by a Whirlpool French-door residential refrigerator next to a wood pantry, with a half-bath across the hall. The rear master bath showcases what Newmar calls "our largest shower," in

addition to a full-length wardrobe. Integrating a long list of popular features and arrangements from Newmar's most popular 45-foot floorplans, the 4551 extends by way of three power slideouts, including one of the full-wall variety. Opposing sofas welcome visitors aboard, and the dinette located on the off-door side is positioned just in front of an expansive cabin window. Porcelain plank tile can be found throughout. The Essex is available on the Freightliner SL or Spartan K3 chassis powered by a 605-hp Cummins diesel. MSRP: \$764,970.



### NEXUS BENTLEY DIAMOND

NeXus RV has introduced the Bentley Diamond, a 40-foot diesel pusher built on the Spartan K1 chassis with a Cummins 6.7-liter 360-hp engine and six-speed Allison 3000 transmission. NeXus President Dave Middleton noted this is the first time the company has built on a Spartan chassis, and he said it's right in line with the manufacturer's desire to develop products that shake up the market. After all, NeXus first introduced the Bentley Diamond on a Freightliner chassis at a price point far below the market. Middleton noted that other manufacturers eventually developed competitive products, so switching the Bentley Diamond to a Spartan K1 chassis is another move to disrupt the market. "Now we've switched and we went with the value of the Spartan chassis, which is independent front suspension, air ride, air brakes, 360 hp, dual fuel fill. In this marketplace, we hit a price point that's \$20,000 less than anything else. And it's got all the features of a much higher-priced unit," Middleton said. The Bentley Diamond features high-end components, construction and amenities. MSRP: \$299,000.



### NEXUS EVOQUE

NeXus, which has been selling its Class A and C motorhomes through a dealer body for a little more than a year after having been factory-direct since its inception in 2010, has introduced the 37-foot, three-slide luxury Evoque. "The idea behind the Evoque is we once again are trying to shift the paradigm against our competition. So we took a Freightliner XCR raised-rail chassis with a 360-hp Cummins engine, paired with a 3000-series six-speed Allison transmission, loaded with full air ride and full air brakes, and we put it at a price point that no one else has," said Claude Donati, chairman of NeXus. "The Evoque is equipped with everything," he continued. "It has a 2,000-watt inverter, an 8.0-kW Onan QuietDiesel generator, residential refrigerator, 1.3-cubic-foot microwave convection oven, a brand-new Dometic range top, Formica wraparound countertops, upgraded cabinetry, leveling jacks and comfortable, durable furniture. So, it is loaded. There isn't an option that's missing," Donati said, adding the "idea was just to try to give people a chance to buy a real raised-rail diesel motorhome at a price that's pretty aggressive." MSRP: \$239,000.



## PHOENIX CRUISER 2552

Phoenix Cruiser has followed the factory-direct sales model for more than a decade, allowing the manufacturer to sell a higher-quality vehicle at a lower price by forgoing dealer costs in favor of a more affordable, personal experience. The 2019 Phoenix Cruiser 2552 built on the Ford F-450 chassis continues that trend with a popular single-slide floorplan Class C designed for families of two to four. All Phoenix

motorhomes are outfitted with cherry- or hickory wood cabinets, Corian countertops, MCD shades and leather furniture. The living area is made comfortable by the freestanding Euro chair that can be moved virtually anywhere to offer a great view of the Samsung 32-inch LED smart TV on a swivel arm, plus Blu-ray player and surround sound. Buyers can opt for a leather sofa bed or a dinette. In the galley, a counter extension comes in

handy for food prep, while a large stainless-steel sink handles dishwashing duties and a pantry near the fridge houses foodstuffs. The power twin beds amidships can be used separately or combined to create a large super sleeper. The spacious rear bath offers a neo-angle shower, foot-flush porcelain toilet and cavernous hanging closet. Phoenix will also work with the buyer and make modifications to existing footprints whenever possible. MSRP: \$132,204.

The factory-direct sales process helps keep the prices on Phoenix motorhomes reasonable without scrimping on comfort. Leather furniture and hardwood cabinets add a touch of class.

## PLEASURE-WAY TOFINO CAMPER VAN

Pleasure-Way's Tofino camper van, built on the RAM ProMaster 1500 chassis, is a throwback to simpler times but with high-quality amenities and sporty styling. A 3.6-liter V-6 Pentastar engine powers the 17-foot, 9-inch-long van conversion with its 136-inch wheelbase and claimed 2,000-pound cargo carrying capacity. Sleeping accommodations include a 49-by-72-inch overhead bunk accessible via a folding ladder (once the manual-lift roof with gas struts and Sunbrella tenting is popped up),

and a rear sofa with two seat belts that converts into a 54-by-72-inch bed. The Tofino is outfitted with two 100-amp-hour-rated lithium house batteries, a 2,000-watt inverter, touch-screen control panel with remote, adjustable swivel seating for the driver and passenger, a 2.1-cubic-foot refrigerator, single-element induction cooktop, stainless-steel sink with cover, 15-gallon freshwater tank, 8-gallon gray-water tank, city-water hookup, 16,000-Btu furnace, dimmable LED lights, MCD roller shades and a

vinyl soft-touch ceiling. To make the Tofino four-season capable, plumbing lines and tanks are located inside. At the rear is 70 cubic feet of storage, and a toy/luggage rack is optional. Also optional are 100- and 200-watt solar packages. MSRP: \$69,900 (base).





### REGENCY RV ULTRA BROUGHAM

While Fort Worth, Texas-based Regency RV has a history dating back to 1985, it was primarily a builder of custom vans and trucks. After the company was sold in 2005, it later went dormant, so when company president Alan Osicka got back into the business five years later, he resurrected the Regency name. It wasn't long, though, before he sold off the custom division and began concentrating on RVs. "Since we're from the automotive industry, we take a different look at things, like the design of the outside of our Mercedes-Benz Sprinter-based coaches," he said. Pointing to the

taillights of the upscale Ultra Brougham, he added, "I probably spend a lot more money using those than I do on the little round units." Built on the 11,030-pound Sprinter chassis, the Ultra Brougham is a couple's motorhome, with a Murphy bed tucked into the streetside wall (supported by a pair of unique fold-down captain's chairs) and perhaps the most expansive rear bath seen in a so-called Class "B-plus" motorhome. According to Osicka, another of Regency's "calling cards" is its fit and finish. "When we build our coach, from the dash all the way back, everything matches. We feel a customer of a Mercedes-Benz should



get a full coach, not just from the B-pillar back. And there are no cracks, no trim pieces to cover up a mistake, everything is made to fit." It's also made at Regency. "Being in Fort Worth, there are no local vendors, so we build everything," said Osicka. MSRP: \$133,000 (base).



### RENEGADE RV VERACRUZ 35FWS

Long known for its so-called "Super C's" on Freightliner truck chassis or Sprinter-van-chassis-based motorhomes, Renegade RV has introduced the Veracruz, a Class C built atop a Ford F-550 Super Duty platform. The Veracruz debuts with two 35-foot, 5-inch-long models — the dual-slide 35MDS and the 35FWS — that feature an L-shape dinette, three-piece bath and king bed set opposite a full-wall streetside slide that houses a sofa, galley and wardrobe. And with a Ford 6.7-liter Power Stroke V-8 turbodiesel engine, the Veracruz provides 12,000 pounds of towing capacity and is available in either two- or four-wheel drive and one of three full-body exterior paint schemes. Additionally, the Veracruz features a king-sized iRelax memory foam bed, 40-inch LED hide-away TV, Samsung 2.1 soundbar system, multiplex lighting system, maple hardwood cabinetry, solid-surface countertops and full-body paint. Veracruz is designed to be easy to drive and operate, with a comfortable and quiet driver cockpit, automotive-designed cab, automatic headlamps, remote keyless entry system and power adjustable driver pedals. "The Veracruz breaks the mold for Class C RVs but has a wide appeal; it's powerful but functional and both rugged and luxurious," said Mike Lanciotti, vice president and general manager of Renegade RV. "And Veracruz highlights Renegade's legendary luxury and quality. We build our products to an incredibly high standard, and Veracruz is no exception." MSRP: \$202,860 (base).



## RENEGADE VERONA 34VQB

Renegade RV has added the new 34VQB floorplan to its Verona lineup of Class C motorhomes built on the Freightliner M2 chassis. At 33 feet, 11 inches, the 34VQB is a little more than 2 feet shorter than the next shortest Verona model, the 36VSB, and is rated to tow trailers up to 20,000 pounds. "Retail customers have been telling us that they want something even shorter than what we had. So we started thinking about how we could possibly build a coach that would have all the amenities and all the features, and the quality of a Renegade product, but build it into a smaller exterior footprint," said Kevin Erdman, Renegade's sales and marketing director. The 34VQB features a streetside slide with a dinette booth and sofa, both of which convert into beds, and a slide in the rear bedroom housing a queen mattress. A split bath, curbside galley and large over-cab storage complete the layout.

"There are a couple of differences between it and a 36-footer, but not very many," Erdman said. "Construction-wise, they're identical. Inside, again, it's built just like all the other Renegades. It has the same solid hardwood construction. We use a fiberglass exterior roof surface. We use our signature product, the 'Super Sandwich' floor that is very unique to the industry. People really have come to appreciate what that does for you, but the quietness of this coach going down the road is absolutely amazing." MSRP: \$284,578 (base).



