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APRIL 2011

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*The Honda Ridgeline easily tows the compact Lance 1685 travel trailer through the elements for an early-spring adventure in the Four Corners region. See story on page 28.*

Photo by Richard Greer

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# DRIVER'S SEAT

by **Kristopher Bunker**



## CHORES



o every kid growing up, “chores” is a four-letter word. Cleaning your room, making your bed, taking out the garbage, mowing the lawn ... you get the idea. At the time, you just couldn’t understand why your parents would disturb your precious weekends with mundane tasks when there was so much fun to

be had. Often, you begrudgingly slogged through your jobs, not because you wanted to, but because there was no leaving the house until the work was finished.

Well, as we all know, Mom and Dad weren’t so evil after all. Chores not only provided a clean room, a made bed, a groomed lawn, etc., but they also instilled a sense of responsibility in all of us, one that, hopefully, has remained to this day.

The other thing that has remained to this day? The chores. But that’s not necessarily a bad thing.

Maintaining your RV’s appearance with good housekeeping ultimately extends its “lifespan.” A shiny exterior or clean carpeting looks great to be sure, but there’s more to it than looks. Durability and longevity are direct results of proper maintenance and detailing, so it’s important to take your time when spiffing up your tow vehicle and trailer before setting off for some R & R.

And what better place to begin than the trailer’s exterior? “A Clean Start,” on page 36, features all you need to know about the chore of beautifying — and protecting — your trailer’s skin, tires, wheels and the like. We’ve featured RV-specific products, methods and tips that will help your RV get back that famed showroom shine in no time.

“It’s in the Details” on page 39 continues the chore list, as we take a look at some insider tricks of the trade to get the most out of your cleaning products — along with some home-brewed remedies that will also work in your prized possession.

Our last RV chore is one that’s not often discussed: slideout maintenance. In “Slideout Secrets,” beginning on page 43, we offer expert insight into properly maintaining these often-taken-for-granted components that make life in a trailer even more enjoyable.

So, the chores are here to stay. True, there are better ways to spend a Saturday than with pruned fingers and a bottle of carpet cleaner. But if that’s what it takes to keep us on the road, living the RV lifestyle, I’m sure we’ll all be happy to pick up a broom and dustpan and get straight to work. Hey, it sure beats wrestling with a push mower all afternoon. 🚗

# TRAILER LIFE

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# LETTERS

from our **Readers**

“Thanks to the latest issue, we will stop in Saguaro National Park, the Grand Canyon’s North Rim, the San Andreas Fault and Mesa Verde.”



## TRAVELING THE WEST

We own a small motorhome but subscribe to both *Trailer Life* and *MotorHome* magazines. We do this specifically for the travel articles in both periodicals. The February issue of *Trailer Life* arrived in today’s mail, and I have already devoured it. We have been planning on heading west to California via Arizona, then east again via Colorado. Thanks to the latest issue, we will stop in Saguaro National Park, the Grand Canyon’s North Rim, the San Andreas Fault and Mesa Verde. We love the way your travel articles offer valuable tips for RVers on what to see, what to do and suggestions on where to camp. We enjoy your wonderful balance of travel information, which I read first, as well as technical expertise, which my husband reads first. Thanks for doing a great job with both.

**Regina and Lynn Hollis,**  
Louisville, Kentucky

## SAGUARO OR FOUR PEAKS

As a lifetime desert dweller and lover of the outdoors, your article on Saguaro National Park (February 2011) was very good. Having visited and hiked many of the park’s areas, it is indeed a national treasure. One problem is that the photo depicting the park is actually nearby Four Peaks Wilderness Area. Thanks for the great travel articles and the tech series.

**Brett McGee,** Vail, Arizona

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

## VIRGINIA CITY

A great little story about Virginia City. My wife and I visited there several times and the townsfolk were always very nice and helpful when asked a question. Wish I had some of that silver today. We live in Sarasota, Florida, another jewel we call paradise on Earth. Visit this town if you haven’t already. Great sugar sand beaches.

**John & Joanne Cisler,** Sarasota, Florida

## SANTA MARIA ATTRACTIONS

Thank you for the San Andreas Fault article in the February issue; however, with the Plain being about three hours east of us, the Santa Maria Valley Chamber of Commerce isn’t the best resource to list for information on the Carrizo Plain. That would

be best covered by the BLM’s Bakersfield field office (661-391-6000, [www.blm.gov/ca/st/en/fo/bakersfield.html](http://www.blm.gov/ca/st/en/fo/bakersfield.html)).

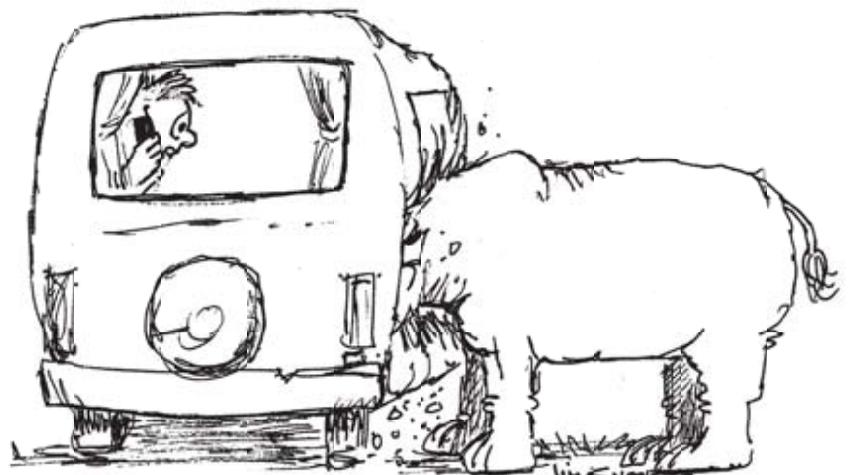
**Gina Keough,** Santa Maria, California

## FUEL PRICES

With today’s economy, I can’t understand the outrageous fuel prices. I don’t expect to pay \$1 or even \$2 per gallon for gas or diesel; however, here in California diesel is pushing \$4 per gallon and gas isn’t far behind. A reasonable and truthful accounting for the tremendous jump in prices must be investigated. My husband and I are full-time RVers and have met many others with the same sentiments. We are being forced to curtail our travels or give up this lifestyle.

**Sonja Martin,** Ojai, California

## SNOOK’S NOOK



“Send a really big tow truck to Safari Campground. Fast would be good...”

# AROUND

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

# THE BEND

Edited by Marleen Canniff

## TRAILERING WITH TRILLIUM



Spontaneity is a luxury not afforded by all, but with Trillium RV's brand-new 1300 and 1500 travel trailers, you can be equipped to take off on a whim while on a budget. These 2011 models are available in 13- and 15-foot lengths with four floorplans. And with unloaded vehicle weights from 1,400 to 1,700 pounds, fuel costs for towing should be minimal. The 15-footer has a larger bed/dinette area with more counter and storage space than the 13-foot model, and it has all of the amenities you need for a weekend getaway or an extended cross-country road trip. Base msrp for the 1500 is \$15,295. **To learn more**, call (949) 608-9034 or visit [www.trilliumrv.com](http://www.trilliumrv.com).

## THE RALLY 2011 IN REDMOND!

The Rally 2011 is coming to Redmond, Oregon, from July 14-17! This is the Greatest RV Event in the World, where you'll find thousands of rigs to view, hundreds of new RV products, area tours, pet adoptions, a dog show, an action-packed youth program and seminars on all things RV — from maintenance and repair to healthy cooking and safe-driving tips. And the entertainment will be top-notch with superstar Bobby Vinton and the multitalented High Street Band so far on the lineup. Redmond is a prime location for this event, with easy access to camping, hiking, fishing,



biking, rock climbing, golf and more. And one of the best ways to enhance your Rally experience is by volunteering. The Rally's third-annual Volunteer Day to give back to our host community is taking place on early-bird Tuesday, July 12. This year The Rally has adopted Redmond-Sisters Hospice, where volunteers will be working to beautify the hospice grounds ([www.redmondhospice.org](http://www.redmondhospice.org)). **You're invited to our big RV party!** Start planning now and register for The Rally today by calling (877) 749-7122 or visiting [www.therally.com](http://www.therally.com).

## FORT JEFFERSON MEMORIAL CROSS

High on a bluff overlooking the glittering-silver confluence of the Mississippi and Ohio rivers is a majestic 90-foot tall white cross that can be seen for many miles across the rivers in Missouri, Illinois and Kentucky. Fort Jefferson Memorial Cross, completed in 2000, stands on two acres of groomed lawns and includes picnic tables and walkways that offer stunning views of the surrounding country. From its base, visitors look far out over wooded river banks, flatlands and rolling hills to misty horizons in all directions. It's a popular site for weddings and memorials, including a candlelight service every September 11 and an annual Easter Sunrise service — this year on April 24.

The cross, lighted every night, has placards explaining that in 1780 during the Revolutionary War, General George Rogers Clark established Fort Jefferson at this strategic site to protect area land claims of the fledgling United States. The fort was besieged by the British and Chickasaw Indians in 1781, and following a massacre was abandoned. In 1802, at William Clark's recommendation, a second fort was built on the site. Decades later, during the Civil War, it served as a Union supply base.

Fort Jefferson Cross is located off of U.S. Highway 51 one mile south of Wickliffe, Kentucky. RV parking is available, and Columbus-Belmont State Park is about 20 miles south, where you can find 38 wooded campsites with hookups, barbecue grills and more.

**For more information**, call (270) 334-3253 or visit [www.kentuckytourism.com](http://www.kentuckytourism.com). — Pamela Selbert

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## TOWING WITH COOL APPEAL

With a new engine, upgraded interior and other improvements, the 2011 Land Rover LR4 is hitting the road with style. The LR4 has plenty of power for trailering with a maximum tow rating of 7,716 pounds, and its upgraded 375-hp, 5.0-liter V-8 engine along with its six-speed automatic transmission, four-wheel drive and other impressive off-road abilities make it a good choice for those who like a little adventure. The 2011 model also has upgraded Hill Start Assist, Gradient Acceleration Control and an improved Terrain Response system with other new standard features and options. msrp starts at \$48,500.

**For more information**, call (800) 346-3493 or visit [www.landroverusa.com](http://www.landroverusa.com).

## SUNSCREEN FOR DRIVING

A study published in the Journal of the American Academy of Dermatology shows that people who spend a lot of time behind the wheel are at an increased risk of developing skin cancer on the left side of their bodies more often than on their right. The study shows that 52.6 percent people had skin cancer on the left side of their bodies as opposed to 47.4 percent on the right. And melanoma, a dangerous type of skin cancer, occurred much more frequently on the left side — 74 percent compared to 26 percent on the right. In a similar study in Australia, right-side cancer was found to be more prevalent, as their driver's side is on the right. So, be sure to always use sunscreen even if you plan to drive all day.

**For more information**, visit [www.eblue.org](http://www.eblue.org).



## FRENCH QUARTER FESTIVAL

PHOTO COURTESY OF FRENCH QUARTER FESTIVALS INC.



With RV campgrounds in area parishes from the bayou to uptown, New Orleans is fixin' to throw a celebration — the largest free music festival in the South, that is. The French Quarter Festival, taking place from April 7-10, will feature more than 275 hours of free music across 18 stages throughout the historic French Quarter. Festival-goers will find plenty of local food specialties at the more than 75 food and beverage booths, while being entertained by more than

800 local musicians performing everything from traditional and contemporary jazz, to rhythm and blues, New Orleans funk, Zydeco, brass bands, folk, opera and gospel. Be sure to check out the French Quarter RV Resort to plan your stay ([www.fqrv.com](http://www.fqrv.com)).

**For more information** about the festival, call (800) 673-5725 or visit [www.fqfi.org](http://www.fqfi.org).

## NEWswire

**RVers can visit National Park Service lands** and other public areas for free on National Park Week, April 16-24 ... **The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA)** and Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) are taking the next steps to improve fuel efficiency and reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions by working to set national standards for medium- and heavy-duty vehicles in a regulatory program to begin in 2014. Updating these standards could reduce GHG emissions by as much as 20 percent and increase fuel efficiency by as much as 25 percent by 2018 through the use of existing technologies.

To gather information, NHTSA and EPA will seek



input from an array of stakeholders, including, but not limited to vehicle and engine manufacturers, fleet owners and operators, and environmental organizations. The agencies also will work with the state of California and other states in this process. For more information and updates, visit [www.nhtsa.gov](http://www.nhtsa.gov) ...

**Automakers recalled about 20.3 million vehicles in 2010**, making it the fourth largest number of recalls in a year since NHTSA began keeping track in 1966. Number one still goes to 2004 with 30.8 million units recalled ... Check out the *Trailer Life* iPhone app at the iTunes App Store and follow us on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/TrailerLifeMagazine](http://www.facebook.com/TrailerLifeMagazine). 📱



## INCOMPATIBLE UPGRADE

Frustrated that his new truck was suffering damage from his year-old fifth-wheel, a reader asked *RV Action Line* to intervene:

I purchased a Keystone Montana 3150RL in May 2010, and I originally pulled it with a 2004 Chevrolet 2500 HD. I then purchased a 2011 Chevy 2500 HD and have had problems ever since. When I make a turn sharper than 45 degrees, the pin box contacts the side of the truck's roll-top cover (as it did on the old truck). I told Keystone about the problem, and its representatives had me contact Lippert, who makes the pin box and frames.

Lippert said it manufactured the parts to Keystone's specs, so I was referred back to Keystone. At Keystone's request, I talked to the dealer, and sent pictures of the damage to Keystone.

I was finally advised that the truck or the hitch may not be compatible (I have a PullRite Super Glide Hitch). Apparently, Keystone doesn't recognize the problem, so it can't offer a resolve. Any solution to my problem will help.

**Bruce Whipple**, Mason City, Iowa

Apparently, brand loyalty runs deep. So deep, in fact, that Whipple encountered compatibility problems with his tow vehicle and trailer, and then bought the same model tow vehicle (albeit newer), hoping for different results.

The real problem here, however, is that few dealerships (if any) will allow you to test your trailer's compatibility with a potential new tow vehicle by installing a fifth-wheel hitch, hitching up a trailer and then making 90-degree turns. So, that's where a forum such as this becomes especially helpful. Knowing of Whipple's plight, potential buyers may want to steer clear of such a combination — or at least ask plenty of questions and for a written

guarantee that an exchange will be permitted should damage occur. Keystone replied with the following:

A review of your correspondence indicates there were items that you found on our fifth-wheel and your new truck that were incompatible. We apologize that you are unhappy with these components. At this time, the Keystone units we manufacture are intended to meet the needs of a majority of tow vehicles. When a vehicle manufacturer makes a change to its product that causes an issue for its use with your unit, it is not a failure in the manufacturing of or the products used in the manufacturing of the fifth-wheel. Those types of failures are reviewed under Keystone's warranty procedures.

Considering the information above, we regret we cannot participate in a modification to your carefully engineered unit.

