

SPECIAL ANNIVERSARY ISSUE: CELEBRATING 50 YEARS

# MotorHome

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### ON THE COVER

MotorHome celebrates 50 years of travel, tech and lifestyle for the discerning RV enthusiast (subscriber cover). Newell's exquisite Coach No. 1643 is right at home at Motorcoach Country Club in Indio, California (see test on page 72). Photo by Scott Hirko (newsstand cover).





By Kristopher Bunker

# Fine at 50

It doesn't take too long to determine the theme of this month's issue. Just look at the headline above. It has been a half-century in the making, and we're quite proud of what *MotorHome* magazine has become: The No. 1 choice for travel, tech and lifestyle for the discerning RV enthusiast.

Since its debut in 1968, *MotorHome* (initially called *MotorHome Life*) has evolved from a once-yearly buyers guide to a quarterly publication to a biannual magazine to the monthly book you hold in your hands today. And that's no small feat. The magazine has prospered through fuel crises, major wars, economic recessions, and all the other highs and lows associated with a half-century of time passing. And it's still going strong.

But motorhomes predate even this magazine by a long shot. As you'll read in "Going for the Gold," our special 50th anniversary feature on the evolution of motorized RVs and the industry as a whole, we've come quite a long way from the homemade wooden cubes attached to truck chassis of the early 20th century, or even the bread-box bricks that are so often associated with motorhome design in the 1980s and '90s. Turn to page 51 to begin the journey to yesteryear ... and beyond.

Today's motorhomes are so much more than the typical bed and a sink on wheels from those early days;

many contemporary designs begin with residential luxuries in mind before even considering conversion to a mobile platform. And even then, it's not unheard of to achieve a smooth ride and fuel economy results in the upper teens in some models.

This residential-first way of thinking is never more apparent than when looking at "Art of Opulence," beginning on page 72. In this month's test, *MotorHome's* publisher emeritus, Bob Livingston, puts a nearly \$2 million dollar penthouse on wheels through the paces. Quite a departure from the \$16,495 Newell 25-footer included in *MotorHome Life's* inaugural issue. Oh, and spoiler alert: The 2019 Newell Coach No. 1643 is an absolute pleasure to drive, and even more of a joy to live in. Also of note is that Newell ran a full-page advertisement back in that first issue of *MotorHome Life*. Talk about full circle.

Also celebrating 50 years in 2018 is a pair of legislative acts that you may not know about — but that you no doubt enjoy. In 1968, Congress passed both the National Wild and

Scenic Rivers Act and the National Trails Act. These pieces of legislation have been paramount in protecting the very public lands that we all depend on for exploration, recreation and relaxation. For more information, turn to "Keeping America Beautiful," beginning on page 42.

And, making it a true hat trick of 50th celebrations, RV manufacturer Jayco turns 50 in 2018 as well. For an overview of the company's storied history, turn to page 21.

*MotorHome's* 50th celebration is also a celebration of family; after all, that's who we cherish the most. "A Trip for the Ages," beginning on page 33, offers one author's perspective on his true "trip of a lifetime." And, if you're also interested in taking along the kiddos, but are looking for the perfect motorhome to help facilitate the voyage, "A Lot of Bunk," beginning on page 62, gathers together some of the top motorized bunkhouse floorplans for your shopping convenience.

But, let's finish at the beginning: "Pages From the Past" on page 22 features a look at all the fireworks — both figurative and literal — *MotorHome* has been a part of each July for the last 50 years. We hope you have as much fun reliving the magazine's past and present as we have, and also look forward to sharing our future for another 50 years. **M**

## Contributors | July



**Morey Edelman** and his wife, Ruth, are adventure-loving RVers who travel six months a year in their 2017 Winnebago Sunstar. Follow their motorhome adventures at <http://blowin-in-wind.blogspot.com>.



**Ann Eichenmuller** is a Virginia freelance writer who loves exploring the country with her husband, Eric, in their Minnie Winnie. Ann is the author of the novel "Kind Lies" ([www.hightidepublications.com](http://www.hightidepublications.com)).



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

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## Have you had an experience with a drone user at an RV park? Or, do you own a drone? Do you think RV parks and campgrounds should ban the use of drones?

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



### Fly Responsibly

I own a DJI Mavic Pro drone and a 2007 Winnebago 31C motorhome. I read Ken Green's letter about a drone user in the April issue and I'd like to address his comments. First off, new users should learn their skills at a local park or other open area. There are a lot of YouTube videos on learning how to fly. After you master the basics, then you can try flying around more-populated areas. Green also mentioned that drones should be banned in certain areas. Banning does nothing; there just needs to be rules governing their use. The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) has rules every drone user

must follow, and there is also a Drone License course you can take (FAA Part 107) so you can use your drone for commercial use.

I use my drone while camping, and I also don't care for unwanted noise. I've purchased low noise propellers to keep noise down. I also fly well above anyone, so they are not bothered by any noise. Drone users just need to be aware of their surroundings. You wouldn't play loud music near another

camper — that would be annoying. Wait, some people do that; do you now want to ban all music? And, I guarantee my drone is much quieter than your generator ... I know you don't want to ban those.

I fly my drone responsibly, and when doing so, many people are curious and want to see what it can do. The best part is the photos and video you can take. They are always crowd pleasers. Next time you see one, go over and ask to learn more about them; they are awesome little machines.

**Bob Amoroso | Napa, California**

### Good Guy

First of all, may I congratulate you on your first issue of *MotorHome Life*. In my opinion, this is an outstanding magazine — the finest publication I have been able to read pertaining particularly to motorhomes. As a manufacturer of chassis for motorhome body installation, you can appreciate our interest, particularly in the article entitled "Pro and Con — Motorhome Power Plants." We at Dodge feel that we are manufacturing and selling the best stripped forward control type chassis for motorhome body installation, and we are constantly striving to improve whenever necessary, to remain number one. Therefore, we found many of your articles to be helpful in our thinking regarding the motorhome industry.