## THOR MOTOR COACH OUTLAW 38MB

Toy haulers are popular in the towable segment of the industry, but motorized units are few and far between. Available in Class A and Class C configurations, "The Outlaw is the only dedicated motorhome toy hauler on the market," said Krider. "Everything we do in the Outlaw is just based on the toy hauler market." The new 38MB Class A comes standard with niceties ranging from a 10-inch touchscreen dash stereo with GPS, instant water heater, multiplex lighting/systems control and a Zero-G drop-down ramp door with snap-in patio system. According to Krider, the new 38MB floorplan is the result of recognizing a need within the segment. "One of the things we see in toy haulers is they [buyers] want the garage space, but they also want a [permanent] bed," he said. "This one's got the bed in the garage area that comes out of the ceiling, but then you also have a dedicated bed in the back [of the living area]. This means you're not always having to take the bed up and put it down every time you want to work on your toys." MSRP: \$219,750.

## MAGNITUDE BR35



## OMNI BH35



## THOR MOTOR COACH MAGNITUDE & OMNI

After a brief but notable hiatus from producing new so-called "Super C" motorhomes, Thor has re-entered the market with a bang — two of them, to be exact. "The reason we got out [of the Super C market] is because we thought there were some things we could do better," said John Krider, vice president of marketing and product development at Thor Motor Coach. "We redid the entire overhead section, got the bunk lower, made it bigger and got the new skylight with the panoramic window." The new Omni and Magnitude Class C's are built on the Ford F-550 chassis and powered by the 6.7-liter Power Stroke diesel engine, resulting in a robust 10,000-pound towing capacity and fuel economy Krider estimates between 9.2 and 9.3 mpg. But the new Thors also blend that strength with superior livability by borrowing from the Class A segment. "We went with some different floorplans; they're more Class A layouts," said Krider. "So this is definitely for the more affluent Class C buyer who wants that truck chassis and a diesel engine. That's one of the big things — that when somebody gets into a 35-footer, they can't get diesel." Both models come standard with most features you'd expect in a highly equipped motorhome, including leatherette furniture, residential refrigerator, Onan genset and exterior TVs. Available in three full-wall-slide floorplans (including a bunkhouse with a bath and a half) ranging from 35 feet, 6 inches, to 36 feet, 10 inches, MSRP for the Omni and Magnitude is expected to start around \$209,000.

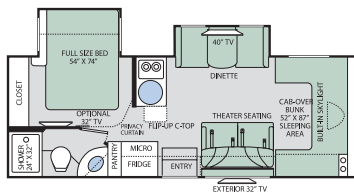


## THOR MOTOR COACH QUANTUM CR24

One of several new floorplans for 2019, the Thor Motor Coach Quantum CR24, a 25-foot, 8-inch Class C motorhome on the Mercedes-Benz Sprinter cutaway chassis with 3.0-liter 188-hp V-6 diesel engine, features a “completely unique front living room layout,” according to Thor’s Northeast Sales Manager, Joe Barlich. When the cockpit seats are rotated into the living area, coupled with the dinette slide and opposite the curbside theater seating, there’s room for six to comfortably enjoy a pleasant conversation. “This is going to be very, very popular for us going forward. It already has



been very well received because it’s not the ‘same old-same old.’ We’re actually pushing the envelope and innovating, and doing something unique and new again,” Barlich said. The motorhome features a small galley off the dinette and past the refrigerator there’s a convection microwave, pantry, three-segment bathroom, and a bedroom featuring a full-size bed slide and wardrobe along the back wall. MSRP: \$125,700 (base).



## THOR MOTOR COACH QUANTUM KW29

Built on the Ford E-450 chassis and powered by a 305-hp 6.8-liter Triton V-10 engine, the Quantum KW29 is a new 30-foot Class C motorhome featuring a king bed out back and conversational seating in the living area, thanks to theater seating set opposite a streetside dinette slide. “We’re really trying to hit all aspects and give somebody a nice place to be when it rains. This gives you the best of both worlds: a lot of Class A amenities, but with Class C affordability, comfort and drivability,” said Barlich. The KW29 also features a cozy L-shape galley off the dinette with a three-burner cooktop and dual-bowl sink. A curbside refrigerator and pantry just off the entry door flank the foot-travel route to the rear bathroom and bedroom, which has the king bed tucked neatly into a streetside slideout. A wardrobe along the rear wall completes the 31-foot motorhome’s layout. MSRP: \$121,350.



## THOR SIESTA 24MB

Murphy Bed floorplans continue to gain popularity because they allow for a more versatile living configuration. They especially make sense in compact Sprinter-based Class C’s, and the new Thor Siesta Sprinter 24MB raises the bar by including a 67-inch sofa, over which the Murphy bed deploys when needed. “Right now, many other floorplans don’t have a sofa that goes with the fold-up bed,” explained Krider. “With a Murphy bed, you have a sofa first, and then the bed folds down over the top of it, so it kind of gives you the best of both worlds.” A large slideout amidships houses the Murphy bed and the 70-inch Dream Dinette with footrests across from the 32-inch TV in the main living area. “It really takes some of this small area you usually encounter in the very middle of the motorhome, and gives you a big walkway all the way through,” said Krider. The rear bath features a roomy 24-by-36-inch corner shower, in addition to a closet for extra storage space. Outside, an armless patio awning with integrated LED lighting makes it easy to view the exterior 32-inch LED TV. MSRP starts at \$134,850.



**WHAT A VIEW!**  
Sofa/Murphy bed allows for watching TV or gazing out the large galley window.



## TIFFIN ALLEGRO BUS 40IP

Perhaps the biggest model year change for the Allegro Bus line by Tiffin is the addition of another rail on top of its proprietary PowerGlide chassis, which elevates the entire floor several more inches. The result is not only a flat floor across the length of the interior of the coach, but additional basement storage as well. Among the five Allegro Bus models is the 40IP, a quad-slide diesel pusher featuring a Cummins ISL 450-hp engine and Allison 3000MH six-speed automatic transmission. Company founder Bob Tiffin said the added rail eliminates the step-up that had been at the rear of the motorhome, plus the basement storage is a "real deal for us old folks because the doors got 3½ inches taller. So stooping down under the slideouts and getting in there is a much easier chore right now." Additionally, Tiffin pointed out the new horizontal window that extends the length of the kitchen, an addition implemented across the company's entire Class A product line by his son, Van, who is Tiffin's research and development manager. Stan Posey, Tiffin's national sales manager, added that the Bus also has a few other changes for 2019, including new paint graphics, new front and rear caps, new stairwell and a digital instrument panel in the dashboard. "It's going to look real nice and close to what our [flagship] Zephyr looks like," Posey said. Lastly, in what could arguably be a feature that should be incorporated in most RVs, Tiffin is offering an optional emergency exit door with fold-out stairs from the head of the master bed. In an emergency, pull two padded panels off the wall, and it opens like an airplane emergency exit, with small steps that fold out. MSRP: \$441,112.



## TIFFIN WAYFARER 25 QW

The Wayfarer Class C motorhome, built on the Mercedes-Benz Sprinter cutaway chassis, has come a long way in a short amount of time. Introduced in January 2017, four Wayfarer models are manufactured in Tiffin's production facility in Winfield, Alabama, which will soon be joined by a 20-bay customer service center and adjoining campground for owners seeking service work. For 2019, the Wayfarer receives several upgrades, such as a leveling system, and options including a solar system and theater seating. "We re-enhanced the 24 QW, made a couple of changes to it, and made it a 25 QW. The 24 QW had a corner shower; this one actually has a bigger shower that you can get into a lot more easily," Posey explained, adding that six full-body paint schemes also are new for 2019. MSRP: \$134,000 (base).



## 2019 WINNEBAGO ADVENTURER 36Z

For 2019, Winnebago jumped back into the larger-size gas Class A market with the return of the Adventurer, which for decades was the company's premiere gas offering. The Adventurer lineup was shelved when demand for larger motorhomes faded, leaving the Vista LX as Winnebago's top gasser; however, renewed interest in the segment made for an easy decision to bring back the Adventurer. Of the five floorplans introduced, the 36Z is the "Cadillac" of the bunch. At almost 37 feet in length, this three-slide, one-and-a-half-bath motorhome has diesel-like space and amenities on the more affordable Ford F-53 platform with a GVWR of 22,000 pounds. The 36Z features a full-wall curbside slide that includes an entertainment center with electric fireplace; galley with a 16-cubic-foot residential refrigerator, microwave oven with range touch control and dual stainless-steel sinks; and a sizable wardrobe in the rear bedroom suite. Dual slides straddle the half-bath on the driver's side, while the full rear bath is equipped with a



30-by-36-inch shower stall. Two is the magic number with the 2019 Adventurer: two standard full-body paint options, two interior décor choices and two cabinet wood choices. Of course, the Adventurer 36Z has all the high-end amenities

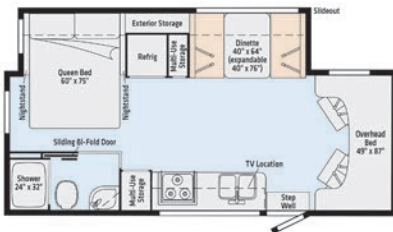
you'd expect, including a 5,500-watt generator, 2,000-watt inverter, Corian countertops, 50-inch LED HDTV and more. On the outside, 122 cubic feet of exterior storage will hold all the stuff needed for an extended RV sojourn. MSRP starts at \$152,862.