**Robyne Hakes**,

Customer Relations Specialist,  
Keystone RV Company

### WHAT SNOW STORM?

All heated up at a dealership's insistence that his trailer had undergone damage during inclement weather, a reader turned to *RV Action Line* for assistance:

I purchased a new 2010 Everest fifth-wheel from Olinger Travel Home Inc. in October 2009, at which time I also purchased a seven-year full warranty. The trailer was parked in my barn until March 22, 2010, when we used it for the weekend. The next use was on the rainy weekend of April 23. During our stay, the landing gear failed and would not lift the trailer, and the slide cover on the large slideout did not shed water.

After our trip, I went to Olinger for repairs. The service department called me two days later and told me they had ordered the landing-gear parts, but the slide topper was broken because there was a snow load on it that stretched the canvas.

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## RV ACTION LINE

I explained that our trailer was a 2010 model, that there hadn't been any snow during the past winter and that the trailer had been stored in a building. The rep said she'd contact Keystone on my behalf.

I was asked to provide photos, which I did, but I've been going back and forth between the dealer and the manufacturer since then. I've now come to a dead end. Olinger says the slide topper isn't broken, and Keystone maintains the covers aren't supposed to shed water. Can you help?

**Ken Arends, Gresham, Oregon**

It seems pretty straightforward: No snow means no snow damage. Also, Arends stated he purchased a full warranty. Believing this was simply a case of wires not crossing, we passed along a copy of his complaint to Keystone and Olinger.

We heard back from Arends some months later, who told us that Olinger agreed to resolve the issue at its own expense. Arends also included a copy of the correspondence from a Keystone rep, who

commended the dealership for taking care of the issue, and apologized for expending Arends' time, energy and funds. She also informed him that Keystone plans to reimburse the dealer. ☺

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

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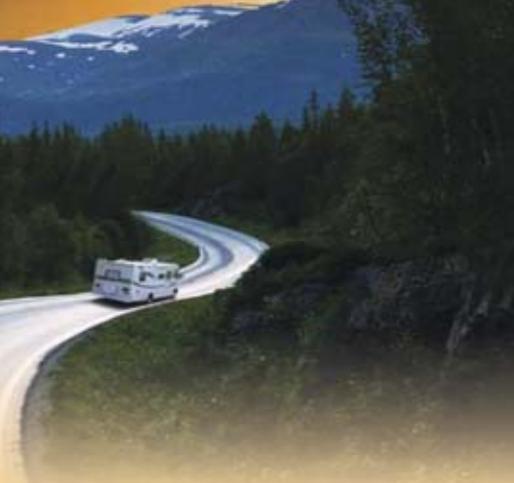
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User Guide

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# THE OUTSIDER

by Bruce Leonard Jr.



## Views from the Road

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

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

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

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

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

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

Happy travels.



Al and Mary traveling the country



## GETTING OLD

**"FROM WHERE I PARKED MY RIG, I COULD SEE ONLY ONE MAN-MADE STRUCTURE IN ANY DIRECTION, AND I WAS ENTHUSIASTIC ABOUT THE PROSPECT OF TRYING MY LUCK IN A LAKE THAT WAS NEW TO ME."**

**I**n the tiny town of Verdi, Nevada — on Interstate 80 between Truckee, California, and Reno — I was lusting after fly-fishing equipment in Cabela's when I saw a sign touting Pyramid Lake beetles. I gave the sign no heed since I had no idea where Pyramid Lake was, nor did I feel that I needed to buy more flies, not with numerous fly boxes filled with beribboned hooks that had gone entirely untouched that year. So I wandered and perused and talked myself out of any unnecessary purchases, but then I saw a snapshot of an enormous trout in the hands of a smiling man, and the salesman told me that his fellow employee had recently caught the fish in Pyramid Lake.

I soon learned that Pyramid Lake glimmered about an hour's drive from the Verdi triumvirate of Cabela's, Boomtown Casino Resort and Reno/Boomtown KOA in which I stood. The lake sits on the property of the Pyramid Lake Paiute Tribe and lies within the Pyramid Lake Indian Reservation in Nevada. Anglers who want to fish for Lahontan cutthroats do not need a state fishing license but must purchase a tribal permit either at the lake or at various locations in the Reno area, including Cabela's, or on the tribe's website, [www.pyramidlake.us](http://www.pyramidlake.us). I was not quite convinced that the journey to Pyramid Lake was worth my efforts, but then the employee told me the huge fish in the photo was not all that rare a catch. In fact, the lake is basically a trophy lake: All cutthroats shorter than 17 inches must be released; only two fish



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## THE OUTSIDER

between 17 and 20 inches can be kept daily; no fish between 20 and 24 inches can be kept; or anglers can keep one fish between 17 and 20 inches and one fish longer than 24. All bait is illegal, and hooks must be barbless. It was a lot of info to digest, but since the employee told me that he has caught, while wading in from shore, a fish every third cast on average when the fish were biting, I was soon pawing the Pyramid Lake beetles.

As I drove through Reno on my way to the lake, however, I sensed that my timing might be bad. Horrendous, in fact. It was the Friday of Memorial Day Weekend, and although I had been told that the camping was freeform along the shore (no developed campsites), I called ahead to double check that my information was accurate. The woman on the phone said that I simply needed to pay \$9 a night to camp and \$9 a day to fish, then she told me that I should continue driving through the oh-so-vast spaces along Pyramid Highway (Nevada state Route 445), through ranchland and open range until I was certain that I had missed a turn, then keep going. When I finally saw the lake, she said, I would likely gasp. She was right on all fronts.

Pyramid Lake is 27 miles long, from four to 11 miles wide and has a surface area of 117,400 acres, or 183 square miles. Its maximum depth is 356 feet. The view from the road was impressive, and on my way to the recommended spot — to the left of the outhouse at Windless Bay — I saw dozens of RVs camped along the shoreline. I stopped in the combination store-restaurant-tackle shop and was summarily informed that my beetles were not the ticket, so I purchased a few more colorful hooks, then crimped the barbs.

Maneuvering my rig past the 22 RVs of every possible make (driven or towed by owners of every economic class, it appeared), I carefully avoided the rocks and potholes, then managed to settle my Xplorer into a level section of sandy dirt 80 yards beyond the arc of the other rigs. The wind was blowing fiercely, white caps dappled the lake's surface and dark clouds threatened the torrents that had been following me. From where I parked

my rig, I could see only one man-made structure in any direction, and I was enthusiastic about the prospect of trying my luck in a lake that was new to me.

I pulled on my waders, then delivered my fly line again and again into the chop. I waded in up to my waist, trying to get my line out to the bank that I was told the fish feed at. On the way to my campsite, I had thought the guy standing on a ladder in the lake a bit odd, but I quickly understood the method to his madness. I ran through my various beetles and whatever the colorful hooks I'd purchased in the shop were called without a single bite, then packed it in when I could no longer feel my toes. Or fingers. Or legs.

I settled in my RV with a good book, and then the onslaught began. D-Day delivered fewer people to a beach. Souped-up pickups disgorging tenters were followed by minivans towing pop-ups; Hondas filled like clown-cars with astounding numbers of occupants accompanied panel trucks equipped with nothing but pulsing bass speakers. People who were allergic to normal speech volume soon surrounded me, and the beer and booze stacked in the sand could have sustained a fraternity row for a semester. I put in earplugs and tried to come up with a mantra that would get me through the night.

"When is everyone getting here?" I heard one neighbor slur. At 11:30, something bumped my Class B, then I heard whispered voices inches from my ear. The side of my rig had become Inspiration Point. "Somewhere else," I said, though I said nothing to the motorbike that passed by at 3:30 a.m.

As I prepared my spinning reel the next morning, I listened to a conversation about using shivs in prison, then failed to entice the cutthroats for another hour and a half. Of course, this failure may have had something to do with the fact that as I stepped into the water, a guy buzzed the shore on a jet-ski — with his pants down. ☹

**Pyramid Lake Paiute Tribe**, (888) 225-2668, [www.pyramidlake.us](http://www.pyramidlake.us).

**Pyramid Lake Fisheries**, (775) 476-0500, [www.pyramidlakefisheries.org](http://www.pyramidlakefisheries.org).

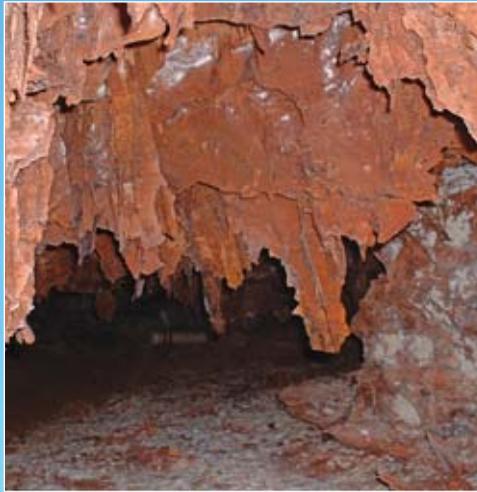
# WIND CAVE NATIONAL PARK

by **Len Cousineau**

**I**n 1881, two brothers heard a loud whistling sound emanating from the earth near the Black Hills of South Dakota. Investigating the noise, the Bingham brothers discovered the only natural entrance to what would become known as Wind Cave. The strong winds that flow in and out of the cave as a result from air pressure equalizing between the cave's passages and the outside atmosphere. Since the Bingham's discovery, nearly 135 miles of underground passages have been explored within the cave, making it one of the world's most extensive. Wind Cave was declared a national park in 1903, and today encompasses 28,295 acres.

Wind Cave displays many novel formations, the foremost of which are called "boxwork," honeycomb-like concretions made of calcite. The boxwork formations in Wind Cave are considered to be among the world's most impressive.

Rangers give tours of the cave that range from one hour to half a day, and participants should be in good shape, since even the least rigorous tour requires the negotiation of approximately 150 steps. In summer, the park offers the most cave tours, but visitors in other seasons can still take guided excursions. No matter when they visit, however, those who descend into the cave should wear good walking shoes and

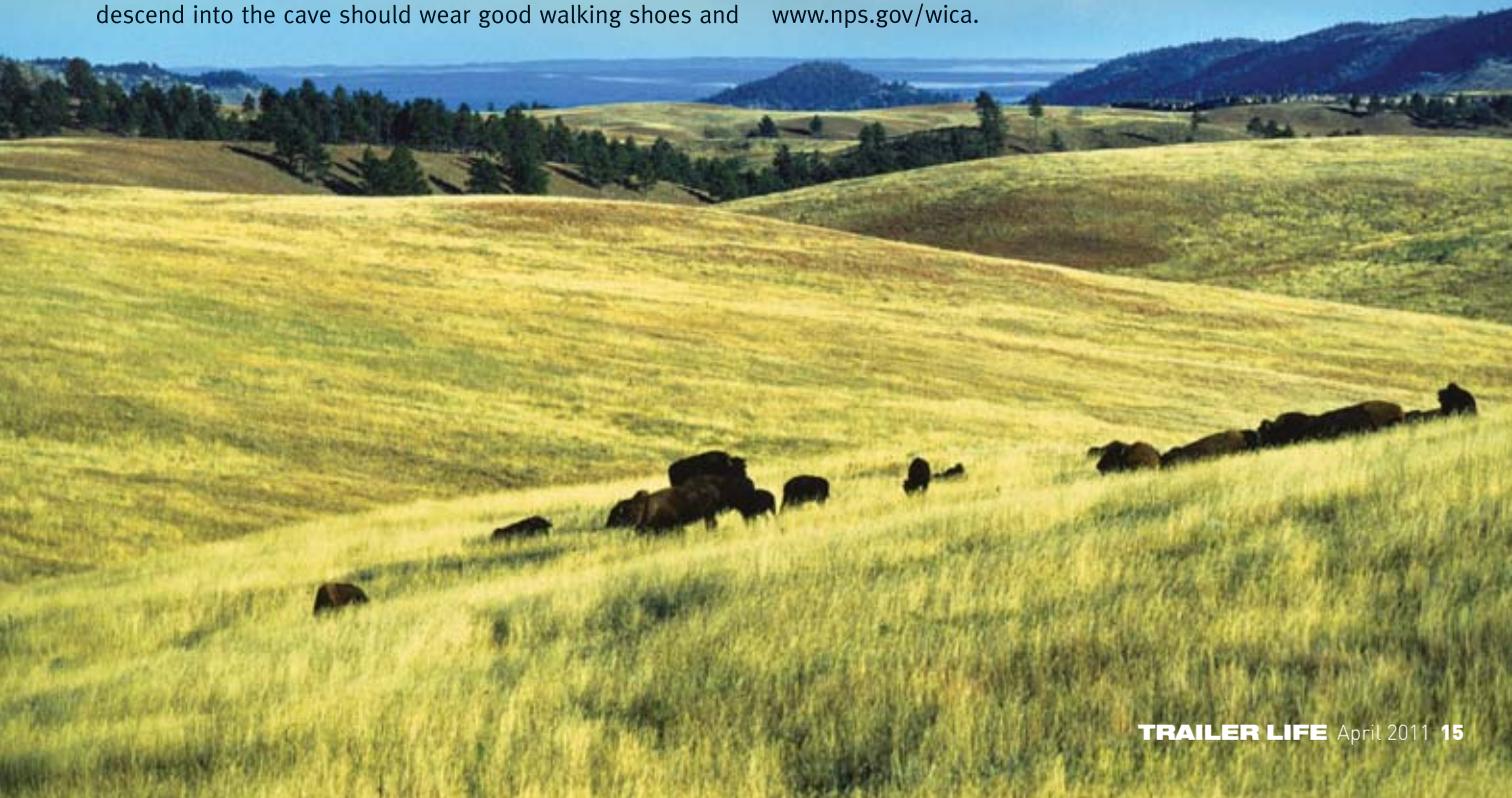


dress for the year-round 53° F temperature inside the cave. Anyone who suffers from claustrophobia may want to consider staying above ground — not that the outside sec-

tions of Wind Cave National Park require a great sacrifice to explore.

Wildlife abounds in the mixed-grass prairie of the Western Great Plains, with meadowlarks and prairie falcons coexisting with the wild turkeys and nuthatches that inhabit the ponderosa-pine forests of the Black Hills. Park visitors are likely to encounter some of the numerous bison that roam the national park. Staying in the campground, which is open year-round and rarely fills up, greatly increases visitors' ability to appreciate Wind Cave's attractions. 🚐

**Wind Cave National Park**, (605) 745-4600, [www.nps.gov/wica](http://www.nps.gov/wica).





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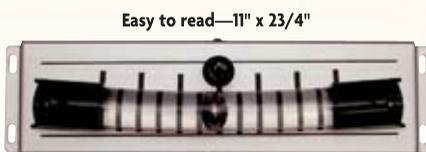
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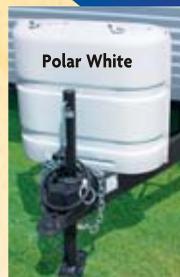
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# NATURE'S HEALTH CLUB

**EXPLORING OPPORTUNITIES FOR  
HIKING, BIKING AND WATER SPORTS IN  
NEW YORK'S FINGER LAKES REGION**

by **Lisa Halvorsen**

# H

illsides of plump purple grapes vie with eye-popping scenery for my attention, as I meander through the Finger Lakes region of central New York. I'm not in search of the next winery but rather opportunities to experience the outdoors and other attractions.