NEW FOR 2019

## WINNEBAGO VITA 24P

A full-wall slide in a sub-25-footer? Winnebago's new Vita 24P, built on the Mercedes-Benz Sprinter chassis, features just that. The streetside slide opens up the interior, making the compact Class C feel much larger than it really is. But that's not the only thing that lives large on the Vita. "The nice thing about the Vita is 'best-in-class green features



and capabilities," said Sam Jefson, Winnebago's public relations specialist. "That means large storage tanks, and a good-sized tank for your freshwater. That's a big plus for people who are active and want to be on the go. And, you

have 200 watts of solar [panels]." Winnebago has also focused on user-friendliness.

"The unique thing about this is that we've designed the pocket door [near the bed] so that you can enter the bathroom while the slide is in," said Jefson. The bed is flanked by dual nightstands and is across the aisle from the bathroom, which features a 24-by-32-inch corner shower. The Vita is also equipped with a "SuperShell" front sleeper above the cockpit, a large galley and traditional cabinetry, which Jefson says is "a nice change of pace for somebody looking for something different" from the European cabinets so popular today. MSRP: Around \$120,000.



## FOR MORE INFORMATION

### 5 Mars

844-562-7778

### Airstream Inc.

877-596-6111, [www.airstream.com](http://www.airstream.com)

### American Coach

800-854-1344,  
[www.americancoach.com](http://www.americancoach.com)

### Coach House Inc.

800-235-0984,  
[www.coachhousesrv.com](http://www.coachhousesrv.com)

### Coachmen, a division of Forest River Inc.

[www.coachmenrv.com](http://www.coachmenrv.com)

### Dynamax Corp.

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### Entegra Coach

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### Newell

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### NeXus RV

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### Phoenix Cruiser

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### Pleasure-Way

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### Regency RV

800-839-7551, [www.regencyrv.com](http://www.regencyrv.com)

### Renegade RV

[www.renegaderv.com](http://www.renegaderv.com)


### Thor Motor Coach

800-860-5658,  
[www.thormotorcoach.com](http://www.thormotorcoach.com)

### Tiffin Motorhomes Inc.

256-356-8661,  
[www.tiffinmotorhomes.com](http://www.tiffinmotorhomes.com)

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The all new Tofino combines simplicity with technology while offering 70 cubic feet of rear cargo storage, 100 Ah lithium coach batteries, 2000 watt inverter, as well as available solar package and roof rack. A manual lift roof reveals a spacious 49"x72" overhead bunk providing a second sleeping space while opening up the galley and living area.

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By E. Don Smith

# AN OUNCE OF PREVENTION



## EMPLOYING SOME SIMPLE PERSONAL SECURITY TIPS BEFOREHAND WILL HELP KEEP YOUR MOTORHOME EXPERIENCE A POSITIVE ONE

**W**hen traveling in a motorhome, we are faced with many situations that could potentially lead to trouble. To prevent a flat tire from ruining a trip, we carry a spare tire or join a roadside assistance program and carry a cellphone. To protect us and our RV, we purchase health insurance for ourselves and motorhome insurance for our coach. However, there are situations that insurance can't protect against, and situations in which preparation is needed to ensure that your trip goes more smoothly in the event you are victimized on the road.



Although rather frustrating, getting locked out of your motorhome doesn't have to mean the end of your travels, provided you follow a few simple steps.

To paraphrase Dagnet: *The story you are about to read is true; only the names have been omitted to protect the innocent.*

This couple's trip started like any other in the motorhome — with the dinghy vehicle connected to their diesel pusher. This trip was taking the couple across several states on a two-week adventure. Upon arrival, they checked into the RV resort and disconnected their dinghy from the coach. After setting up the motorhome, they headed downtown for a day of sightseeing and parked their dinghy in a public parking lot. Not wanting to carry the bulky motorhome and car keys around, they used the vehicle's external keypad and locked all the keys inside the glove compartment, along with the woman's pocketbook, which was placed in the trunk, and off they went for a day of fun.

After several hours of walking around the city, a bus tour of the area, dinner and a fireworks display, they decided to call it a night and get in the dinghy and head back to the

RV park. After walking to the public parking lot where they had parked, they were unable to locate the car. Their first assumption was that the car had been towed, so they called the phone number posted at the parking lot and they were given the address of the tow yard where all the vehicles are hauled after being towed. They got a taxi and \$48 later they were at the tow lot. The weary travelers were told their dinghy was not here, but might be at the other tow lot across town. So another cab ride (\$52) was taken to get them across town to the other lot. Upon arrival, they were told it was not there, either. At this point a sickening feeling fell upon them as they realized their car was likely stolen, along with all of their keys and the woman's pocketbook.

Next, they called the police to report the car stolen. The police, of course, asked for a tag number and the vehicle identification number (VIN) of the stolen vehicle. The couple had to report that the insurance information and VIN were stored in the dash of the car. The police advised they couldn't accept a stolen vehicle report without the info and suggested they find the info before calling back. The next 30 minutes was spent on the phone with the various credit card companies as they tried to get



After purchasing magnetic key holders, make copies of your entry door key and the compartment keys for your coach and store one in each of the holders; the compartment key on the chassis, and the door key in a basement compartment. This will ensure that you can always get into the coach and drive it if you lose your other keys. When choosing a location to hide your magnetic key holders, make sure you select a spot that you can remember and easily access, even when the coach engine is hot. You need access to the compartment key holder when the storage bays are locked and the slides are in or out, so pick your hiding location very carefully.

her credit cards canceled before too much damage was done. Not having an actual list of the cards made this task a lot more difficult, but he had his cards in his wallet so they called each card, one by one.

At this point, it was very late at night and they couldn't call their insurance agent until the next day to obtain the missing information needed by the police. They took another taxi ride back to the RV park, but the fun wasn't over yet because the coach was locked and the keys to it were in the stolen car. Luckily there was a window that was unlocked, but closed, so after finding a table to stand on, they crawled through the window to get into the coach.

The next morning, they contacted their local insurance office back home and then the tag registration office in their home state to obtain their tag number. Finally, almost 10 hours after discovering their vehicle missing, they contacted the police and reported the car stolen. The vehicle was never recovered, and the police told them it was likely parted-out, never to be seen again. After a call to a relative

back home, they had a spare set of motorhome keys shipped overnight to them, which allowed them to once again have full access to the motorhome and drive it back home.

The travelers had a lot of work to do when they returned home — dealing



Magnetic key holders with combination locks, like this one from GE/Kidde, are weather-resistant, and the strong magnet will adhere well to steel. You'll still want to try to keep it lubed and as dry and clean as possible, and test it from time to time.



## GOING DIGITAL

There are many ways to digitally save documents and scans of your credit cards, etc. You can store them in the cloud, but always use a safe service with encrypted storage methods and protect the files with a password as well. Another option is to store the data on a flash drive or a memory card. Just remember, if you physically store a card in your motorhome or dinghy and the vehicle is stolen, or in a fire, etc., you will not have access to the data. A cloud-based service does have some risks, but it also means you can access the data from basically anywhere that you have internet access and a computer or smart device.

with credit card companies, the driver's license office, tag office, etc. Making the process more difficult was the fact that several of the credit card numbers were unknown, and in some cases, they didn't even remember all of the cards they

had until charges popped up on their bill. The VISA and American Express cards were easy to take care of, but several other cards, such as gas credit cards and department store cards, were forgotten about because they didn't

have a list of the cards they carried.

There are many lessons to be learned from this situation, so let's take a look at the following list of things we can do to avoid this happening to us.

**1** No matter how secure we think the vehicle is, don't lock the keys to any vehicle inside of it. Once inside, the thief didn't have to hot wire the car because they likely found the key fob and simply started it up and drove away. Vehicles with out-of-state plates, especially, are a welcoming target for thieves. Don't give them any ammunition.

**2** When traveling in a motorhome, always keep your RV keys and a spare set of keys with you on your trip. We recommend that you keep a full set of spares to both vehicles and store them in a locked location. One idea is to keep the full spare set, including the ignition key, in a safe that is mounted inside the RV. Copy a door key and a compartment key, and keep the compartment key in a magnetic lockbox on the frame of the motorhome, and the door key in another one in a basement compartment. Only you know where they are, and a thief would be hard-pressed to spend the time to look on the off chance there is one somewhere. Never leave the ignition key to the motorhome in the ignition. If you don't want to carry it, lock it in the safe when you leave.

**3** Make sure the locations you choose for the magnetic

key holders are accessible to you, even when the engine and exhaust are hot, and make sure you can remember where they are located. The location you choose should be accessible with or without the slides open. It may be years from the time you hide the key until the time you need it, so we recommend recording the location electronically in a cloud-based file as described below. Another suggestion is to check the magnetic key holders to ensure they are there before departing on each trip.