The area has a well-deserved reputation for its wines. Its five official wine trails and more than 100 wineries, most open to the public for sales and sampling, attract legions of visitors every year. Perhaps less known is its reputation as Nature's Health Club, an apt moniker as it's a prime area for outdoor recreation from biking, hiking and birding to water sports — no surprise given that the region has 11 glacier-carved lakes and a number of state parks and natural areas.

Heading down the winding road to pedal around Honeoye Lake.

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User Guide

Contents



**Left: A hybrid of bicycling and boating, waterbiking is an increasingly popular activity in the Finger Lakes region.**

**Right: Atop a sun-bathed hill sits the Sonnenberg Gardens and Mansion State Historic Park, where visitors can explore the 40-room Queen Anne-style mansion, landscaped lawns and theme gardens.**

With only a few days to explore, I had to make a choice: wineries or outdoor activities? A little of both ended up being the perfect mix. I based myself near Canandaigua Lake in Ontario County, home to five finger lakes and a number of RV campgrounds, including the relaxing Bristol Woodlands Campground (585-229-2290, [www.bristolwoodlands.com](http://www.bristolwoodlands.com)) in Bristol Center and the excellent Canandaigua/Rochester KOA (585-398-3582, [www.koa.com/campgrounds/canandaigua](http://www.koa.com/campgrounds/canandaigua)) in Farmington.

It also may explain why, on my first day in the area, I find myself — instead of sipping wine — circling Honeoye Lake by bike, beads of sweat forming on my brow as I pump my legs hard to reach the crest of the next hill. The downhill coast affords teasing glimpses of the bucolic, deep blue lake. The 20-mile ride, one of many popular bike treks in the region, is considered easy. I find it challenging, probably because it's been years since I last rode a bike.

Later, as I wait at Steamboat Landing

in Canandaigua to board the Canandaigua Lady, I watch sailboats and motorized craft — as well as people-powered water bikes and jet skis — whiz by. Less than a century ago it was steamships that traversed this lake. During the steamboat era, which lasted from the early 19th through early 20th century, as many as 19 steam-powered paddle wheelers plied the waters of the 16-mile long lake, transporting both passengers and freight.

Today The Lady, a replica Mississippi-style paddlewheel, recreates that fascinating period of history with narrated cruises telling passengers about the people and places of Canandaigua Lake, including the tiny, colorful boat-houses. Packed side by side like sardines on mini-piers off the main City Pier, many of these architectural curiosities were built on the lake more than 150 years ago and have been passed down from one generation to the next.

Wandering through the New York Wine and Culinary Institute, which opened on Canandaigua's lakeshore in 2006, I learn about the state and region's agriculture — including its wineries — from a series of well-illustrated exhibits. In a nearby kitchen, a handful of eager amateur cooks listen intently as the instructor gives step-by-step instructions on how to prepare the main course before signaling the class to

start. I head to the educational theater to observe a renowned Food Network chef demonstrate how to make chilled pea soup and pasta with a beet and goat cheese sauce.

Visitors can try wines and seasonal dishes prepared with locally produced foods at Taste of New York Restaurant. The on-site restaurant and lounge also features a rotating selection of beers from New York's 60 microbreweries.

The Finger Lakes Wine Center, located on the grounds of the Sonnenberg Gardens and Mansion Historical Park, also in Canandaigua, provides another introduction to the wine trails and wineries. My reason, however, for stopping is to tour the 40-room 1887 Queen Anne-style mansion and nine theme gardens including the Japanese garden and moonlight garden with its fragrant white and silver flowers.

Sonnenberg, German for “sunny hill,” is the former summer cottage of New York City bank financier Frederick Ferris Thompson and his wife, Mary Clark Thompson. It was Mary who designed the gardens, based on observations and ideas from her numerous trips to Asia and Europe. The Conservatory complex, one of the few remaining Lord & Burnham conservatories in the country, was built between 1903 and 1915 and includes greenhouses filled with orchids, cacti and other tropical plants.



The rhythmic clip-clop, clip-clop of horses fills the air as I tour the grounds of Granger Homestead and Carriage Museum, another popular Canandaigua attraction, by horse and carriage. The elegant three-story Federal-style house was the retirement home of Gideon Granger, the U.S. Postmaster General under Thomas Jefferson and James Madison. Two barns on the 10-acre property are chockablock with vehicles, more than 90 in total, including hand-pulled fire wagons, a horse-drawn hearse and other 19th and early 20th-century carriages. One section showcases the original farm equipment used by the Granger family.

The drive south to Naples takes me through farmland, past grape stands selling the local harvest and jams, jellies and other grape products. State Route 364 follows Canandaigua Lake's eastern shore before connecting with state Route 245 at Middlesex. Although this route is longer than the more direct state Route 21 to Naples, from Canandaigua through Bristol Springs, that narrow road twists and dips in places like a rollercoaster ride, making it less suitable for RV travel.

The purple fire hydrants are the first sign that I am entering Naples, a story-book village famous for its grape pie and annual grape festival in late September. Artizanns on Main Street offers original

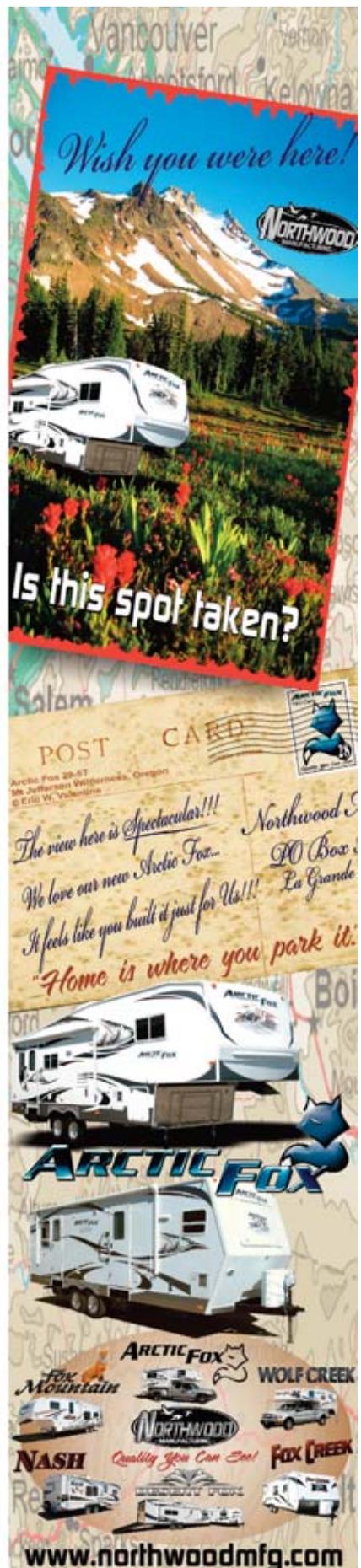
artwork and crafts by close to 200 Finger Lakes' artisans. On weekends a rotating slate of artists, photographers and musicians demonstrate their craft on the front porch through its Artists in Action program.

Ontario County has several good hiking trails including the Ontario Pathways Trail, which was once the Canandaigua Corning Railroad Line. The Canandaigua to Stanley leg stretches 11 miles along the old railroad bed before continuing north to Phelps on a grassy track for nearly nine miles.

I choose an easier walk at the Cumming Nature Center in Naples, a 90-acre environmental education center. The dense forest is filled with warbler song and squirrel chatter as I make my way along the Helen Gordon Trail.

I also go bird-watching at the Mary Frances Bluebird Haven in Victor, northwest of Canandaigua. The trip to Victor takes me north from Naples on state Route 2 through Bristol Springs, where I stop for a wine tasting at Arbor Hill Grapery.

The land for the bluebird sanctuary once belonged to Robert and Mary Frances Butler. Robert donated the property to the town in 1996 in memory of his wife, who loved to watch the bluebirds swoop through the meadows. I also walk the trails at the nearby Ganondagan Historic Site. Its full-size replica of a 17th-



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## NATURE'S HEALTH CLUB

century Seneca bark longhouse shows visitors how the Seneca tribe, one of the six nations in the Iroquois Confederacy, lived 300 years ago.

Geneva, a straight shot east from Canandaigua along U.S. Routes 5 and 20, is located on the northernmost end of Seneca Lake, the largest finger lake. Its streets are easy to negotiate by bicycle, and it's also a good starting point for a bike ride — or drive — around Seneca Lake. The town has a lot of interesting historic architecture including Belhurst Castle, now a restaurant and accommodations; and Rose Hill Mansion, an 1839 Greek Revival home that was once the centerpiece of a working farm.

I end my journey in Clifton Springs to take “the waters” (mineral baths) at The Springs Integrative Medicine Center and Spa at Clifton Springs Hospital. In the 1800s the wealthy traveled to this small community for the Clifton Springs Water Cure developed by Dr. Henry Foster. It

was widely believed that a soak in the sulphur springs would cure all ailments.

Although there's no scientific proof that the treatment works, the soak is quite relaxing, as is my stroll afterward through the Clifton Springs Sanitarium Historic District. Visitors here can view the original sulphur springs, the 19th-century Clifton Springs Sanitarium and Foster Cottage, where the founder of the cure lived. Many of the stores on the Foster Block have original tin ceilings and other architecturally interesting features.

It's no surprise that a long weekend isn't nearly enough time to see everything. So before I even left the area, I had already made plans to return again to sample more of what Nature's Health Club has to offer. ☺

**Finger Lakes Tourism Alliance**, (800) 536-7488, [www.fingerlakes.org](http://www.fingerlakes.org).  
**Finger Lakes Visitors Connection**, (877) 386-4669, [www.visitfingerlakes.com](http://www.visitfingerlakes.com).



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PHOTOS BY CLAIRE ROGERS

Top to bottom: Surf fishing is a great way to spend a day at the beach. Go fly a kite and take home a perfect souvenir. A memorial stands tribute to the lost fishermen of South Texas. RVs are the perfect base camp for a day of kiteboarding.

# SOUTH PADRE ISLAND: WHO'S YOUR PADRE?

## BALMY TEXAS BREEZES AND GREAT FISHING BRING OUT THE BEST IN FAMILIES

by **Claire Rogers**

**T**here's nothing like a 34-mile-long barrier reef island to drain all your cares away. Just let your worries drift with the long-shore current, right off the tip of the island. South Padre Island (SPI) is especially good at absorbing great surfing waves from the Gulf of Mexico and transforming the sea into calm backwaters in the Laguna Madre. It's no wonder *USA Today* named SPI one of the top 10 places to get your feet back on the ground.

South Padre Island, at the southernmost tip of Texas on the Gulf of Mexico, is just far away enough to slow time down a bit, yet still have great food and amenities as easy to access as the beach.

As you cross the approximately two-mile Queen Isabella Causeway from Port Isabel, watch for dolphins slicing by; they're a harbinger of good things to come. Get ready for island time complete with warm, tropical salt air and balmy evenings mingled with scents of warm Coppertone and a cool Piña Colada.

SPI is big with RVers: surrounded by water yet easy to get to, the weather is idyllic and there's lots of room, even for the biggest rigs. The gulf side is all sandy beach; 34 miles of it is accessible from 13 beach access points and three county parks. North of the developed resort area are miles of beach open to vehicles. To avoid getting stuck, it's best to use a four-wheel-drive tow vehicle.



## FISHING

Think about it: Thousands of pelicans can't be wrong. The waters around SPI are a rich mix of bay, surf, estuary and blue-water habitats. Add to this the artificial reefs from oil rigs and popular diving wrecks like the Texas Clipper, and you've got a recipe for some serious fishing grounds.

The prevalence of SPI state fishing records is no surprise to local guides. Big-time talent from around the nation drop in for competitions like the Texas International Fishing Tournament held each August. South Padre Island KOA hosted the World's Largest Surf Fishing Tournament in 2008, when 466 participants fished their way into the Guinness Book of World Records.

The crisp blue water is much more accessible here than many places, simply because the marinas are so much closer to the Brazos Santiago Pass. Charters will quickly get you out to a good fishing ground where you can toy with kingfish, wahoo, bonito and Spanish mackerel. Farther out, plumb for blue, white and striped marlin. There's also blackfin, yellowfin and bluefin tuna to extend your game.

If you're without a boat, you can head to the north or south jetties, or fish from one of several piers. Some of the piers are especially convenient for night fishing, with plenty of light to draw the fish in.

To top off all your fishing options, many local sport-fishing charters have licenses and papers for Mexico, so when U.S. fisheries are closed, you can still fish Mexico. Not too many other states have that border benefit.

## GO FLY A KITE

If it's not windy, it must not be South Padre Island. Kites sprout like colorful and exotic beanstalks here. There's enough wind for not one, but several annual kite events. In February, the Kite Fest features giant sculpture kites, high fliers and sky ballets. The November Kite Festival and Competition shows off what everyone's been working on over the summer.

Kites have grown up a bit, so you may want to take lessons from B & S Kites, (956-761-1248). If you're really into it, you can take a workshop on how to build a large delta kite. Also check out Windchasers Kite Shop (956-761-7028).

## DIVING

Dolphin watch excursions and snorkeling trips are a big deal in SPI, and snorkeling lessons are available for newbies. Prime dive spots near SPI include the Texas Clipper, sunk 17 miles off the coast, Texas Underwater Park, and the Liberty Ship Reef system ([www.divesouthpadre.com](http://www.divesouthpadre.com)).

## FOR NATURE LOVERS

South Padre still has plenty of room for nature and several opportunities to get close to the natives. The South Padre Island Birding and Nature Center, located by the SPI Convention Centre and adjacent to the existing Laguna Madre Nature Trail. Close by is Wyland Whaling Wall #53, one of a hundred such murals around the world.



**Top to bottom:**  
Early birds get the fish. Big kites are crowd pleasers. Isla Blanca County Park has a lovely and convenient marina. Surrounded by water, SPI is a fine place for water sports or relaxing on the beach.



See sea turtles feed and learn more about the five species of turtles at Sea Turtle Inc. This nonprofit rescue and education center is just south of the Convention Centre and is open Tuesday through Sunday from 10 a.m. until 4 p.m. ([www.seaturtleinc.com](http://www.seaturtleinc.com)).

Dolphins are the ambassadors of South Padre; the Dolphin Research and Sea Life Nature Center, located in Port Isabel on the mainland, is a good place to learn more before taking a dolphin watch tour ([www.spinaturecenter.com](http://www.spinaturecenter.com)).

The Coastal Studies Laboratory, in Isla Blanca County Park, features marine life exhibits and aquariums full of local fish. It's open Sunday through Friday from 1:30 p.m. to 4:30 p.m. The popular Isla Blanca County Park also has a mile of beach, a fishing jetty, camping, picnic, playground and marina amenities (956-761-5493).

Great weather means South Padre is host to year-round special events. After the spring-break revelers return to the books this month, the island gets spruced up with a Beach Clean Up to get ready for the Texas State Surfing Championship, sometime between April 30 and May 1, depending on the weather. If you tow an SURV and have brought along your motorcycles, come for the Beach 'N Biker Fest April 15-17.

Tip of the Island: The Wave is an island-friendly, free way to get around, just wave them down. The shuttle bus runs along the business district and also crosses the causeway to Port Isabel.

SPI is a diverse destination, with plenty of attractions and activities to keep visitors busy year-round. 📍

#### NEARBY CAMPGROUNDS

**South Padre Island KOA**, (800) 562-9724, [www.koa.com/campgrounds/south-padre](http://www.koa.com/campgrounds/south-padre).

**Isla Blanca County Park**, (956) 761-5494, [www.co.cameron.tx.us/parks/isla\\_blanca.htm](http://www.co.cameron.tx.us/parks/isla_blanca.htm).

**Andy Bowie County Park**, (956) 761-3704, [www.co.cameron.tx.us/parks/andy\\_bowie.htm](http://www.co.cameron.tx.us/parks/andy_bowie.htm).

For more information about activities on SPI — along with finding great places to eat on the island — visit our *Web Exclusives* at [www.trailerlife.com](http://www.trailerlife.com).

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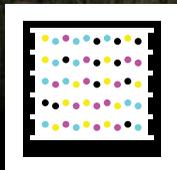
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# TEST DRIVE ON THE ROAD LESS TRAVELED

## ENCOUNTERING EARLY-SPRING WHITE STUFF WHILE TOURING THE FOUR CORNERS WITH A HONDA RIDGELINE AND LANCE TRAILER

by Peter Starr



PHOTOS BY RICHARD GREER

To paraphrase a famous saying, life is what happens to us while we're busy making plans. Well, "life" certainly happened to us — my nephew Richard and me — during our recent trip through Colorado, Utah, New Mexico and Arizona.

The way I look at it, anyone can tow a trailer and go camping in summer, but I like the road less traveled and destinations less crowded, when the air is crisp and the snow sometimes still covers the mountains like a fresh coating of alabaster. Our trip would have us visit the Four Corners area and head east from there to Taos, New Mexico, before heading south to Santa Fe, Albuquerque and west back to Southern California.

The Honda Ridgeline and Lance 1685 travel trailer might be considered by some as a lightweight combination; the Ridgeline has a tow rating of 5,000 pounds. I am in the "less is more" stage

of life, and this package promised a great way to go for this trip.

I had driven the Ridgeline two years prior, and its basic formula has barely changed since then. Its 250-hp 3.5-liter V-6, complete with VTEC, is a great power source, if a little lacking in the low-end torque department for towing. The EPA estimate of 20 mpg promised reasonable, if not stellar gas mileage.

Ergonomically this Honda works well, too, with a very comfortable electronically adjustable driver's seat and plenty of storage space for handling the more-often-than-not cockpit clutter.

The Ridgeline drives like a sophisticated SUV with the bed-storage capability of a pickup.

I have always enjoyed slideouts in small trailers. They provide the space you need while camping but reduce the size and wind resistance while towing.

Lance has done a great job to this end. The 1685 is relatively lightweight at



**The spacious interior of the Lance features a queen bed up front, a large dinette that converts to a sleeping position and a user-friendly galley.**



right up to its 5,400-pound gross vehicle weight rating (gvwr) the Ridgeline is then technically overloaded by 400 pounds. With this truck and trailer duo, users will need to deduct that 400 pounds from the trailer's 1,610-pound payload capacity to help avoid an overloaded situation. The weight of passengers and cargo in the tow vehicle also figure in the equation, but that's standard for any towing setup.

After some uneventful miles while driving into Nevada, we spent a day in Las Vegas acclimating to the rig, before heading across the much less-populated desert of northern Arizona, which became the first real test of the Honda/Lance combination.

My initial impression of the towing package was very positive. The Honda handled the weight and "windage" very well, and the Lance looked and seemed every bit a natural part of the package. After refueling in St. George, Utah, we headed to Zion National Park, a place I had wanted to see for a long time. Unfortunately, I was to be disappointed, as unexpected and torrential rain had washed away the road in the park and the ranger advised against taking a trailer through the park without an escort. So, tail between our legs, we headed back to Hurricane, Utah, topped off the gas tank and spirited down Highway 59 and into northern Arizona to join up with

Highway 89 at Kanab. Our goal that night was to make it all the way to Cortez in Colorado, a distance of 492 miles. A lot of driving, but I was anxious to maintain our schedule.

The drive through Arizona, back into Utah (at Kanab), and then Arizona again (at Page) was uneventful. From Page, we took Highway 98 across the Navajo Indian Reservation, and that is where our road trip changed. Richard was driving and I was reading when we spotted a little dog on the side of the road, and decided to pick it up. The small, black puppy was little more than skin and bones. In minutes Richard picked it up and made a bed out of a cardboard box for it in the cab of the Ridgeline. It must have felt very safe, not to mention warm, because it immediately fell asleep and did not wake up until we stopped for the night in Cortez.

There we hit the local market, where we bought a doggy bed, puppy food, dog shampoo, wormer, etc., and began the role of dog rescuer. Our first order of business was to introduce the dog to the new experience of bathing. It actually went easier than expected. He wolfed down some dinner and then promptly fell asleep.

The next day we left the trailer in the campground and spent the day in Mesa Verde National Park. The area outside the park is teeming with top-notch campgrounds, including A & A Mesa Verde RV Park & Campground (800-972-6620, [www.mesaverdecamping.com](http://www.mesaverdecamping.com)), Mesa Verde RV Resort (800-776-7421, [www.mesaverdervresort.com](http://www.mesaverdervresort.com)) as well as Sundance RV Park (800-880-9413, [www.sundancervpark.com](http://www.sundancervpark.com)). The Mesa Verde wilderness area is a melting pot of remote nature — we saw a rare northern pygmy owl in close quarters — and ancient history, the amazing living quarters of the Pueblo Indians at Spruce Tree House. The blue skies and cold air made the spectacular vistas of the Mancos Valley and the snow-covered San Juan Mountains even more crisp and alive.

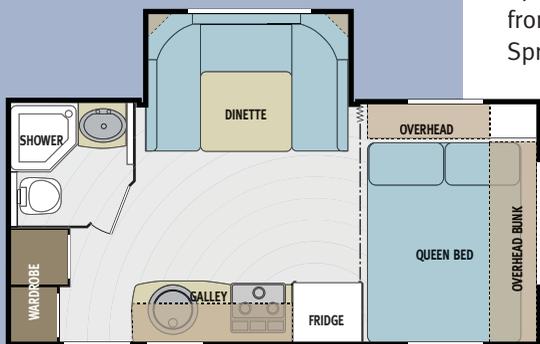
The drive to Durango, the pivotal destination of our planned trip, got us into our first experience of driving the lash-up over snow and ice. We set up camp at the Westerly RV Park (970-247-1275, [www.westerlyrvpark.com](http://www.westerlyrvpark.com)), owned

3,400 pounds, yet with sleeping positions for up to five, and all at a very attractive price. With a full queen bed and a dinette that drops down into another queen bed and bunk bed for the kids, accommodations are commodious enough for most small families. I particularly liked the standard electric awning, TV with built-in DVD player and the high level of fit-and-finish.

We equipped the Ridgeline with a trailer-brake controller and weight-distribution spring bars before hitching up the Lance, and then we hit the road. Although the Lance's empty wet weight was well within the Ridgeline's tow rating, users should be aware of the truck's tow rating relative to the trailer's overall weight potential. If the trailer is loaded

## RIDGELINE RTL

**ENGINE:** 3.5-liter V-6  
**HP:** 250 @ 5,700 rpm  
**TORQUE:** 247 lb-ft @ 4,300 rpm  
**TRANSMISSION:** 5-speed automatic  
**AXLE RATIO:** 4.53:1  
**FUEL CAP:** 20 gal  
**TIRES:** P245/60R18  
**SUSPENSION, F/R:** MacPherson strut/  
multi-link with trailing arms  
**BRAKES:** Four-wheel disc  
**TOW RATING:** 5,000 lb  
**GROSS VEHICLE WEIGHT RATING:** 6,050 lb  
**GROSS COMBINATION WEIGHT RATING:**  
10,085 lb  
**WEIGHT AS TESTED:** 4,504 lb  
**LENGTH:** 17' 3"  
**WHEELBASE:** 122"  
**MSRP, AS TESTED:** \$37,610  
**BASIC WARRANTY:** 3 yr/36,000 mi



## LANCE 1685

**EXT LENGTH:** 20' 9"  
**EXT WIDTH:** 8'  
**EXT HEIGHT:** 8' 11"  
**INT WIDTH:** 7' 8"  
**INT HEIGHT:** 6' 6"  
**CONSTRUCTION:** Laminated fiberglass,  
coated aluminum and rigid foam  
**FRESHWATER CAP:** 30 gal  
**BLACK-/GRAY-WATER CAP:** 30 gal/30 gal  
**LP-GAS CAP:** 10 gal  
**WATER-HEATER CAP:** 6 gal  
**REFRIGERATOR:** 6 cu ft  
**FURNACE:** 20,000 BTU  
**AIR CONDITIONER:** 7,000 or 11,500 BTU  
**CONVERTER:** 30 amp  
**TIRES:** ST215/75R14  
**SUSPENSION:** Torsion bar  
**WEIGHT:** (freshwater, water heater, LP-gas  
full; no cargo) 3,450 lb  
**HITCH WEIGHT:** 346 lb  
**AXLE WEIGHT:** 3,104 lb  
**GROSS VEHICLE WEIGHT RATING:** 5,400 lb  
**GROSS AXLE WEIGHT RATING (2):** 2,900 lb ea  
**CARGO CARRYING CAPACITY:** 1,610 lb  
**MSRP, BASE:** \$19,611  
**MSRP, AS TESTED:** \$24,603  
**BASIC WARRANTY:** 1 yr



**The Honda/Lance combo performed admirably while up against the elements. An optional slide-out storage tray (\$138) is offered on the Lance to help you organize and access your cargo.**

by Jeff and Eugenie Schlittgen, across from Trimble Spa and Natural Hot Springs, about five miles north of Durango. A light snowfall was fresh, but nothing compared to what was to come. The RV park is close to the Durango and Silverton Narrow Gauge Railroad route, a perfect location for our base camp. Gallup KOA (505-722-2333, [www.koa.com/campgrounds/gallup](http://www.koa.com/campgrounds/gallup)) is also near.

Trimble Spa and Natural Hot Springs, where the likes of Clark Gable and Marilyn Monroe had bathed in the 107° F mineral springs, beckoned, so with the backdrop of 10 inches of snow, I enjoyed every minute.

Durango is a wonderful small-town experience full of down-to-earth people and plenty of things to do. The focal point of most tourists is the steam train that runs year-round, though in winter months it does not go all the way to Silverton but only to Cascade Canyon, a five-hour round trip. This wilderness destination is a great setting for photo opportunities or a walk along the Animas River, but bring snowshoes during the snowy season.

The train trip is hard to describe without resorting to usually unbearable clichés. The views are stunning as the train chuffs its way along the narrow tracks on the edge of 400-foot drops down to the Animas River. The snow enhanced the wilderness experience and gave some insight to the hardships endured by the original miners of Silverton in the early 1900s.

Other recommended places to spend



time in Durango are Steamworks Brewing Company, a brew pub with outstanding beers and excellent food, and the Cyprus Café, where natural food from local sustainable farms is a memorable culinary treat with a friendly presentation. With five days of feeding and grooming, the puppy was now looking decidedly healthy and, with the help of some friends, we found him a new home.

The exceptional hospitality of all the people we came across in Durango made this trip particularly memorable, and the days in Durango went by all too quickly. However, with very heavy snowfalls and fast-falling temperatures that added to the already dangerously icy road conditions, we had to make more executive decisions regarding the travel plans.

With even worse weather on its way, we decided that the road to Taos and Santa Fe was simply too risky to take with our trailer, and so we set out south to Farmington, New Mexico, and Gallup in the hope of warmer weather at lower latitudes. Were we wrong! After leaving Shiprock and heading south on Highway 491, as day quickly turned into night, we encountered a road of packed ice and temperatures 30° below freezing — not counting the wind-chill factor. The Honda handled everything in stride, confidentially pulling the Lance through it all and to the overnight stop in Gallup.

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## TEST DRIVE ON THE ROAD LESS TRAVELED

Here, I wished for one accessory that we could have used — an electric heater for the Lance. That night was so cold we ran out of LP-gas for the furnace.

We headed out the following morning along I-40 toward Flagstaff, expecting miserable and perhaps dangerous driving conditions, but we were prepared. A quick stop at the Petrified Forest National Park Ranger Station revealed the park drive was closed due to ice, and so we drove to lower elevations to get to warmer climes in Sedona. A campground is at Lo Lo Mai Springs (928-634-4700, [www.lolomai.com](http://www.lolomai.com)) that borders Oak Creek. There, we spent two days recovering from the cold and enjoying the wonderful scenery and the mystical ambiance unique to the Sedona area. Rancho Sedona RV Park (800-641-4261, [www.ranchosedona.com](http://www.ranchosedona.com)), also along Oak Creek, is yet another fantastic camping option.

In the almost 3,000 miles of driving in these trying weather conditions, I was

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comforted by the confidence I felt and the safety afforded by the Honda during the day and assured with the warm, cabin-like ambiance and lots of storage of the Lance 1685 while camped. The only disappointment of the entire 10-day trip was the less than stellar mileage, which averaged 10.1 mpg while towing, but that's about par when towing a full-profile trailer.