**4** Make electronic copies of your insurance card, vehicle registration, driver's license, credit cards, health insurance cards, passport, social security card and any roadside assistance programs you belong to, and store them in your phone as well as on a cloud-based (password-protected) service. Another option is to scan the documents and email them to yourself and/or a trusted family member. Then make sure you can access your email via the web and of course update your password there as well. Another option is to store everything on a memory stick and store the memory stick in a safe place inside the coach, like the aforementioned safe. There are also apps available to help you store all of your information

via a smart device. Just make sure you use a safe and secure app that stores your information with encryption to avoid hackers. Apple iOS devices and some native apps are accessible from multiple devices — and the internet — by any device with a login.

**5** Instead of carrying all your credit cards, why not use a service like Apple Pay, Google Pay or PayPal? In the case of Apple Pay, your credit accounts are activated by the financial institution and are quite secure in your device's "wallet." Just carry one card in your actual wallet as a backup, along with your smartphone. Even if the device is stolen, it can't be used by thieves, and again, in Apple's case, it can be located and even wiped remotely.

**6** If you are not a computer guru and prefer paper copies, then keep these documents stored inside the motorhome in the safe, and your emergency keys will get you access to them even when you are locked out. Keep your extra credit cards and copies of all your IDs and documents in the safe.

**7** If you or your companion have specific medical issues or travel with your medical information such as advance directives, etc., you can expand those stored documents to

include them as well. Again, Apple's iPhones have a secure app called Health, which can be used for all your medical information, and is accessible by emergency responders. Other important personal data can be stored in your electronic contact card under "Notes," which doesn't get shared even if you share your contact card with others. This can include VINs and license plate numbers, insurance company contact information and policy numbers, and so on. Also, emergency contacts in the contact list can be marked with "ICE" — In Case of Emergency, which can be found by emergency responders. ICE contacts should also be entered in the "Health" folder, which is accessible from the emergency screen.

**8** To help keep your vehicles secure, have good quality alarm systems installed in both the motorhome and your dinghy vehicle. Some systems are even internet-connected, so you can check on the motorhome remotely, and get a notification if the system is activated. Once an alarm activates, thieves usually flee so as not to get noticed. Many late-model vehicles either have an alarm built in or available as an easy plug-in from the manufacturer. Be sure to mention your alarm systems to your vehicle's insurance company, as they'll often give substantial discounts for an alarm system.



There are a number of safes available that work very well in a mobile environment, like this Dometic MD408, which features both combination and backup key lock security. These can be bolted down under a bed or in a closet, or anywhere that is out of the way. Various options are available, including electronics charging ports and lights.

Of course this may seem like a lot of work to organize all this information and make copies, then store all these copies electronically, but in the long run it will save you a lot of time if your wallet is stolen. Taking a few small steps now to prevent yourself from being locked out of your coach or losing your passport after crossing the Canadian border can help you prevent a disaster while on the road and ruining your trip. **M**

# 2019

# SHOW

# LINEUP

**GS** | MEDIA & EVENTS



COME AND SEE US AT A **SHOW LOCATION** NEAR YOU!

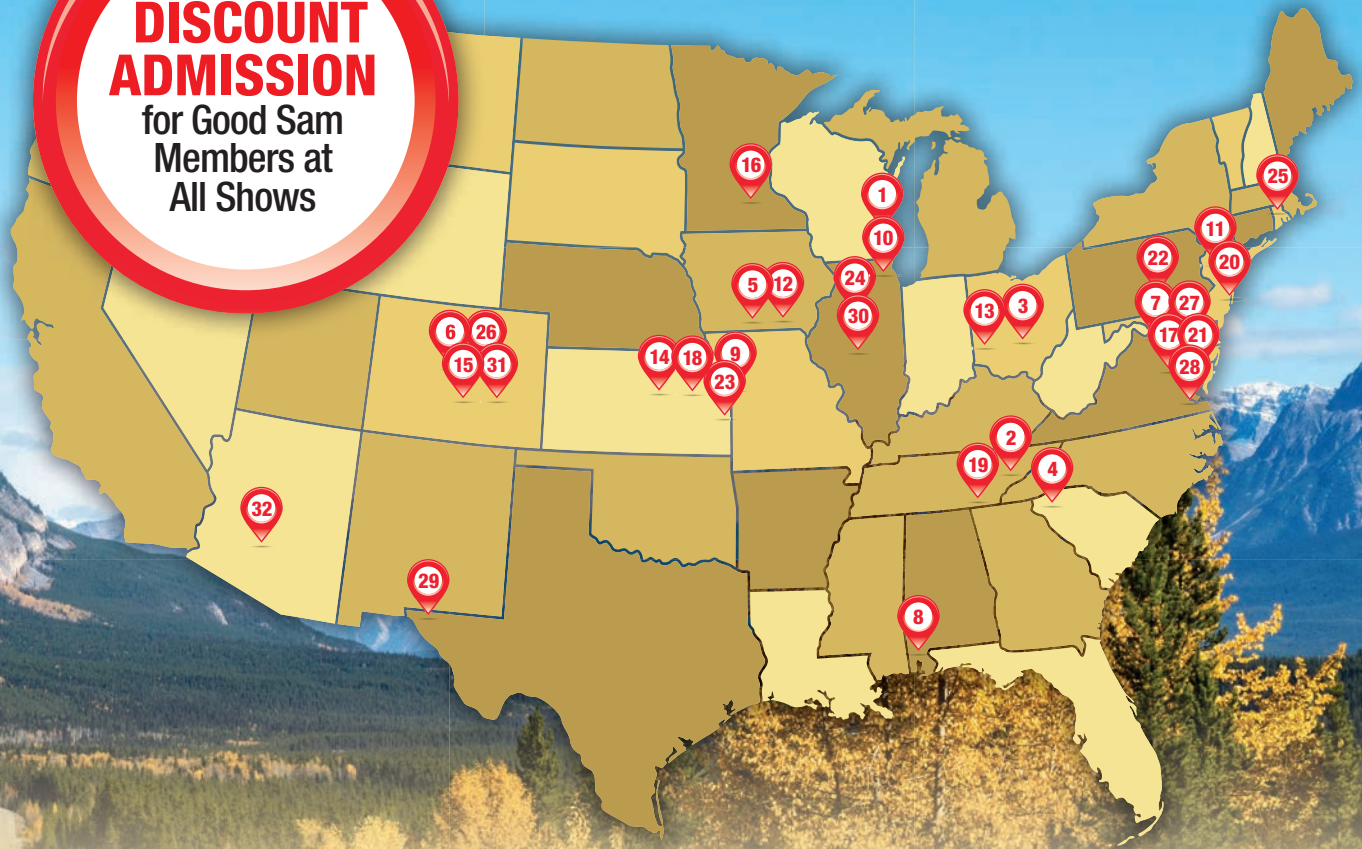
Map#	Event Name	Dates	Venue	City, State
01	Wisconsin RV Show	1/4/19-1/6/19	Wisconsin Center District	Milwaukee, WI
02	Knoxville RV Show	1/4/19-1/6/19	Sevierville Convention Center	Sevierville, TN
03	Columbus RV Show	TBD	Greater Columbus Convention Center	Columbus, OH
04	South Carolina RV & Camping Show - Greenville	1/4/19-1/6/19	Greenville Convention Center	Greenville, SC
05	Des Moines Boat & Sport Show	1/4/19-1/6/19	Iowa State Fairgrounds	Des Moines, IA
06	Colorado RV Adventure & Travel Show	1/9/19-1/12/19	Colorado Convention Center	Denver, CO
07	Washington Camping RV Expo	1/11/19-1/13/19	Dulles Expo Center	Chantilly, VA
08	Gulf Coast RV Show - Mobile	1/11/19-1/13/19	Mobile Convention Center	Mobile, AL
09	Mid America RV Show	1/17/19-1/20/19	Kansas City Convention Center - Bartle Hall	Kansas City, MO
10	Greater Chicago RV Show	1/18/19-1/20/19	Renaissance Schaumburg Convention Center	Schaumburg, IL
11	New Jersey RV & Camping Show - Edison	1/18/19-1/20/19	New Jersey Convention & Exposition Center	Edison, NJ
12	Des Moines RV & Outdoor Show	1/18/19-1/20/19	Iowa Events Center	Des Moines, IA
13	Cincinnati-Dayton RV Show	1/24/19-1/27/19	Dayton Convention Center	Dayton, OH
14	Topeka Boat & Outdoor Show	1/31/19-2/2/19	Kansas Expocentre	Topeka, KS
15	Colorado Springs RV & Outdoor Show	2/7/19-2/9/19	Colorado Springs Event Center	Colorado Springs, CO
16	Minneapolis/St Paul RV, Vacation & Camping Show	2/7/19-2/10/19	Minneapolis Convention Center	Minneapolis, MN
17	Richmond Camping RV Expo	2/8/19-2/10/19	Richmond Raceway	Richmond, VA