Overall, I'd recommend the Lance and Ridgeline combo for its ease of towing, comfort, thoughtful amenities and ability to withstand the extreme weather conditions on this early-spring adventure. 🚗

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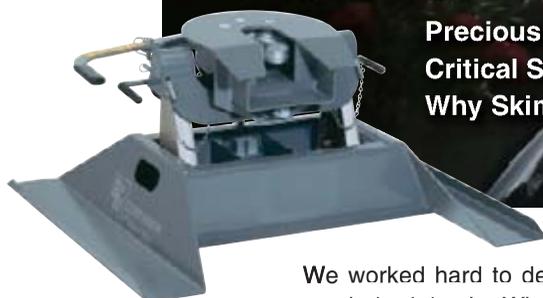
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[www.arrkannrv.com](http://www.arrkannrv.com)

Bucars RV Centre  
Balzac, AB  
[www.bucarsrv.com](http://www.bucarsrv.com)

Woody's RV World  
Red Deer, AB  
[www.woodysrv.com](http://www.woodysrv.com)

## COLORADO:

Windish RV Center  
Lakewood, CO  
[www.windishrv.com](http://www.windishrv.com)

## DELAWARE:

Parkview RV Center  
Smyrna, DE  
[www.parkviewrv.com](http://www.parkviewrv.com)

## FLORIDA:

Dusty's Camper World  
Bartow, FL  
[www.dustysrv.com](http://www.dustysrv.com)

## LAZY DAYS:

Lazydays ●  
Seffner, FL  
[www.lazydays.com](http://www.lazydays.com)

## ILLINOIS:

Pontiac RV  
Pontiac, IL  
[www.pontiacrv.com](http://www.pontiacrv.com)

Rick's RV Center  
Joliet, IL  
[www.ricksrv.com](http://www.ricksrv.com)

## INDIANA:

Modern Trailer Sales  
Anderson, IN  
[www.moderntrailer.com](http://www.moderntrailer.com)

Mount Comfort RV  
Greenfield, IN  
[www.mountcomfortrv.com](http://www.mountcomfortrv.com)

## MARYLAND:

Beckley's Camping Center  
Thurmont, MD  
[www.beckleysrvs.com](http://www.beckleysrvs.com)

## MICHIGAN:

American RV Sales & Service  
Grand Rapids, MI  
[www.americanrv.com](http://www.americanrv.com)

Veurinks' RV Center  
Grand Rapids, MI  
[www.veurinksrv.com](http://www.veurinksrv.com)

## MINNESOTA:

Coates RV Center  
Columbus, MN  
[www.coatesrv.com](http://www.coatesrv.com)

Hilltop Trailer Sales  
Fridley, MN  
[www.hilltoptrailers.com](http://www.hilltoptrailers.com)

PleasureLand RV Center  
St. Cloud, MN  
[www.pleasurelandrv.com](http://www.pleasurelandrv.com)

Steinbring Motorcoach  
Garfield, MN  
[www.steinbring.com](http://www.steinbring.com)

## MISSISSIPPI:

Aberdeen RV Center  
Aberdeen, MS  
[www.aberdeenv.com](http://www.aberdeenv.com)

## MISSOURI:

Apache Village RV Center  
Hazelwood, MO  
[www.apachevillagerv.com](http://www.apachevillagerv.com)

Coachlight RV Sales  
Carthage, MO  
[www.coachlightrv.com](http://www.coachlightrv.com)

## NEW HAMPSHIRE:

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## RV BUSINESS



## DEALER AWARDS

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Colonial Airstream & Itasca  
Lakewood, NJ  
[www.colonialairstream.com](http://www.colonialairstream.com)

Driftwood RV Centers  
Clermont, NJ  
[www.driftwoodrvcenter.com](http://www.driftwoodrvcenter.com)

### NEW MEXICO:

Aloha RV  
Albuquerque, NM  
[www.aloharv.com](http://www.aloharv.com)

### NEW YORK:

Alpin Haus  
Amsterdam, NY  
[www.alpinhaus.com](http://www.alpinhaus.com)

Boat N RV Superstores  
West Coxsackie, NY  
[www.boatnrv.com](http://www.boatnrv.com)

Wilkins Recreational Vehicles  
Bath, NY  
[www.wilkinsrv.com](http://www.wilkinsrv.com)

### NORTH CAROLINA:

Bill Plemmons RV World ●  
Rural Hall, NC  
[www.billplemmonsrv.com](http://www.billplemmonsrv.com)

Carolina Coach & Camper  
Claremont, NC  
[www.carolinacoach.com](http://www.carolinacoach.com)

Terrell Camping Center  
Terrell, NC  
[www.terrellcampingcenter.com](http://www.terrellcampingcenter.com)

Tom Johnson Camping Center  
Marion, NC  
[www.tomjohnsoncamping.com](http://www.tomjohnsoncamping.com)

### NORTH DAKOTA:

Capital RV Center  
Bismarck, ND  
[www.capitalrvcenter.com](http://www.capitalrvcenter.com)

### OREGON:

Big Country RV  
Bend, OR  
[www.bigcrv.com](http://www.bigcrv.com)

Curtis Trailers  
Portland, OR  
[www.curtistrailers.com](http://www.curtistrailers.com)

Guaranty RV Supercenters  
Junction City, OR  
[www.guarantyrv.com](http://www.guarantyrv.com)

### TENNESSEE:

Tennessee RV Sales & Service  
Knoxville, TN  
[www.tennesseeerv.com](http://www.tennesseeerv.com)

### TEXAS:

ExploreUSA RV Supercenter  
Plano, TX  
[www.exploreusa.com](http://www.exploreusa.com)

Topper's Camping Center  
Waller, TX  
[www.toppersrvs.com](http://www.toppersrvs.com)

### VIRGINIA:

Dixie RV Superstore ●  
Newport News, VA  
[www.dixiervsuperstore.com](http://www.dixiervsuperstore.com)

Dodd RV  
Portsmouth, VA  
[www.doddrv.com](http://www.doddrv.com)

Safford RV  
Thornburg, VA  
[www.saffordrv.com](http://www.saffordrv.com)

### WASHINGTON:

Poulsbo RV  
Kent, WA  
[www.poulsborv.com](http://www.poulsborv.com)

Roy Robinson Motorhome  
& RV Center  
Marysville, WA  
[www.royrobinsonrv.com](http://www.royrobinsonrv.com)

### WISCONSIN:

Greenway RV Sales & Service  
Winsconsin Rapids, WI  
[www.greenwayrv.com](http://www.greenwayrv.com)

Kings Campers  
Wausau, WI  
[www.kingscampers.com](http://www.kingscampers.com)

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User Guide

Contents

# A CLEAN START

**GET YOUR RIG READY FOR THE TRAVEL SEASON WITH THESE DETAILING PRODUCTS AND TIPS**

by Chris Hemer

PHOTOS COURTESY OF THE MANUFACTURERS

**T**here it sits. An imposing figure of fiberglass, plastic, rubber and steel. It loafs in the driveway, staring back at you expectantly, daring you to tackle its broad flat panels, filthy roof and abundance of windows. Some call it an RV ... but right now, you call it a chore. And the very thought of cleaning it makes you want to go back inside and watch reruns of “Iron Chef America.”

Come on, now; you’re better than that. All you need is a game plan, a little coaching and the right products to detail your rig like a pro. To get you started, we talked to some of the leading manufacturers of RV (and some non-RV) detailing products to get their tips and suggestions, and harvested the considerable experience of the TL staff as well. Since you probably already know how to wash and care for your tow rig, we’re going to devote most (okay, all) of the attention to your trailer. Remember that most of the companies we mention here offer a complete line of RV care products, so be sure to check their websites for more information, products and useful tips.

## THE WHEEL DEAL



left there. Apply a good tire and wheel cleaner such as Eagle One's All Wheel and Tire Cleaner or Protect All's new RV Wheel and Tire Cleaner to one wheel/tire at a time, gently agitate the surface with a wheel cleaning brush, then hose off. And by the

As you know, cleaning your RV thoroughly can be a time-consuming process, so you'll want to create an efficient workflow to prevent repeating any steps. Start with the wheels and tires first, because you don't want any of the strong cleaning agents and resulting grime to spatter onto the painted/gel-coated surface and be

way, the same is true for your tow rig, so you can clean all wheels and tires first before proceeding. Once you're done detailing the trailer, apply a good tire protectant (one without petroleum distillates) for a like-new appearance.

### TAKE IT FROM THE TOP



Now, you're going to work top to bottom, cleaning the roof, awning(s), walls and finally the glass. As you've likely noticed, the roof is where most of the grime accumulates, and how you care for it has a lot to do with what it's made out of. Common roof materials on newer RVs include fiberglass, rubber (EPDM) and thermoplastic polyolefin, also known as TPO. Fiberglass and TPO roofs can be cleaned like the rest of the surfaces in your coach; in other words, hosed off and gently cleaned with a soft bristle brush (designed for vehicle detailing) and some RV wash.

Rubber roofs are a completely different story, however, because they are more porous than other roofs and are more likely to suffer damage caused by neglect. Direct sunlight can cause the surface to become chalky, while excessive moisture can allow algae and mildew to form. When the deteriorating rubber is mixed with dirt and airborne pollutants, you've not only got a dirty roof, but the dreaded black streaks will soon appear on the exterior walls and windows (more on them later).

How often you tend to your rubber roof depends on the environment and/or conditions in which you live; however, the experts we interviewed agree that it should be cleaned and conditioned at the beginning and end of each season, at minimum. If the RV is parked under trees or is stored in an area where dirt and/or pollutants accumulate quickly, the roof may need to be cleaned and conditioned four or more times a year. There are a variety of products available from companies like Camco, Dacor, Protect All and Thetford designed specifically for cleaning RV rubber roofs, as well as treatments that will protect the rubber from the elements after cleaning.

Depending on the product used, the typical manner in which rubber roofs are cleaned is to spray the roof with a garden hose first to remove loose particulates. Then, starting at the front of the coach and working back (toward the ladder you came up), apply the product and gently scrub with a soft bristle brush designed for vehicle detailing such as Shurhold's deck brushes (Shurhold even offers complete cleaning kits). Camco also offers an adjustable RV Wash Brush that connects to your garden hose, is adjustable from 40 to 66 inches long, and features a built-in on/off lever.

Keep in mind that, while you should give your rubber roof the full treatment at least twice a year, it should be rinsed off every time you wash the RV to keep dirt down to a minimum. (See the March 2011 issue for even more in-depth information on roof maintenance.)



### FAWNING OVER YOUR AWNING

Under normal use, cleaning the awning isn't much of an issue, because it spends most of its time stored, away from the elements. But during long stays or full-timing, it's only a matter of time before the awning gets dirty or worse yet, covered with bird droppings, sap and other debris. Thetford

and Camco offer products designed specifically for cleaning awnings and removing the stains that affect them most. First, deploy the awning and flood it with water to remove the worst of the dirt and debris, scrub stubborn stains with a brush and extension pole, then rinse clean. And while this may sound obvious, make sure to let the awning dry completely before you roll it back to prevent mold and mildew issues.

### WALL TO WALL

With the roof and awning cleaned, the next step is the exterior walls. While it is common practice to use common household dish detergent for this purpose, RV and car care product manufacturers advise against this for one simple reason: It strips the surface of any waxes that you may have applied earlier. Specialized washing soaps offered by Protect All, Camco, Thetford and car care specialists like Eagle One, Mother's and





Meguiar's are all designed to clean away dirt and grime while leaving the thin film of wax intact. In between washes, there are also a variety of "waterless car wash" products designed to rid the surface of the light dirt film that can accumulate over a few days, and spray-on "touch up" wax products to keep a layer of wax on the surface between waxings.

It's no secret that reaching the upper half of any RV can be a challenge, and constantly moving a ladder down the side of the rig just won't do. The easiest and safest way to get to hard-to-reach areas is with an extension-pole system. Shurhold, for one, offers three different RV Kits (Basic, Intermediate and Deluxe) that contain a telescoping handle (up to 9 feet in length), a soft brush and stainless-steel squeegee, among other items. And California Car Cover company offers its California Jelly Blade, a giant squeegee (12 inches) made from medical-grade silicone that can also be affixed to an extension pole kit.

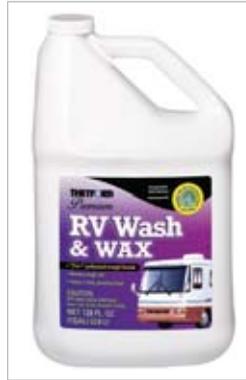
## BREAKING THE STREAK



Now, before we deal with waxing, we need to touch on the dreaded black streaks we mentioned earlier — because waxing over them will make them more difficult to remove. Any RV can suffer from black streaks, regardless of the type of roof you have or environment the rig is stored in; but what are they? Essentially, they're a combination of soils, oxidation and non-water soluble oils used in the manufacturing process of rubber roofs, rubberized sealers and plastic/rubber parts on the RV's roof and exterior walls. They won't come off with common soap and water, and if left unchecked, they can etch the surface and become very difficult to remove — especially on older RVs where the gelcoat may have become oxidized. We can say from personal experience that Thetford's Premium Black Streak and Bug Remover does an admirable job of removing black streaks without much effort — but companies like Camco and Protect

All offer similar products designed for the same purpose. Spray the product on, wipe the streaks clean, and then rinse thoroughly with water.

## WAXING PHILOSOPHICAL



Whether painted or gelcoated, an RV's exterior walls should be waxed on a regular basis to prevent surface oxidation. How often depends, again, on the severity of your environment, but figure it should be waxed whenever the rubber roof is treated, or at the beginning/end of every travel season, minimum. This is where the expression, "frequent care is easy care" comes into play; wax the surface often, and you won't have to

worry about oxidation that can damage the surface and require serious elbow grease to remove.

One of the easiest ways to apply a wax product over a large surface is with an orbital buffer, not a rotary buffer, which can quickly burn through paint/gelcoat if used by inexperienced hands. Shurhold offers the Dual Action Polisher (pictured on the top of page 36) that's designed to eliminate the burn-through woes.

To begin, apply a small amount of wax to the pad, then begin applying the product. Remember, less is more when it comes to wax. If you apply too much, it will splatter and dry elsewhere, requiring more work to remove it. Let the wax form a light haze, and then use a clean bonnet on the buffer to remove the wax and polish the surface. It's quicker and a lot easier. If you notice wax in some nooks and crannies, you can use a detailing brush specifically made for the purpose, or even a common soft bristle toothbrush will do the trick.

Once the RV is waxed and polished, you can keep a light film of wax on the surface after every wash with a spray on product like Eagle One's Wax As-U-Dry, Protect All's Polish, Wax and Treatment or Thetford's Premium Protect and Shine.

There, now don't you feel better? Instead of a beast of burden, your trailer will now stand as the benchmark against which all other RVs in the neighborhood will be measured. 🚐

## SOURCES

**California Car Cover Company**, (800) 423-5525, [www.calcarcover.com](http://www.calcarcover.com).

**Camco Manufacturing Inc.**, (800) 334-2004, [www.camco.net](http://www.camco.net).

**Camping World**, (800) 626-3636, [www.campingworld.com](http://www.campingworld.com).

**Dicor Corporation Inc.**, (800) 837-2059, [www.dicor.com](http://www.dicor.com).

**Eagle One**, (800) 832-6825, [www.eagleone.com](http://www.eagleone.com).

**Meguiar's Inc.**, (800) 347-5700, [www.meguiars.com](http://www.meguiars.com).

**Mothers Inc.**, (714) 891-3364, [www.mothers.com](http://www.mothers.com).

**Protect All Inc.**, (800) 322-4491, [www.protectall.com](http://www.protectall.com).

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

**Thetford Corporation**, (800) 543-1219, [www.thetford.com](http://www.thetford.com).

**World Class Motoring**, (800) 986-4977, [www.worldclassmotoring.com](http://www.worldclassmotoring.com).

# IT'S IN THE DETAILS

## KEEPING YOUR RV'S INTERIOR CLEAN IS AS SIMPLE AS APPLYING THE RIGHT PRODUCTS AND TECHNIQUES

by Chris Hemer

**O**n your personal-fun meter, detailing the inside of your trailer probably ranks right there with a root canal, filing taxes and flea marketing with your mother-in-law. Housekeeping is never fun, and the fact that the inside of your RV can be a mix of carpet, fabric upholstery, leather/Ultraleather, tile, stone, fiberglass and wood — each with its own cleaning regimen — doesn't make it more so. Well, the good news is that your trailer is smaller than your house (we hope), and there are a variety of common and RV-specific solutions that can make cleaning and detailing your RV easier.

Rather than an overview of cleaning in general, we've broken it up into categories to make finding your solution easier and faster. While we can't cover every possible cleaning scenario (that could be a book in itself), we've done our best to present effective ways to solve the cleaning issues you're likely to find. And don't forget, the Internet is also a great resource when it comes to finding solutions to specific stains on various materials and surfaces.

### CARPET

Do a little research, and you'll find that there are almost as many different ways to clean carpet as there are carpet styles, ranging from home remedies to machine cleaning. The most common

stains can be removed with a spot carpet cleaner, but beware: They're not all created equal. The Carpet and Rug Institute (CRI) has tested an assortment of carpet cleaning solutions and equipment, and found a wide variance in how well these products work. In fact, the organization found that some products even damage carpet. So how do you know what will clean your carpet effectively without harming it? Look for products that have been awarded the CRI Seal of Approval. The CRI Seal of Approval program identifies effective carpet cleaning solutions and equipment that clean carpet right the first time and protect a facility's carpet investment. Spot Shot, a product of the WD-40 company, is a recipient of the CRI Seal of Approval and has received rave reviews. We tried it ourselves and found that it did an admirable job of removing common stains without any scrubbing or rinsing. Spot Shot is non-toxic and biodegradable, so it's safe for you, your pets and your kids. For pet stains, consider Spot Shot Pet Instant Stain and Odor Eliminator, or Nature's Miracle.

Whatever carpet you have or product you choose, the CRI offers the following general spot cleaning tips.

**Act quickly:** Most contemporary carpet is stain-resistant to some degree, so many spills can be removed if immediate action is taken. The longer you wait, the more likely it is that the stain will become permanent.



PHOTOS BY CHRIS HEMER



**Blot liquids:** Use a dry, white absorbent cloth or plain white paper towel.

**Don't scrub:** Scrubbing can cause pile distortion. Blot until the area is dry.

**Pretest:** Apply a small amount of your chosen cleaning solution to an inconspicuous area to make sure the solution will not damage the fiber or dye before you commence cleaning your stain.

**Edges first:** Work from the edges of the spill to the center to prevent the spill stain from spreading.

**Continue cleaning:** Continue using the solution as long as there is a transfer of the spill to the cloth.

**Rinse:** After the stain has been removed, rinse the area with cold water and blot with a dry cloth.

Though not necessarily recommended by the CRI, we've had good luck with Bissell's Little Green deep cleaning machine. Reasonably priced at around \$90, it does a good job removing tough, ground-in stains without damaging carpet, and it's small enough to store without taking up too much space.

## COUNTERTOPS



While laminate was once the sole choice for RV countertops, there's now a full range of products for RV use, up to and including natural stone. Depending on the surface, the cleaning procedures are different; laminate cleans up easily with soap and water and/or an "all purpose" product like Roadmaster's Voom! RV Cleaner.

There are also a number of different companies manufacturing so-called "solid surface" products, which is pretty

much any surface made from polyester, acrylic or in some instances a combination of both materials. Products such as these are also easy to clean, but can scratch easily if an abrasive is applied.

Use only a nonabrasive cleanser and a non-scratching scrub sponge on countertops to avoid damage (that goes for the solid-surface sink, too, if applicable). The good news is solid-surface products are all easy to repair, so if you do scratch it, the damage can usually be buffed out.

The last category is natural stone and engineered stone surfaces. The only thing to be aware of here is that natural stone is porous, even if a coating has been applied. That means there are tiny nooks and crannies in the surface that can allow bacteria to grow (which is why it's not used in restaurant kitchens) — so make sure you use an antibacterial cleaner on these products to be safe and use non-scratching pads to remove tough stains. Engineered stone products look and feel like natural stone, but are non-porous. If in doubt, ask your dealer/manufacturer what product was used in your trailer, and their recommendations for cleaning it.

## DUST

The California Dash Duster is perfect for removing dust from flat surfaces, and a Swiffer duster is great for getting in between mini blinds. Dryer sheets also work well on blinds, as they trap dust and tend to help repel small particles, due to the sheet's anti-static properties.

## FIBERGLASS



Whether it's in your sinks, shower or both of the above, fiberglass is a fact of life in an RV — so learning to clean it effectively and safely is crucial. Above all, it is important to remember that, while fiberglass is strong, its surface is delicate and can be damaged easily. In sinks, use

a store-bought, nonabrasive cleanser, a specialty product like Thetford's Aqua Clean, or a home remedy like baking soda and a sponge dipped in white vinegar.

In showers, you can make your life a lot easier by using a shower squeegee on the walls and door after every shower, and by drying off the taps with your bath towel. This simple habit will prevent hard-water spots from forming (which can

be difficult to remove). If you've already got them, try the same cleansing methods previously mentioned.

## FLOORS

Sweeping regularly is the best way to protect your floor from scratches, regardless of whether the surface is vinyl, laminate or tile. Even so, you're still going to have to mop once in a while, and who wants to deal with a heavy bucket of water and a wet mop? The Swiffer WetJet is a great solution for light mopping — squeeze the trigger, and the multipurpose cleaning solution sprays in front of the mop head. A textured pad collects dirt, while a large scrubbing strip up front makes it easy to remove tough or dried stains. The WetJet is safe for all types of floors, and when you're done mopping simply tear off the textured pad and throw it away.

## FURNITURE

As with carpet, there are dozens (perhaps hundreds) of different fabrics on the market today, not to mention leather, synthetic leather (aka Ultraleather) and synthetic suede (aka microsuede). Generally speaking, most of the techniques used to clean carpet will work on fabric furniture, but it's a good idea to learn how to clean your specific furniture, and what product to use, before an accident happens. For example, Ultraleather and microsuede have a reputation for easy clean up, but where the former cleans up with a sponge, mild detergent and water, the same isn't necessarily true for the latter.

There are actually different types of microsuede — some that clean up with water, some that don't — and if you use water on the wrong type, you can cause a permanent stain. Here, it really pays to read the owner's manual or contact the manufacturer of your furniture for proper product and technique before cleaning is required.

## PET HAIR

Using a vacuum to remove pet hair from furniture and bedding is almost futile. The best method we've found is to use a silicone pet hairbrush, or even a common rubber dishwashing glove, to rub the hair out of the fabric. Then you can vacuum it up.

## PLUMBING FIXTURES AND STAINLESS STEEL



For touch-ups, use a common glass cleaner or white vinegar and a paper towel. But for hard deposits, soap scum, etc., it's hard to beat a nonabrasive cleanser like Bon Ami or Bar Keepers Friend. And keep in mind that stainless steel actually has a "grain" (directional lines in the surface), so it's easier and more effective to clean it with the grain, rather than against it.



## STICKY STUFF

In our opinion, it's hard to beat original Goo Gone. We've tried it on a number of stubborn messes, such as tar, stickers, tape residue and crayon marks — but the company also claims it can remove oil, blood, lipstick, mascara and shoe polish. It's environmentally friendly and has a pleasant citrus scent.

## WINDOWS

Take your pick from any of the dozens of window cleaning products out there, and hope the one you choose really works. Or, you can take a tip from old pros and use plain 'ole white vinegar and newspaper.

## WOOD



For real wood, we like to use Pledge, as it brightens the finish and protects it from water stains. Scott's Liquid Gold is another reputable product, and it's also offered in wipes. For cabinets with a veneer, it's best to avoid silicone- or oil-based cleaners; instead use a product such as Guardsman's Furniture Polish.

Murphy's Oil Soap, Old English Lemon Oil as well as linseed oil can also be used to keep your cabinets looking clean and new.

Regardless of wood type, be sure to dust regularly to keep dirty buildups away. A microfiber cloth, paper towels or a feather duster all work nicely on most wood surfaces.

Housekeeping is never fun, but taking care of your most prized possession will keep your enjoyment preserved for years to come. 🚗

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**California Car Cover Company**, (800) 423 5525, [www.calcarcover.com](http://www.calcarcover.com).

**Camping World**, (888) 626-7576, [www.campingworld.com](http://www.campingworld.com).

**Roadmaster Inc.**, (800) 669-9690, [www.roadmasterinc.com](http://www.roadmasterinc.com).

**Thetford Corporation**, (800) 543-1219, [www.thetford.com](http://www.thetford.com).

Other products mentioned in this article are readily available at most grocery stores, home-improvement centers and many mom-and-pop stores across the nation.

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User Guide

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# SLIDEOUT SECRETS

## TIPS ON KEEPING THE MOVING PARTS MOVING

by Ken Freund

**S**lideout rooms can make a huge improvement in interior space and livability, adding many square feet to an RV when they're set up. However, like any electro-mechanical system, slideout mechanisms need a little love (and occasional maintenance) to perform at their best for a long service life.

We contacted Tom Pilgrim, tech guru at Winnebago Industries, for some suggestions on slideout care. He noted "the hydraulic and electric mechanisms Winnebago employs to operate room extensions do not require lubrication. However, owners can do their part by keeping the equipment clean, which lends to familiarization and inspection and, therefore, timely repairs should they be necessary."

Pilgrim added: "It's important to mention the floor surface beneath a room extension. Depending on the room installation and design, we could have rollers in contact with the flooring or there could be 'glide-strips' or a combination of both. These are weight-bearing devices that are in direct contact with interior flooring surfaces. The flooring (carpet, laminates, tile) can be easily damaged if foreign material gets in between. It's a good idea to ensure the floor is checked and clean prior to retracting a room. Sidewall opening perimeter wipe-seals are in direct contact to the exterior surfaces. Even when in proper adjustment, these seals create a substantial amount of drag. A clean wall surface is the key, and avoiding the scratching of exterior paint and fiberglass and room movement will be much smoother, too. Apply a protective product to the exterior surfaces, such as synthetic polymer products that are friendly to paint, fiberglass, graphics, etc. This aids with water runoff and the cleaning process, and it lessens friction. We suggest



PHOTOS BY KEN FREUND



**Before operating a slideout, check to make sure the area is free of debris, which could cause some unsightly damage to the floor or even to the slide mechanism.**

products like 303 Protectant, which is friendly to plastic surfaces, paint, fiberglass and graphics, and the UV protection 303 prolongs the life of the seals. Just spray and wipe; it's very effective at lessening friction, contains no silicones, is not a petroleum-based product and doesn't attract dust or dirt. Some folks use cornstarch and just keep a treated rag in a baggie and use a broom handle to run the rag across the seals. It's effective and cheap and you don't need to climb a ladder. Obviously, this is a short-term treatment because it will wash away."

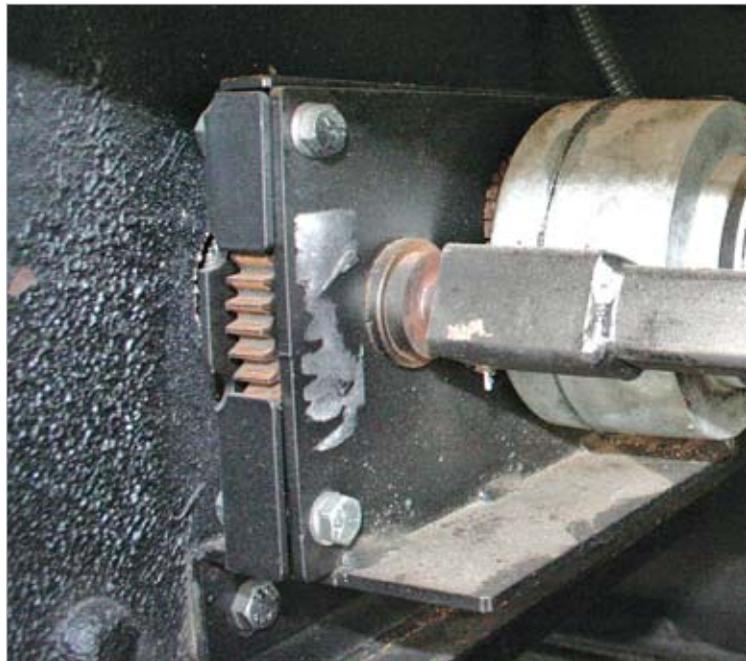
We also spoke with Eric Davis of Eric's RV in Sequim, Washington, about some of the most common problems encountered, and he also offered a few tips on how to keep those slideouts humming. He noted, before you press that slideout control switch to open it, make sure your RV is level, any latches are released and that you have sufficient clearance to extend it fully. Before closing a slideout, check the floor for throw rugs, sand or other things that can get into the slideout mechanism and damage flooring. Check outside for branches, leaves and other debris that might be on your slideout room. Also, if the slideout has been extended for a lengthy period, check that the edges of the seals aren't stuck to the sliding surfaces.

Slideouts can bind if the chassis is twisted or not level, and motors also bog down if they don't get enough voltage. To ensure sufficient voltage at the slideout motor, leave the shorepower connected, the generator on or the tow vehicle's engine running and a trailer harness connected. Sometimes a slideout mechanism still may fail to operate properly; fortunately many problems can be solved by a do-it-yourselfer. So before sending your RV to a shop for a potentially costly repair, try troubleshooting the problem.

### **GENERAL TROUBLESHOOTING/REPAIRS**

If a slideout moves slowly or sticks when moving, check for binding around the edges of the opening that the slideout passes through. It's also possible that a drawer or cabinet opened during transit or some other foreign object is jamming the slideout. Listen for unusual sounds and look for erratic movements whenever operating slideouts.

Slideout systems require sufficient power (often around 70 amps) from the battery to operate, so before you begin troubleshooting elsewhere, check voltage under load at the motor, which should not drop below about 10.5 volts. If nothing happens when you operate the slideout switch, after checking the



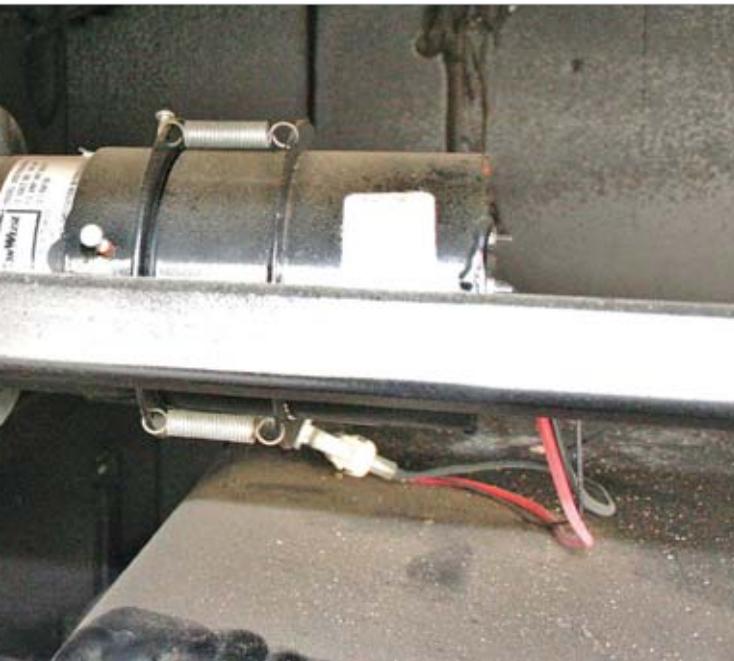
**Mechanical slideouts often have a hand crank as a backup plan if there's little or inadequate power. It's important to always know the location of the crank mechanism.**

battery, look for a blown fuse or tripped circuit breaker. Locations for these include the fuse/breaker panel, the battery compartment or in the wiring harness near the motor.