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Map#	Event Name	Dates	Venue	City, State
18	Topeka RV & Sport Show	2/15/19-2/17/19	Kansas Expocentre	Topeka, KS
19	Chattanooga RV Show	2/15/19-2/17/19	Chattanooga Convention Center	Chattanooga, TN
20	Atlantic City RV & Camping Show	2/15/19-2/17/19	Atlantic City Convention Center	Atlantic City, NJ
21	Richmond Boat Show	2/15/19-2/17/19	Richmond Raceway	Richmond, VA
22	Harrisburg RV & Camping Show-Pennsylvania	2/21/19-2/24/19	PA Farm Show Complex & Event Center	Harrisburg, PA
23	Overland Park RV & Outdoor Show	2/22/19-2/24/19	Overland Park Convention Center	Overland Park, KS
24	Central Illinois RV Show - Peoria	3/1/19-3/3/19	Peoria Civic Center	Peoria, IL
25	Rhode Island RV & Camping Show	3/1/19-3/3/19	Rhode Island Convention Center	Providence, RI
26	Colorado RV, Sports & Travel Show	3/7/19-3/10/19	National Western Complex	Denver, CO
27	National Capital Boat Show	3/8/19 -3/10/19	Dulles Expo Center	Chantilly, VA
28	Virginia RV Show - Hampton	3/8/19-3/10/19	Hampton Roads Convention Center	Hampton, VA
29	El Paso RV Show	3/15/19-3/17/19	El Paso Convention Center	El Paso, TX
30	Springfield RV & Camping Show	3/22/19-3/24/19	BOS Center	Springfield, IL
31	Colorado Springs RV & Travel Expo	4/4/19-4/6/19	Colorado Springs Event Center	Colorado Springs, CO
32	Greater Phoenix RV Show	TBD	TBD	Phoenix, AZ

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## HOME AWAY FROM HOME

### A 1995 WINNEBAGO VECTRA FAR SURPASSES ITS ORIGINAL INTENTION AS A TEMPORARY RESIDENCE

**T**he reasons people give for purchasing an RV are as varied as the owners themselves. In more than two years of searching out classic rides, we have met couples whose motorhome doubled as a ski lodge, a beach four-wheeler, a location service for modeling shoots, and even a tow vehicle for a trailer full of goats. But Tom and Janice Lee were the first couple we encountered who purchased their RV so they could build a house.

Not that construction was their original motivation when the pair first got into camping. In 1980, Tom promised his wife that if she'd go along with buying a motorhome, they would never have to stay in a relative's house again. The young couple's first RV was a 17-foot

Chinook on a Toyota chassis with a pop-top, followed by a 21-foot Vixen, and later by a 25-foot Sterling. They not only avoided family members' sofa beds, the couple also averaged 8,000 miles a year in recreational camping trips.

The decision to move up to a

larger Class A came after the couple bought property at Smith River in Northern California. They planned to design and build their own retirement home, and knowing this would be a long-term project, they realized a larger RV could double as an on-site residence while they worked. Not long after, the Lees were given the opportunity to purchase a 35-foot Winnebago Vectra owned by Tom's aunt and uncle. The motorhome was purchased new in 1995, but by 2003 Tom's uncle had passed away and his aunt wanted to sell the Vectra. One

Tom and Janice Lee show off their Vectra's custom contemporary paint, which often fools fellow RVers into thinking the motorhome is a newer model.

of the company's first luxury Class A diesel motorhomes with an original base price of more than \$120,000, the Vectra was well-equipped for full-time living. In good condition with only 20,000 miles on its Spartan chassis, this Winnebago fit perfectly into the Lees' future plans.

The Lees purchased the Vectra for \$40,000, living in it for nearly five years while they built their dream home. One added benefit to owning the large motorhome, at least in Tom's mind, was the need for a much bigger garage.

"I said she could design whatever she wanted in the house, but I needed a garage at least as big for the RV and tools," he says with a smile. "She got a 3,400-square-foot house, and I got a 2,800-square-foot garage — so I guess she won."

After construction was complete, full attention was turned to upgrading the Vectra. Janice was particularly eager to replace the baby-blue carpeting. "It must have been designed by a man who never had to clean it," she says, only half-jokingly. The Lees replaced the flooring with wood laminate and also added a new Norcold refrigerator. Otherwise, the original appliances were functional, and the rest of the interior was in excellent condition. Janice was particularly impressed with the quality cabinetry and the detailed workmanship.

Other upgrades included four 6-volt deep-cycle batteries and replacements for the inverter and Onan generator. Tom notes that Onan is known for producing reliable equipment, but this particular generator had multiple issues. After



Clockwise from above: New wood laminate replaces the original carpeting for an updated interior. The round sink in the split bath is an example of the Vectra's original style and workmanship. The rear bedroom features a walk-around bed.

several repairs, Tom laughs that his mechanic offered to sell the couple a new Onan at cost "if you just won't make me work on this one anymore."

The next project was the exterior. Like many motorhomes from the 1990s, it was white fiberglass with vinyl graphics that had grown faded and worn, and according to Janice, "definitely looked its age." She designed the new exterior paint scheme, and the couple took it to a shop known for its classic car renovations. The Winnebago just fit into the shop bay, and the job took 10 gallons of paint at a cost of \$300 a gallon. Of course, the same paint today would be \$800 a gallon, so



the Lees consider it a worthwhile investment, especially since it turned out so beautifully that their Vectra is often mistaken for a newer model.

As always, space is one trade-off when you purchase an older motorhome. Slides were not

## A GRAND TOUR

The Winnebago Vectra was first sold in 1993 and was manufactured through 1998. Renamed the Vectra Grand Tour, it was manufactured with two slides in 1999 and then discontinued. An updated Vectra was reintroduced by Winnebago from 2004-2009. Units built in the 1990s average between \$14,000 and \$22,000, and newer units go for \$60,000 to \$149,000, depending on age and condition.

▶ The 1995 Winnebago Vectra with dated decals before its new paint.



Photos: Tom Lee

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## The Classic Ride



The Lees built a custom 2,800-square-foot basement garage to house their Winnebago. The extra space fueled Tom's passion for collecting vintage cars. All told, the garage holds the Lees' Vectra and eight classic cars, including the Olds Fastback painted to match the motorhome.



available in the 1995 Vectra, and at only 8 feet wide it is narrower than more modern coaches. (In fact, the next model year up from the Lees' grew by 6 inches in width.) The couple admits they wish their motorhome was "a bit wider," but both agree they love their Winnebago anyway. They don't feel the need to trade up, and Janice points out that all she ever really wanted in a motorhome was the ability to walk around the bed — something she can do in their Vectra.

"We have no desire to spend \$200,000 on a new motorhome," Tom affirms.

The only other major upgrade made to their Winnebago was increased engine power, and it came as a result of having such a wonderfully large new garage. Tom, who had renovated a 1973 Corvette before the move to Northern California, realized that with 2,800 square feet, he had quite a bit of unused room.

"I filled up the extra space with classic cars," he says, adding, "so I guess I won after all."

Tom has eight vintage vehicles, including a 1923 Model T and a 1950 Oldsmobile Fastback painted to match his Vectra. He also has an enclosed trailer to transport his

cars to shows — and that's where the problem developed. While the Cummins 5.9-liter, 230-hp diesel capably pushed the Winnebago over mountains, the same was not true when his car trailer was attached. Tom went with a Banks Power Pack and new fuel injectors, which combined to produce additional horsepower for towing.

"I can do a 6 percent grade at 55 mph easily and still get 10-11 mpg," he says, joking that his Vectra gets better gas mileage than his vintage cars.

Tom and Janice have put more than 90,000 miles on their Vectra going to car shows, taking ski trips, and visiting friends and relatives. They point out that their total investment in their Winnebago Vectra has been less than \$55,000, a fraction of the cost of a new diesel pusher. Tom says he spends less annually on maintenance than most owners he has met who have much newer motorhomes. The Lees hope to continue to travel affordably for years to come, and fully expect their Vectra's diesel to make it to 300,000 miles.

That's plenty of road ahead for this classic ride. **M**



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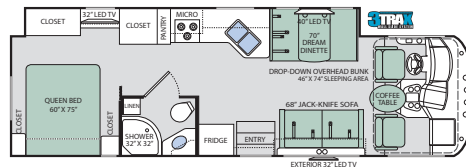
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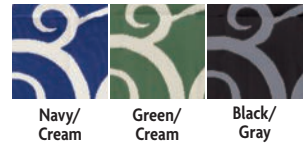
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## Lights, Please

Finding the lock to my RV's entry door in the dark can be challenging. I found a very lightweight, low-cost (about \$3) 4 LED Auto PIR Infrared IR Wireless Sensor Motion Detector Keyhole Lamp on eBay. The lamp uses one AA battery and has been working perfectly since last May. It is motion-activated and stays lit from 6 to 8 seconds — just enough time to insert the key and unlock the door. The lamps are available in silver, silver-plated, gold or white finish housings and can be attached with double-sided tape or small screws (I used 3M VHB tape). I also mounted a second light inside the motorhome, behind a valance, above the entry step. It lights the entry step and could prove invaluable as an escape light in an emergency, plus it adds a touch of safety when entering or exiting the motorhome.

**Doug Warnecke | Harwood, North Dakota**



## Stress Relief

The 50-amp shorepower cord connector for my motorhome is in a compartment with other utilities. The weight pulling on the plug was stressing the connections, so I relieved the stress by wrapping a stout bungee cord and nylon tie on the cord about 15 inches from the plug and securing it to the wall as shown.