Run your hands along the inner and outer seals between the slide and the wall opening along the top and sides (use caution to avoid getting cut). If you find no apparent cause for sticking or binding, it could be the slideout mechanism is faulty or needs realignment. Protect All and Thetford make slideout lubricant products, which are handy for lubing sticking spots.

If the room doesn't seal snugly when it's fully extended or retracted, adjust the stops by tightening the screw or bolt adjusters.

Slideout systems fit into several major categories, and then there are individual differences among brands and models within those classifications. All systems use an electric



**Applying a slideout lubricant to the slideout hardware can help with stubborn slides that are sticking.**

**Familiarizing yourself with the slideout drive mechanisms is a good practice that helps with everyday maintenance.**

motor, but some systems are directly driven by the motor via a mechanical gear-type drive, screw jack or cable setup, while others use hydraulics.

### **HYDRAULIC MECHANISMS**

Hydraulic mechanisms use a pump driven by an electric motor to operate a hydraulic ram that moves the slideout mechanism. Direction is guided by a control module connected to solenoid valves. Besides electrical gremlins, hydraulic systems may fail to operate due to low fluid levels, leaks or faulty valves. Look for signs of leaks around hoses, rams, solenoid valves and the pump. A slideout with a leak can often be made to work temporarily by refilling the reservoir.

Before checking fluid level, the slideout must be fully retracted. Remove the breather cap from the hydraulic reservoir; the level should usually be about one inch below the top of the reservoir. Some slideouts use automatic transmission fluid, others require special hydraulic fluids. You'll find recommended fluids listed in the owner's manual or on the manufacturer's website.

If the pump runs, but the room fails to open, after checking fluid level, check if the solenoid valve opens. If the pump runs, but the room won't retract, extend the retract valve. If the room creeps in after being extended, check if the system is leaking oil, and then check the solenoid or manifold check valve.

### **MECHANICAL MECHANISMS**

Screw-jack systems operate in a similar fashion to fifth-wheel landing gears, but they are mounted horizontally. Rack-and-pinion systems are made in a variety of configurations that consist of strips with cogs in a track. The two sides are typically connected to one motor and drive mechanism by a cross shaft that connects the two. The motors can run in both directions to

operate the mechanism in and out by reversing polarity at the control switch unit. Quite often problems are caused by broken or corroded wiring, so check wires and clean connections. In addition to electrical glitches, these mechanical slideout systems may fail because of broken shear pins, gears or clutches. If you can hear the motor straining and if the lights dim when the slideout is activated, either voltage is low or the mechanisms are binding or jammed. Inspect the underside of the mechanism to see if anything is corroded, broken or otherwise damaged. If the motor spins freely when the switch is activated, but nothing moves, the shear pin or other parts of the drive mechanism, such as a clutch, may be broken. If one side of the room will not move while trying to extend or retract the room, the shear pin may again be at fault and the motor is driving one side while the other side is not driven. Check the drive mechanism that connects the two sides.

### **IF ALL ELSE FAILS**

Most slideout systems have a manual method to operate them if a problem occurs. Hydraulic systems usually require that pressure be released in the hydraulic ram by manually opening a valve, and then the slideout room must be pushed closed or pulled open. Mechanical slideout systems usually have a hand crank, but the motor may have to be removed first to allow the gears to turn. Owner's manuals outline the procedure; make sure you have the crank handle and know how to use it. RV and slideout manufacturers often have manuals and other helpful service information on their websites. 📄

### **SOURCES**

**Camping World**, (888) 626-7576, [www.campingworld.com](http://www.campingworld.com).

**HWH Slide-Out Systems**, (800) 321-3494, [www.hwhcorp.com](http://www.hwhcorp.com).

**Lippert Components**, (574) 537-8900, [www.lippertcomponents.com](http://www.lippertcomponents.com).

**Power Gear Technical Service**, (800) 334-4712, [www.powergearus.com](http://www.powergearus.com).

**Protect All Inc.**, (800) 322-4491, [www.protectall.com](http://www.protectall.com).

**Thetford Corporation**, (800) 543-1219, [www.thetford.com](http://www.thetford.com).

# PERFORMANCE CORNER



by Ken Freund

## HYPERTECH MAX ENERGY E-CON TUNER

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Hypertech reports that its customers are claiming significant mileage gains and a substantial increase in horsepower and torque. When police departments reported a 2.5 mpg gain with their Ford Crown Victorias, Hypertech hired an EPA/CARB-recognized lab — Automotive Testing Laboratory in Mesa, Arizona — to confirm the results. The calculations from its EPA drive cycle testing (used for calculating OEM fuel economy) showed a 13.67 percent mile-per-gallon increase, taking the Crown Vics from 18.42 mpg stock to 20.94 mpg tuned, for a 2.52 mpg gain. Hypertech also sent diesel trucks to Olson Ecologic in Fullerton, California, an EPA/CARB-recognized lab that specializes in diesel



testing. The results from its EPA transient cycle testing proved a 9.73 percent increase in fuel efficiency with Hypertech's tuning, compared to stock.

Hypertech units are simply loaded via the OBDII port and are available for a variety of popular domestic vehicles with both gas and diesel engines. Other features include auto-transmission firmness and shift-point adjustments, speedometer recalibration and cooling fan on/off setting adjustments, and you can read and clear diagnostic trouble codes. For an additional charge, the E-CON can be upgraded to a Max Energy Power Programmer via the Internet to include all the Max Energy features available for that vehicle. Hypertech has included meeting all CARB EO requirements in its product development process to ensure that Hypertech "Power Tuning" products are not detrimental to ambient air quality and will meet or exceed emissions certification. Hypertech has obtained or is pending CARB EOs for all its emissions-related products.

**Hypertech**, (901) 382-8888, [www.hypertech.com](http://www.hypertech.com).

### GM RECALL

General Motors has issued a recall for 2011 models of the Cadillac Escalade, Chevrolet Avalanche 1500, Chevrolet Silverado 1500 and GMC Sierra 1500. According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), rear-axle cross pins may not be properly heat-treated and could fracture and lock, and the driver could lose control. NHTSA says drivers might hear a banging noise which indicates imminent failure, but that may not happen in all cases. If you have questions call Cadillac at (866) 982-2339, Chevrolet at (800) 630-2438 or GMC at (866) 996-9463. Mention GM safety recall #100426 or call NHTSA at (888) 327-4236 and reference recall #10V643000.

### DODGE RECALL

A recall of 2011 Dodge Rams affects 56,611 units manufactured between September and December 2010. The NHTSA indicates that a rear-axle bearing may seize. Owners may hear a growling or grinding noise coming from the axle before the bearing fails. Owners should contact their dealers or call Chrysler at (800) 853-1403 or NHTSA and reference campaign #10V656000. 📞

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Advice from our **Tech Team**

## DODGE TIRE REPLACEMENT

I own a 1995 Dodge Ram 2500 truck and tow a 2010 Dutchmen Denali fifth-wheel. The tires on my truck are 10-ply Goodyear Wrangler LT245/75R16. I would like to replace these tires with larger ones because of the hitch weight on the fifth-wheel. Is this advisable or not? Some salesmen say it is OK, and others say no.

**Darwin Bruns**, St. Peter, Minnesota

*When you say “larger ones” I’m presuming you mean tires with a higher load capacity. Are you planning this because you’ve weighed all the components — truck overall, truck rear axle with trailer attached, and so on — and you know the rear axle is overloaded, or you just have a bad feeling about the existing tires?*

*Replacing the tires might help with tire overloading; however, axle rating is determined by a combination of factors, including axle, wheel, tire and spring capacities. You can change the tires, but you still have the same capacities for the rest of the system. Make sure your wheels are rated for the higher-capacity tires. You might want to consider shifting cargo toward the back of the trailer to cut down the hitch weight a bit. Otherwise, you’ll need springs, a new axle, higher-rated wheels and tires and so forth to increase the truck’s rear axle gawr.*

*If the truck is sagging on the rear end, and that makes it appear the tires are overburdened while the weights are otherwise OK, you could consider adding air bags or auxiliary leaf springs to help support the trailer’s hitch weight. — Jeff Johnston*

### ULSD AVAILABILITY IN CANADA

I recently purchased a new Ford Super Duty F-350, and on the dash and fuel cap it states, “Ultra Low Sulfur Diesel Fuel Only.” I believe that all the gas stations in the



**“Axle rating is determined by a combination of factors, including axle, wheel, tire and spring capacities. You can change the tires, but you still have the same capacities for the rest of the system.”**

United States are suppose to be selling this Ultra Low Sulfur Diesel (ULSD) Fuel. We have been considering a caravan to Alaska. Does Canada sell the ULSD fuel, and if not can I burn the older-type fuel without any harm to the new Ford 6.7 liter diesel?

**Stanley Campbell**,  
Pueblo West, Colorado



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

*Canada has adopted similar regulations to the United States, and ULSD is available there. You can view helpful information at [www.cppi.ca/pdf/ULSD\\_Q&A\\_e.pdf](http://www.cppi.ca/pdf/ULSD_Q&A_e.pdf). It’s important to use ULSD in engines designed for it; using the older higher-sulfur fuels can lead to expensive damage to the emission-control systems. There’s still off-road and marine diesel fuel around, so be sure to avoid it. — Ken Freund*

### DODGE PICKUP STALLING SOLUTION

I have 2001 Dodge pickup that stalls when driving down the road, just like John Gorman’s Duramax (January 2011). We found the throttle-position sensing module was bad so we had it replaced, and have had no more stalling trouble.

**Frank Terry**, Via e-mail

*That’s a relatively simple fix that’s worth checking out if a reader has a stalling situation. Thank you. — J.J.*

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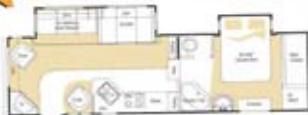
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## RV CLINIC

### INTERIOR UPGRADES

We have a 2010 Jayco Jay Feather 24T. I wish to add more coat hooks, shelves, towel racks, etc. Where can I obtain info on the location of the wall studs, wiring etc? I can't get it from Jayco.

**David & Suzanne Florin, Dallas, Texas**

*The manufacturer is the only place that has blueprints of your trailer. However, you can feel framing by tapping on the walls and/or using a stud finder, which you can find available in most hardware stores. You can also trace wires with an electronic device that sends a signal through the wires as a handheld receiver tracks them (these are available in many electronics stores). If you don't want to bother with that, drill shallow holes for anchors, use adhesives or have an RV shop do it. — K.F.*

### GRAY-TANK SMELL SOLUTION

Dan Schrier wrote about a terrible smell from the sink on his trailer equipped with

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two gray-water tanks (January 2011). I had a similar problem and found a solution.

I also have two gray-water tanks on my trailer. The front gray services the kitchen sink. The sewer line for the front gray has a long way to travel to get to the common clean-out port at the back of the 32-foot trailer, and the angle of drop is very shallow due to the rig's length. It has been my experience that most dump stations are not on a perfectly level surface. When the front of the trailer was pitched ever so slightly down, I found that the front tank was not completely emptying, and consequently an odor was building up. Now I approach the dump station with the front of my trailer on the high side of the station, increasing the drop for my front sewer pipe. Many dump stations allow an approach from either side. If that's not possible, I take extra time to jack up the front of the trailer with an A-frame jack to get enough lift without unhooking the trailer from the tow vehicle to empty the tank. A bubble level attached to the

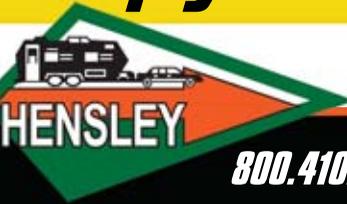
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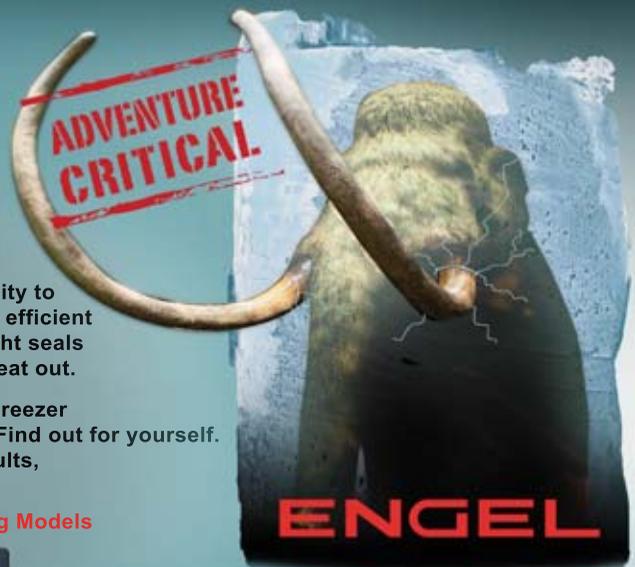
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## RV CLINIC

side of the trailer can be a help.

**Ron St. Laurent**, Okemos, Michigan

*Thank you for the suggestion. Gravity isn't always our friend in the RV arena, and your comments may help a few readers with similar gray-tank odor problems. Adding a tank chemical designed for gray tanks can help as well. — J.J.*

### ALTERNATOR-DIODE FAILURE TIP

Regarding battery drain and possible alternator diode failure (November 2010), one simple check is to put your hand on the alternator when the engine is cold. If the alternator is warmer than the engine, it's a good sign the alternator has a leak.

**Ed Austin**, Newport News, Virginia

*That's a handy quick tip. Of course, if a lot of current isn't flowing, you won't be able to feel the heat, but it's a good start. If you disconnect the main wire going to the alternator and you get a spark (with the engine off) it also indicates a drain. — K.F.*

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### WHEEL LOAD RATING

When I had my fifth-wheel tires changed, the RV center replaced the load range C tires with load range D tires. How can I tell if my wheels are suitable for the higher load range tire?

**Louie Cash**, San Diego, California

You'll find the wheel ratings (Maximum Pressure, Maximum Load) stamped in the wheel's metal, probably on the backside of the wheel somewhere on the rim. As long as your original LR C tires weren't overloaded, and the total trailer weight on the tires doesn't exceed the combined ratings of the wheels, you can still use the original wheels with no problem. Having the higher-rated tires on board may give you some extra tire payload capacity wiggle room. While the LR C tires may have been marginally close to being overloaded, the LR D tires have more capacity to spare as a safety margin.