**Dennis Chouinard | Titusville, Florida**

*From the Tech Editor: The setup of this connection, with the Marinco plug on the ceiling, is unusual. In most cases, the shorepower plug is secured inside the plug housing with a screw-down strain relief and weatherproof grommet. Also, the electrical tape suggests that the insulation may have opened up between the plug and the cordset. If this is the case, the plug should be removed and replaced. An exact replacement for this unit is available from Marinco ([www.marinco.com/en](http://www.marinco.com/en)), or both the cordset and the receptacle could be upgraded with products from Smart Plug (<https://smartplug.com/rv>).*

## Stick to It

A friend of mine has used a product called Collectors Hold Museum Putty for years. It sort of looks like Silly Putty and comes in a few different light colors. It is used in museums to "stick" valuables to shelves so the items can't be knocked off accidentally, or at the

very least, moved. I purchased the product from Amazon.com for less than \$10. To use, simply pull off a small piece, make a ball and stick it onto the back or bottom of whatever you want to stick to the wall or countertop. My friend has hung pictures using four small pieces on the back of frames. The uses are endless; I even stuck the soap

dispenser to the kitchen counter so that it doesn't have to be stored when we are moving. The best part is that if you need to take something down, twist (don't pull) the item, and it comes right off. The putty does not discolor or damage the surface in any way, and it eliminates the need to drill holes in the walls.

**Beth Borgman | Holland, Michigan**

## Soap Straw

I added a soap dispenser to the kitchen sink in my motorhome so I could get rid of the soap bar. Filling it from underneath was a hassle, so I tried filling from above. But when I did, the soap formed an air-lock bubble and overflowed, creating a mess. That's when I came up with the idea of inserting a drinking straw in the dispenser bottle to relieve the "bubble block." Now, when I fill the dispenser the air escapes through the straw and the soap stays where it belongs.

**Glenn Cannon | Hubbard, Texas**



### Have an Idea?

Quick Tips is looking for submissions. Please send your ideas to: *MotorHome* Quick Tips, 2750 Park View Ct., Ste. 240, Oxnard, CA 93036, or email [letters@motorhomemagazine.com](mailto:letters@motorhomemagazine.com). Photos must be high-resolution, at a minimum of 1,400 by 1,400 pixels. If your tip is published, you will receive \$35. All payments require an FEIN or SSN.

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## Not So EZ



Frustrated that the manufacturer of a tire-pressure monitoring system wouldn't help with repairs on a malfunctioning product that was still under warranty, a reader asked Hot Line to intervene. He wrote:

“ This morning one of the EEZ T515 TPMS sensors on our motorhome failed to register with the monitor. This same sensor failed to register a month ago. I replaced the battery with a new one and reregistered the sensor for that tire. About 15 minutes later, the monitor showed all dashes for that tire. We stopped, removed the sensor and verified the tire pressure was fine. I replaced the sensor and it registered with the monitor, but once again, after about 15 minutes, the sensor reading was all dashes for that tire.

While refueling a while later, I removed and replaced this sensor, and once again it registered, only to fail again.

Since our TPMS was still under warranty, I called EEZ customer service. They suggested I swap batteries with another sensor and see if the problem persisted. While opening the problem sensor, I noticed the antenna wire was loose. So I called EEZ again and they suggested I solder the wire back into place, since a loose antenna wire is not covered in the warranty. I said this loose wire may have been why the sensor was failing while driving, but working while stationary. They simply restated that a loose antenna wire is not covered under warranty. Their solution was for me to solder the antenna wire or order a new sensor — even though the system was still under warranty. I'm going to order a new sensor, which will cost \$38 plus shipping. I believe that EEZ should reimburse us or send a new sensor.

**Ed Liebott | Fort Worth, Texas**

This is yet another example of being aware of what a warranty covers. Whether we agree with the warranty parameters or not, they are available to the buyer before making the purchase, and should be studied. We still felt EEZ RV could help, so we passed along Liebott's letter. We never heard back from EEZ RV, but received the following update.

“ My issue with EEZ has been resolved to great satisfaction.  
E.L.

### Where to Begin?

Upset that their used motorhome showed all the signs of being a lemon as soon as it rolled off the lot, two readers turned to Hot Line for assistance. They wrote:

“ We are extremely frustrated with our local RV dealer, Freightliner and our extended warranty company. We bought a used 2006 40-foot Coachmen Encore with 44,000 miles on the odometer in February 2015. At the time of purchase we also paid \$4,224 for a Compass RV Protection vehicle service contract. We recently had to cancel a six-week trip and haven't been able to use the RV for the last three months.

After the initial purchase, the salesperson told us to take the RV for a local weekend trip and see how it worked. The plan was to develop a list of questions and problems and they (the dealer) would fix what was broken and answer any questions.

The dashboard gauges failed as we drove off the lot. We also had a broken fan and a few lights that didn't work, the awning over the door wouldn't

extend and a shade for the driver's-side windshield wouldn't roll down. [After that first outing], many items from the list were fixed. Some were not.

**Editor's note:** *The Kurzes then go on in great detail about a wide range of problems they encountered on subsequent trips, including a faulty icemaker, non-functioning satellite, a leaky roof and even collision damage incurred while their motorhome was on a lot being fixed. Plus, their warranty coverage was downgraded for reasons they could not relate. There's also the ongoing struggle with the dashboard gauges. There is not enough space within these pages to include every incident. They closed with the following:*

At this point we are stuck. Freightliner is trying to fix the gauges; we don't know who is paying for it. There is between \$10,000-\$15,000 in damage to our RV. We don't understand where the dealer's responsibility ends and where the warranty company takes over. We did not buy this "as-is" from the dealer. They were very clear that we should take the unit camping as soon as weather permits and make a list of things that we just could not see in the parking lot. In our opinion, the dealer should own all these issues. Is this just the way things are?

**Bob and Caroline Kurz  
Delmont, Pennsylvania**

While we understand the Kurzes' frustrations, their situation is not the norm. Generally, when you purchase a used RV, there is some sort of pre-established time frame as to how long from the purchase date the dealer will make fixes. That period is generally days or months, not years. The thing to learn from all this is to be sure that you know exactly how long the dealer will provide repairs, and to what extent. As far as the dashboard problem, we did

(continued on page 68)

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By Ken Freund

## Brake Failure Warning

On a return trip from Myrtle Beach, South Carolina, the brake system on our motorhome failed. We were able to safely reach a truck stop and a trucker found brake fluid on the ground. The wrapped brake line had rusted and broke. Apparently, moisture gathered inside the heat shielding and caused the corrosion. It looks like an engineering goof. Fortunately, repair was made the next morning and we arrived home safely. Pennsylvania requires annual inspection of brakes, tires, etc., but no way would a tech be able to detect a corroded brake line under the wrapping. I reported the incident to Ford and its reps said they will check further for recall.

**George DeMoss | Hatboro, Pennsylvania**

Thanks for sharing your experience and warning. Owners in regions with frequent rain or high humidity, or where salt is used on the roads in winter are most at risk. Obviously, you should never drive with a brake failure. Owners can report a safety defect at [www-odi.nhtsa.dot.gov/VehicleComplaint](http://www-odi.nhtsa.dot.gov/VehicleComplaint) or call 888-327-4236.



### Trailer a Vehicle

**Q** We are new to RVing. We own a 2017 Thor Hurricane 34F motorhome. We see many motorhomes on the road towing a dinghy vehicle behind. We are wondering about the pros and cons of trailering a vehicle rather than towing one. We own a 2018 Cadillac XT5 that we could tow on an 18-foot flatbed trailer that we would use for other tasks. Seems like this would be similar to trailering a boat, and be less wear and tear on the vehicle being towed. I understand that the motorhome's gas mileage would suffer some. Wouldn't there be less resistance from the dual-axle trailer than from the drivetrain of the Cadillac? Any suggestions and insights will be greatly appreciated.

**Roy and Laurie Scherrer  
Pikeville, Pennsylvania**

**A** Dinghy towing is indeed popular, and we publish an annual dinghy towing guide ([www.motorhome.com/download-dinghy-guides](http://www.motorhome.com/download-dinghy-guides)) that lists all vehicles approved by their manufacturers for towing with all four wheels on

the ground (also called flat towing, or recreational towing). Trailering does reduce wear and tear on a towed vehicle, especially the drivetrain components and tires. It also allows virtually any vehicle to be brought along, even if it is not approved for dinghy towing. Some motorhome owners opt to transport their dinghy vehicles inside enclosed trailers for additional protection. However, the overall and hitch weights of these trailers usually limit towing to larger diesel motorhomes. Fuel economy will, of course, suffer more as you add weight. The trailer axles may roll somewhat easier than the car's drivetrain, but the difference will be negligible and the added weight of the trailer will more than offset any reduction in rolling resistance. Weight ratings are important. Your motorhome's hitch receiver rating is 8,000 pounds, the gross combination weight rating (GCWR) is 26,000 pounds, and the maximum gross vehicle weight rating (GVWR) is 22,000 pounds. Therefore, you need to weigh your motorhome to determine accurate towing capabilities. For example, if your motorhome is loaded to the

maximum GVWR, you only have 4,000 pounds remaining capacity for a trailer and car (26,000 minus 22,000 = 4,000). Another serious issue is hitch weight. According to Thor customer service, the motorhome has a maximum allowable hitch weight rating of 800 pounds. Motorhomes like yours have a considerable amount of rear overhang, and this causes hitch weight leverage to be multiplied based on the distance from the rear axle centerline. Exceeding the hitch weight rating could lead to structural failure. If the weights and your budget allow a trailer, consider one made of aluminum, which will save hundreds of pounds. Using a tow dolly is another, lighter alternative, considering the XT5 is not approved for dinghy towing.