Did the dealer swap the higher-rated tires at your request because the original

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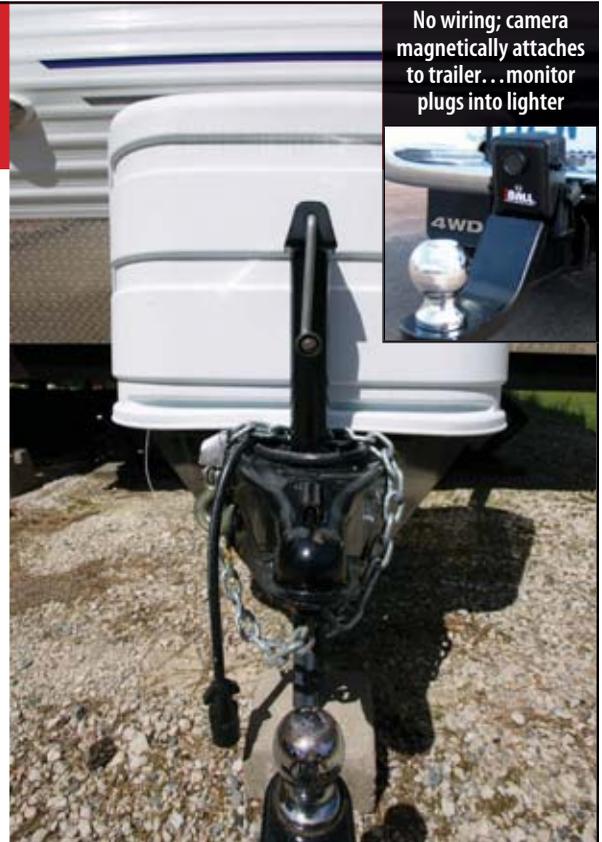
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**RV CLINIC**

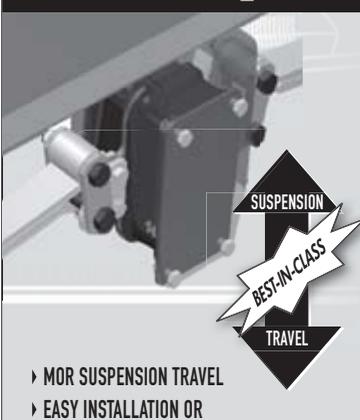
LR C tires were overloaded, per the trailer's loaded weight? If so, you'll also need to combine the wheel-load ratings and compare them to the trailer's weight on the tires. For example, if you have four wheels rated at 3,000 pounds each, that's a total of 12,000 pounds of wheel-load-carrying capacity.

As long as your trailer, loaded and ready for the road, weighs less than 12,000 pounds when you weigh just the axles (don't include the hitch weight), your wheels are fine. If the wheels are marginal for capacity, or overloaded — your trailer weighs more than 12,000 pounds on the axles, using the above example — then you will need to swap for a higher-capacity wheel. — J.J.

**TIRE "TANNING" TIP**

I run an asphalt plant with several pieces of rubber-tire equipment. As with trailer tires, the sun damage goes into the cords and rots the tires well before they are worn out. Every four years I have the tires

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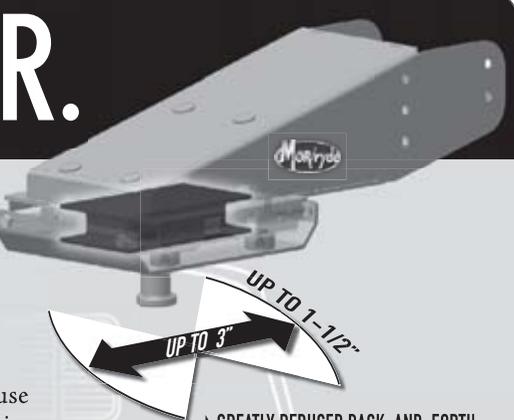


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demounted and then mounted with the inside out and outside in.

This practice seems to be giving me at least an extra four years on the tires. I suppose the same should work on trailer tires. I don't know if changing the rotation direction of a radial is acceptable or not, as it is possible that it would require switching sides as well.

**Russell Crawford**, Via e-mail

Regarding flipping the tires, that's an interesting idea, and one I haven't heard of before. Flipping the tires around might help extend their life, if you do it in time before the sidewalls begin to weaken and crack from the sun. However, remounting tires is a bit of work and a lot of folks may find it too much trouble.

I prefer to cover the tires when parked to help prevent deterioration. Years ago, tire manufacturers recommended that radial tires always turn in the same direction; however, that hasn't been the case for quite a while. — **K.F.**

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## RV CLINIC

### LP-GAS DETECTOR ERRATIC BEHAVIOR

We have a 2006 Fleetwood Terry travel trailer we bought new, and the LP-gas detector gives false alarms. This has happened only a few times over a year or so, there is clearly no leak, and it's definitely a false alarm. The detector is model 7773.2, made by CCI Controls, which has gone out of business. In all the paperwork with the trailer, I don't have a manual or information sheet for this unit.

An online check tells me others have had this unit fail when 2-3 years old. It also suggested the unit could be repaired by using a hair dryer on high heat 5 inches from the front for four minutes to "burn away the HC deposits," but I'm not sure what that means. I've tested the unit by purposely venting some LP-gas near the unit after making sure no ignition source was near. It works fine. Please let me know what you think. Of course, the ultimate solution is to replace the unit.

**Ken & Michele Boynton,**  
Felton, California

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First, are you absolutely positive that the detector is sending a false alarm? You could easily have a very small but erratic leak that you can't directly notice by smell, and that could be setting off the LP-gas detector, as it should. You should take the trailer to a local dealer and have a professional pressure leak-down test performed. You may discover a leak that your nose missed.

An LP-gas detector will trigger if it senses the presence of other fumes as well, not just LP-gas; so for example, if you have a small dog with extra lower-intestinal-tract activity, it could be setting off the detector if the dog is close by when it lets fly. The hair dryer idea may work temporarily, allegedly burning away some HC or hydrocarbon deposits. However, given the modest price of a new detector from a reputable company that's still in business you'd be much better off to simply invest in a new-model LP-gas detector. Your safety is too important to cut corners. — J.J. 🐕

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# 10-MINUTE TECH

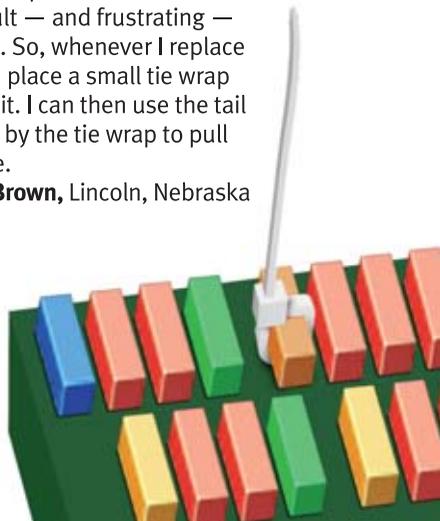
A compilation of tried-and-true tips **From RVers**

## ↓ IT'S A WRAP!



It seems as though whenever I need to pull a fuse, I can't locate the puller. This makes it a difficult — and frustrating — venture. So, whenever I replace a fuse, I place a small tie wrap around it. I can then use the tail created by the tie wrap to pull the fuse.

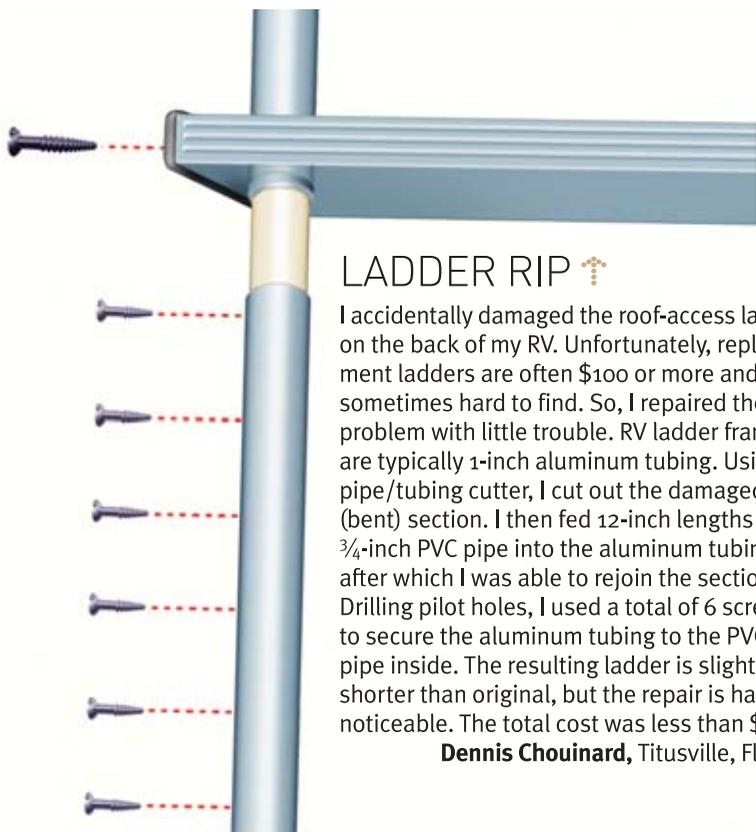
**Ray Brown**, Lincoln, Nebraska



## ↑ HOOK-AND-LOOP HELPER

Whenever we would spend time on the road, I would return to a closet full of shirts that had fallen off their hangers. To stop this, I placed two small strips of hook-and-loop fastener around the top piece of the hanger. I found that using the loop section works best, and it doesn't snag the material. Now, my shirts stay on the hangers.

**Tony Baker**, Sparks, Nevada



## LADDER RIP ↑

I accidentally damaged the roof-access ladder on the back of my RV. Unfortunately, replacement ladders are often \$100 or more and are sometimes hard to find. So, I repaired the problem with little trouble. RV ladder frames are typically 1-inch aluminum tubing. Using a pipe/tubing cutter, I cut out the damaged (bent) section. I then fed 12-inch lengths of 3/4-inch PVC pipe into the aluminum tubing, after which I was able to rejoin the sections. Drilling pilot holes, I used a total of 6 screws to secure the aluminum tubing to the PVC pipe inside. The resulting ladder is slightly shorter than original, but the repair is hardly noticeable. The total cost was less than \$5.

**Dennis Chouinard**, Titusville, Florida

## DOGGY SPLASH

The water from my dog's water dish was always spilling onto the carpet, meaning clean-up was a constant chore. To stop this, I cut down a 5-gallon bucket to about three inches above the dish. After placing the dish into the bucket, the spills are contained, saving my carpeting. Now, I only have to empty the bucket every couple of days.

**Liz Jackson**, Wichita, Kansas 🐕

Illustrations By Bill Tipton

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

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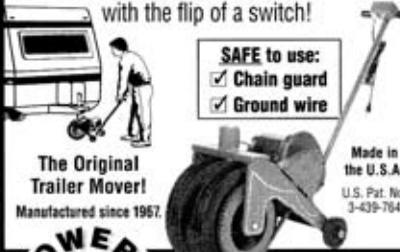
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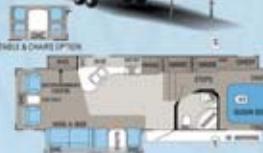
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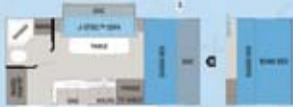
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# AMERICA'S OUTBACK

by Bill Graves

## BRENHAM, TEXAS

**"THEY TELL WITH HOMETOWN  
PRIDE THE STORY OF THE ICE  
CREAM FIRST SOLD HERE"**

**P**aul Kruse runs the "little creamery in Brenham." His father did it before him, and his father before him. It's an only-in-America story that began 100 years ago in the outback of Texas, 70 miles northwest of Houston.

The farmers here, mostly German, Polish and Czech, raised cotton and corn. They had a few cows to keep their families in fresh milk. But these cows, apparently pleased with their Texas lifestyle, were producing more cream than the farm families could use.

So the farmers decided to churn their excess into butter and sell it — hence the little creamery in Brenham. A few years into the deal, the creamery's butter maker took it upon himself one day to hand-crank a mixture of cream, sugar and flavoring inside a wooden tub of ice. His tub of ice cream brought raves among the butter makers.

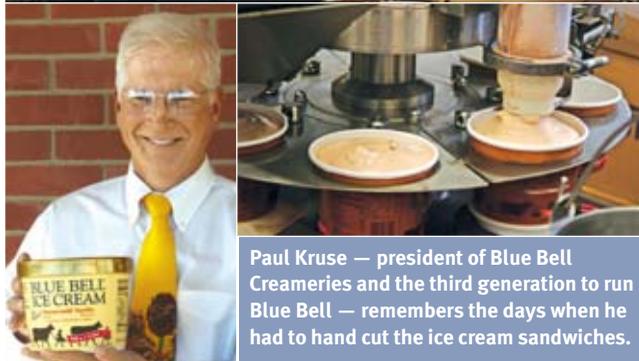
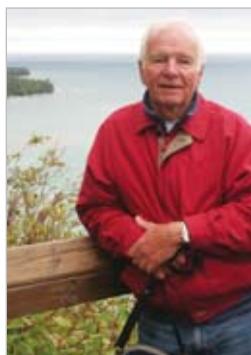
Probably basking in his newfound popularity, he began laboriously cranking out a couple gallons of ice cream a day. What they didn't eat at the creamery, they took into town in a horse-drawn buggy. There it was spooned out from the tub, and was always gone before it melted. From that experience, later came a company slogan: "We eat all we can and sell the rest."

Incidentally, the employee lunch room to this day has a freezer full of help-yourself ice cream.

The farmer-owners quickly learned that "Ice cream is the happiest food in the world," to quote Paul's late uncle. In 1911, they decided to invest in the machinery to make ice cream and tag it with a rural Texas logo.

In 1930, they named the company Blue Bell Creameries, after the native Texas wildflowers. It's now the country's third-largest ice cream maker with 250 products and a rotating menu of 45 flavors.

It's available across the South — from the East Coast to Arizona. It's also on hand at American hangouts in Iraq and Afghanistan. Texas pride being what it is, 62 percent of the ice cream sold in Houston supermarkets is Blue Bell. In



Paul Kruse — president of Blue Bell Creameries and the third generation to run Blue Bell — remembers the days when he had to hand cut the ice cream sandwiches.

Dallas/Fort Worth, it's 59 percent.

Being number three in ice cream sales in the country says a lot, knowing that the competition sells in 50 states. Blue Bell sells in only 17.

When Paul Kruse was a kid, he hand cut rectangles of vanilla ice cream, laid chocolate wafers on both sides and wrapped the ice cream sandwiches in paper, one at a time. Those days are gone. Everything is automated now.

I attended one of the public tours that happen here every day. I watched a machine pack 100 pints of ice cream a minute. Last year, 100,000 visitors made the tour, which ends in the company store and ice cream parlor. I had a hand-dipped bowl of Homemade Vanilla, the recipe for which is the company's only flavor secret.

Paul told me their biggest seller by far is Homemade Vanilla. "Cookies 'n Cream comes in second," he said. "We started by buying Oreo cookies at retail from Nabisco. We had to open each package and dump the contents into mixers. That got to be a big project. Nabisco didn't want to sell them in bulk, so now we bake our own."

The town of Brenham, population 14,000, dates to 1845 and it shows. Homes built in the last two centuries depict the town's early prosperity as a center of agriculture.

And it prospers still, as a place in a great country where anything is possible — and where they tell with hometown pride the story of the ice cream first sold here from a horse-drawn buggy.

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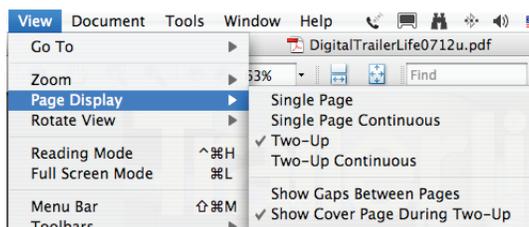


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