### Residential Refrigerators

**Q** We are considering the purchase of a new Winnebago Intent motorhome that has a residential-style refrigerator (it does not run off propane when there is no electricity). The Winnebago is equipped with a 1,000-watt inverter and two house batteries. A Winnebago rep told me,



according to their tests, the refrigerator should run about 48 hours on the two house batteries when fully charged. We often dry camp for up to 10 days at a time. We use a generator about four or five hours a day to make coffee, use the microwave, watch TV, etc. We could run it more, but we enjoy camping the way we do. In our current motorhome, the refrigerator would run on propane using a minimal amount when not on the generator or camping with hookups, and we have had no problems. My wife likes the idea of the larger refrigerator, of course. We are concerned about keeping the house batteries charged. Would we have to run our generator more than we do now? Will the house batteries recharge completely?

I am hoping you can tell me in simple terms if the 1,000-watt inverter and house refrigerator will do what I want it to do. I know that if we are just traveling and spend nights at an RV park with hookups that there should be no problems, but I am not sure about dry camping.

**Gary Epps | Edmond, Oklahoma**

**A** Upgrading the electrical system for off-grid camping is quite common, so if you like the motorhome, there are things you can do. The battery charging capacity of the power converter determines, for the most part, how long it will take to recharge your batteries with the generator or shorepower. According to Winnebago, the Intent has a 55-ampere charging capacity, so the batteries should get recharged well before your 4-5 hour genset run is over. Deep discharges (greater than 50 percent) shorten battery life, so I suggest maintaining them above that level. There are a couple of other possibilities for keeping battery power up to snuff while dry camping. First, as with any system, the batteries are the foundation. You can consider increasing the size of the battery bank, and/or employing a new technology like lithium, which will give you better run time with lighter weight. Lithium and AGM don't off-gas,

so they can be installed anywhere, including in a compartment. Then there's charging off the grid, and solar is the most common go-to off-the-grid power source for RVers. There are numerous choices for RV solar photovoltaic systems from companies like Xantrex Solar, Samlex Solar and more. AM Solar in Springfield, Oregon, is a great resource online for sizing and equipment information at [www.amsolar.com](http://www.amsolar.com). Battleborn Battery and Trojan Battery are good resources for AGM and lithium battery information.

---

### Towing a Nissan Armada

**Q** Can I tow a 2017 Nissan four-wheel-drive Armada behind a motorhome? What needs to be done to the Armada and what are the approximate costs?

**Denny Setzer | Tyler, Texas**

**A** This model is not approved by Nissan to be flat towed behind a motorhome. Therefore, it is not listed in *MotorHome's* 2017 Guide to Dinghy Towing. According to Remco, a leading authority on modifying vehicles for towing, it must be towed using a trailer. The cost will depend on the price of the trailer. Unfortunately, flat towing may cause severe damage to drivetrain components.

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### Ride Improvement — Comment

This comment is on "Ride Improvement" in the October 2018 issue. We have a 2000 Winnebago Chieftain 36W on a Ford F-53 chassis. I am the third owner. The previous owner told me that he was running 120 psi in the tires, which were load range H. The ride was rather harsh, to say the least. In checking things out, I found the manufacturer's data panel and noted that the tires were the correct size; however, the data panel had an "F" after the tire size. I took it to mean that the tires should be load range F. I changed all seven tires accordingly and inflated them to 80 psi as per the data panel. The change to the quality of

the ride was dramatic! The coach now rides so much better. It was the best improvement I have made.

**Bruce Bretschneider | Peoria, Arizona**

The Ford F-53 motorhome chassis of that era came with 19.5-inch wheels on the 18,000-, 20,500- and 22,000-pound GVWRs and (according to the F-53 Fleet Guide manual) the tire size was 245/70R19.5. Your coach should have the 20,500-pound GVWR. According to Winnebago technical services, you are correct — the tires should be load range F. That said, why did the previous owner increase the tire load rating? Often RVers do this to hedge against tire blowouts, especially if they are at the GVWR or are overloading the rig. The LR-H tires are a harsher ride when fully inflated, but another option would have been to weigh the motorhome and reference the tire load/inflation table, available from the tire manufacturer, and adjust the pressure accordingly. That may have made the ride a little more appealing. I also have to wonder if the original wheels were rated for 120 psi. But, you're in good shape with the original tire size. Nice work!

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### Towing a 2019 Honda Fit

**Q** Please let me know if my new 2019 Honda Fit with manual transmission is safe to flat tow (all four tires down). My 2010 Fit with manual transmission towed flat like a charm.

**Russell Green | via email**

**A** Models with the manual gearbox are towable; those with the continuously variable transmission (CVT) are not. Per the owner's manual:

Models with manual transmission: Your vehicle can be towed behind a motorhome. Perform the following procedure before towing your vehicle:

1. Shift to Neutral.
2. Release the parking brake.
3. Turn the ignition switch (or power mode) to ACCESSORY. Make sure the steering wheel does not lock.
4. Turn off all electrical devices. Do

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## COACH & POWERTRAIN

not use any accessory power sockets. This can prevent the battery from running down.

Whenever in doubt, always consult the owner's manual. Look in the index under towing, flat towing, recreational towing or dinghy towing to find out if your vehicle is towable, and if so, what is involved.

### Cruise Control Concern

**Q** We have a Thor A.C.E. motorhome with a V-10 Ford gas engine.

Whenever I am driving with the cruise control on, the engine revs up to the high end of rpm every time we get to even a slight uphill grade, like an overpass. If I am driving with just my foot on the pedal, it doesn't rev up like that on every grade. Is there something that can be done to the cruise control or with the engine itself to keep the motor from revving up when using cruise control? It is a pain to try to remember to take off cruise control every time I approach a grade, and the engine is very loud when it revs up.

**Wendell Wiley | Remington, Indiana**

**A** The cruise control detects that vehicle speed is dropping off quickly as you begin to climb a grade and it applies more throttle at a faster rate and a greater amount than you do with your foot. This causes the automatic transmission to downshift sooner than a less aggressive manual throttle application. Several aftermarket vendors provide electronic "tuners" that can alter the engine's power settings and transmission shifting characteristics. One of them is Ultra RV Products (800-417-4559, [www.urvp.com](http://www.urvp.com)), another is 5-Star Tuning (843-536-1244, <https://5startuning.com>). It depends on the grade, of course, but you may find that turning off the cruise control is best, and it may conserve a little fuel in the process.

### Sagging Ceiling — Tip

Lee Menke (November 2018 issue) can fix his sagging ceiling with a trick

I used to market 15 years ago. Sales were never that good so now I give it away. Take a small staple gun and paint a row of staples the color of your ceiling, then put them in the staple gun (let them dry first). Use a wood yard stick to keep the row straight. Line up the yard stick on the ceiling and pop a row of staples about 2 inches apart all the way across the ceiling then another row about a foot over until you finish the whole ceiling.

**Randy Kough | Deltona, Florida**

Thanks for writing, Randy. We received several tips like this, but yours added the idea of painting the staples a matching color, which is a nice touch.

### Noise When Raining

**Q** I have a 2012 Thor Hurricane 32D on an F-53 chassis. When traveling on the interstate and it is raining, I hear a high-pitched noise coming from the front of the RV. This happens only when it is raining. At slower speeds, I don't hear anything. I read an article discussing that the resonator that precedes the muffler may be getting hit with water and possibly causing the noise. This article was about a Volvo automobile. Any suggestions would be appreciated. The noise is driving me crazy.

**Jim Price | Rainbow City, Alabama**

**A** Water ingestion into the engine air intake (and subsequently the paper air filter element) has been a known problem with the Ford F-53 chassis over the years. This is especially true in heavy rainstorms. I suggest that you check the air filter element to determine if it has been damaged from water or is distorted. When they become soaked, they may distort and possibly reduce power or make noise. You may have to add some shielding to prevent water from entering the air intake. Alternatively, Banks Power (800-601-8072, [www.bankspower.com](http://www.bankspower.com)) and K&N (800-858-3333, [www.knfilters.com/default.aspx](http://www.knfilters.com/default.aspx)) both sell air intake upgrades that are said to mitigate this problem.

## Wondering About Wandering

**Q** I have a 2000 Monaco Diplomat and it seems to handle well, but I have been reading a lot of information on Watts links from MonacoWatts LLC. I have the Roadmaster RR8R chassis under my coach. Can you do some research on a Watts links setup for older Monacos? Before I go dropping \$2,000, I would like to have some more information on the worthiness of purchasing these for my coach. I found some information from a few sources online, but it would be great if you could find some more information to pass along.

**Ron Malcolm | Reno, Nevada**

**A** If you are satisfied with the way your coach rides and handles, then this product might not be for you. However, if you are looking for a more controlled ride, this might be the way to go. Watts linkages are an accepted, tried and proven way to stabilize chassis. It appears that they are designed satisfactorily. MonacoWatts guarantees that its products will perform as advertised. If you are not satisfied that it improved the drivability of your coach you can return it for a full refund within 60 days from the date of purchase and the company will refund your shipping costs.

MonacoWatts can be reached in Lancaster, California, at 661-466-4825 or online at [www.monacowatts.com](http://www.monacowatts.com).

## Engine Battery Goes Dead

**Q** I'm an RV newbie and have very limited knowledge of how everything is connected and works. I have a 34-foot gas-powered 2004 Triple E Commander, which is currently in my driveway and plugged into my house electric to run the lights, etc., while I am setting it up and cleaning it. I also have a small electric fireplace plugged in to help take the chill off. The main engine battery that starts and runs the motorhome is two years old and is good when fully charged. The problem is that it keeps going dead even though I'm plugged into a main source and nothing is turned on or running, other than the

little heater when I am in it during the day. Why does the engine battery keep going dead? What is drawing on it? The key is off, the radio is off and yet it keeps going dead after being fully charged in a couple of days. There is a disconnect over the main door, which I was told to put in the use position (red light ON) when plugged into shorepower. It's very frustrating, and I don't want to get stranded on the side of the road somewhere.

**Elaine Donaldson  
Peterborough, Ontario, Canada**

**A** The engine-starting battery only powers the chassis electrical system. Items such as the electric heater run off 120 volts AC and have nothing to do with your battery going dead. This battery only gets charged by the engine's alternator when the engine is running. Even though the battery is only two years old, it may have been damaged by multiple deep discharges without proper conditioning, or by freezing. First, I suggest charging it overnight and then taking it to an auto parts store for a battery load test. If it checks out, reinstall it. Otherwise have an RV technician connect a test ammeter and perform a load test. Motorhomes have a number of items that have small draws, such as keep-alive memories, etc. Draw should be well below one amp, preferably around 0.050 amp. If the tech finds a significant draw, fuses should be removed one at a time until the culprit circuit is found. Adding a charge-sharing unit like the Xantrex Digital Echo Charge can help.

## Engine Runs Hot

**Q** We have a 2000 Safari motorhome. It has 14,000 miles on the 300-hp diesel engine. After [the new engine] was installed in 2016, we had a problem with it overheating on our first trip. The radiator was replaced as soon as possible, along with the temperature gauge. In 2017, the overheating issues continued when going up mountain passes. We returned to the CAT dealer in Boise for



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diagnosis. A couple days ago we drove it over the 4,000-foot Stevens Pass in Washington state. Ambient temperature was 60 degrees and the temperature gauge reached a high of 230 degrees Fahrenheit. The CAT dealer was not very helpful. Can you help me with this problem?

**Mel Whitworth | Boise, Idaho**

**A** little background on why the engine was replaced might be helpful, especially if it was related to overheating. Make sure you have the correct 50/50 mixture of antifreeze and water. This, along with a 15-psi pressure cap will provide a boiling point of about 264 degrees Fahrenheit (at sea level; it will be slightly less at altitude). Although 230 degrees is a bit high, it typically won't cause any damage, but you should definitely avoid much higher temps. I've found many CAT dealers to have excellent experience with their products. If your dealer hasn't been helpful, I suggest trying another.

Assuming there is nothing wrong with the engine, such as a seeping head gasket, etc., and the radiator (and shroud) is correct, there are a few things to look for to keep the engine cool. Good airflow over the radiator is essential. Ensure that no crud, bugs or other debris is clogging the fins. The fan must come on fully; have its operation checked by a CAT dealer. I suspect this may be the culprit.

Also, many owners have found that downshifting an extra gear on grades and letting the engine rev higher, rather than lugging on the turbo, has brought the fan speed higher and solved the problem. **M**

## HOT LINE

(continued from page 62)

receive some good news from the warranty company:

I am in receipt of your inquiry into a concern communicated by Bob and Caroline Kurz. American Guardian (AG) is the claims administrator and obligor for the Compass RV Protection vehicle service contract that Mr. and Mrs. Kurz obtained from Valero Century Inc. in Delmont, Pennsylvania. AG received its first notice of a claim when Freightliner of New Stanton, in Tarrs, Pennsylvania, contacted us on May 31, 2018, to report intermittent operation of the instrument cluster. The repairer's diagnosis was an electrical failure of the MMDC module. Our claims adjuster initially turned down this reported item because it was not specifically listed as a covered component under Gold coverage.

Upon receipt of your investigation notice, a review was conducted and we decided to reconsider the Kurzes' claim for an instrument cluster failure. As a result, we have authorized \$1,454.99 of the repair charges they have requested. With regard to the consumer's comments about reoccurring conditions and other dissatisfactions, I am obliged to advise that AG is not responsible for pre-existing conditions. Further, AG accepts no liability for an unreported claim or any repair circumstances that are not authorized in advance as stated in the service contract.

**John Wendt, VP Claims and Underwriting, American Guardian Warranty Services | Warrenville, Illinois **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.

### Have a Tech Question?

#### Contact our experts:

Email [tech@motorhomemagazine.com](mailto:tech@motorhomemagazine.com) or write to *MotorHome*, 2750 Park View Court, Suite 240, Oxnard, CA 93036 (please include your name, city and state). Selected letters will be answered in the magazine, but time does not permit individual replies.

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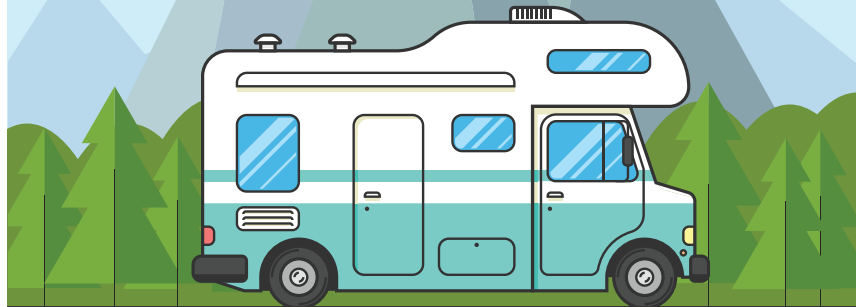
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# Love And Haight

With Valentine's Day fast approaching, we're grooving on the Summer of Love vibe in San Francisco's Haight-Ashbury district

By Alan Rider

**T**hey called it the Summer of Love. I should know. Oh, not because I was there, mind you (my parents didn't seem inclined to let their prepubescent son fly across the country to hang out with a bunch of hippies). A pity, really. No, I learned about it 50 years after the fact on my recent deep dive into San Francisco's Haight-Ashbury district. And what I found pleasantly surprising was just how much of the positive vibe those 100,000 flower children left behind.

Come visit (leave your motorhome in a local campground, as parking can be a real challenge here) and you'll see echoes of that storied summer of 1967 everywhere, like the wild-haired older gentleman offering copies of the ancient Hindu text known as the *Bhagavad Gita* for a small "donation." Or the starry-eyed kids wandering the streets with beat-up sketch pads under their arms, or their guitars slung over their bony shoulders.

In many ways, the days I spent wandering the streets of Haight-Ashbury made it hard to believe a half-century had passed since Timothy Leary took to the stage and urged the crowd at the first-ever Human Be-In in nearby Golden Gate Park to "Turn on, tune in and drop out."

While a full-on psychedelic trip was out of the question for a number of reasons, I still wanted to discover what I could about those carefree days. The question, of course, was how to go about it.

I decided to start my exploration of

the district's storied past with a tour of Golden Gate Park aboard one of those high-tech self-balancing scooters known as Segways. On some level, it seemed to me to be a perfect juxtaposition of history and modernity.

I met our Segway tour guide, Johannes, at the blue-and-yellow pop-up tent of the Electric Tour Co. [415-474-3130, <https://electrictourcompany.com>]. Johannes was the real deal, having arrived in San Francisco from the Netherlands the year before the Summer of Love on a scholarship to study trombone at the San Francisco Conservatory of Music.

After putting us through a thorough training, he led our line of Segways along the winding maze of roads and pathways that crisscross the huge

park. Stories of that unforgettable summer flowed out of him as he pointed out spots like the tree where Janis Joplin used to sit with her guitar working on new songs, and the sloping lawn they called Hippie Hill, where local bands like the Grateful Dead and Jefferson Airplane gave free concerts. Seeing the park through Johannes' eyes was truly far-out.

Perhaps my most memorable exploration of the Summer of Love, however, involved boarding The Magic Bus [855-969-6244, <https://magicbussf.com>]. Now, bus tours are as common as selfie-snapping tourists in San Francisco, but this repurposed old school bus with the wild paint job has an interior that's been converted to a multimedia experience on wheels.

As we motored along, the window shades all rolled down automatically to become screens for vintage film footage of pivotal events of the period, including Leary on stage repeating his "turn on, tune-in, blah-blah-blah" mantra. Then, just as magically, they roll up to reveal the neighborhood you were just looking at in a then-and-now sort of experience.

It's precisely this sense of pop culture time travel that leads me to recommend a visit to San Francisco's Haight-Ashbury neighborhood. And in the spirit of that Summer of Love, allow me to wish you nothing but groovy vibes wherever your travels may take you along The Road Ahead. **M**

**“What I found pleasantly surprising was just how much of the positive vibe those 100,000 flower children left behind.”**

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