A. L. Touchette  
Special Vehicle Manager  
Dodge Truck Operations  
Detroit, Michigan

### Away From It All

Oh my! Was it the outdoor TVs that came before the extensively lighted RVs? Let's not forget the fellow with the fire pit going, so you have to close all your windows and turn on the A/C on a perfectly lovely evening. What, pray tell, is next?

Your question of "Should RV parks and campgrounds ban the use of drones" did make me laugh — well, not laugh so much as scoff. Gosh, why? My attempts to get out in nature, or simply have peace, quiet and common courtesy extended when in such tight quarters as an RV park or campground,

### Old School

We've included a selection of some of our favorite letters from the first "The Mail Van" column, which ran in the Spring 1969 issue of *MotorHome Life*.



THE  
MAIL  
VAN

### Jazzed

With all due respect to your other magazine, *Trailer Life*, I don't know how I put up with my travel trailer for so long! We recently traded in our tired trailer on a new Clark Cortez, and now you couldn't get me in another trailer with a gun. No more towing at a snail's pace, no more fooling with that %\$#&\$ hitch, etc. A motorhome's the only way to go, and I only wish I'd found out sooner.

Greg Bautzer  
Milwaukee, Wisconsin

seem so old fashioned and archaic. Golly, fire them up. Nothing makes one enjoy the sounds of nature like the buzzing and engine noise of [a] drone overhead.

I have been subjected to the noise of a fellow camper's football game, played at extreme volume on his outdoor TV; and I have been subjected to the light pollution of a fellow camper's colored lighting under his RV,

on the RV and woven into his awning — which was extended all night, so that I could not keep my shades up to enjoy the stars. I've also had to go inside our RV and turn on the air because someone had a smoky fire going that threatened to asphyxiate me. So, drones? Bring 'em on, baby!

I'll be the one inside the RV, A/C going, curled up in a ball on the sofa wondering where one can go to get

away from all this ... when I thought we got the RV in order to get away from all this.

Should RV parks and campgrounds ban the use of drones? To put it mildly, hell yes!

**Rev. D. Tinsley | Colorado Springs, Colorado**

**Guidelines**

I am a drone owner and have been flying them for more than four years. I have flown, and still fly, in RV parks. With that said, there are guidelines for responsible flying. These guidelines have been established by the Academy of Model Aeronautics (AMA) and the FAA. Every person flying a drone should be aware of the guidelines as well as use a little common sense. Anyone flying a drone weighing more than 8 ounces must be registered with the FAA. Drones are not toys. The letter, "Attack of the Drones," is so typical of the person with the (expensive) motorhome wanting to control someone else's fun and not understanding the overall purpose of the drones. Also, the people not flying in a reasonable manner are just as much to blame. Education and communication by both sides can bring about an understanding about drones and allow those of us who fly to enjoy the hobby.

I enjoy taking aerial pictures of the landscape 'round the campgrounds. When I fly a drone, it is in an open space away from people and with a

**Amphibious MH**

Since reading the first issue of *MotorHome Life*, it has revived an old dream of mine of building an amphibious motorhome. My wife and I have covered the western United States, British Columbia and Canada since retiring, and have seen some of the problems of trailering boats for thousands of miles to get to some favorite fishing grounds. It's my belief that a practical amphibious motorhome can be built — and I believe one will be, sooner or later.

George Titus  
Santa Cruz, California

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spotter, per the guidelines as set forth by the AMA and FAA.

**Ken Salley | Via email**

### The Old Common-sense Argument

I have had a drone for more than two years and have flown it in some parks, but away from people and RVs. Also, common sense comes into play — just like playing baseball around large rigs, etc. I don't think we should outlaw baseball in RV parks, but people who have drones should be very aware of where they are flying them and also adhere to the regulations already in place.

**Gary Hunter | Via email**

### Just in Case

I bought a drone last year for our family trip to Hawaii. I bring the same expensive drone with me in our Thor Palazzo. It's a fun, entertaining way to meet people and to take great video or photos of my rig and surroundings. My experience with other RVers has

been minimal since I always go to a not-very-populated field to fly. With the GPS and all the sensors, it's hard to crash into an RV or tree. Several of the RV sites we stay at are heavily treed, so it would be a waste to fly above them, anyhow.

I love seeing people with interesting hobbies. I'm 46 years old, with a wife and four kids, and we are always looking for things to do. Drones are very cool in my opinion. Plus, I have insurance if things go haywire!

**Joe Spinello | Via email**

### Try to Get Along

I own, and sometimes use, a drone, but to be honest, I don't use it as much as I thought I would. When it comes to drones, I don't see them as too different from anything else at an RV park. The responsibility is that of the owner. The owner should use it safely, respectfully and with consideration to those around them. If they don't, the park should have the right to ask them



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## P.O. BOX

to stop. However, drones should not be banned just because people are scared of them. Many RV parks rent or allow the use of golf carts. If someone was to crash a golf cart into my diesel pusher, I would imagine it could do a lot more damage than a drone. But we wouldn't consider a golf-cart ban. Like it or not, drones are part of the modern landscape, and we need to figure out how to properly integrate them rather than attempting a ban that will inevitably fail over time.

**Scott Wright | Sugar Land, Texas**

### Kindred Spirits

I am a drone owner and have flown my drone at campgrounds without any problems. Of course I take it to an open area on the campground and put it in the air. I have tons of people who come up to me and ask questions about it and I show them what it can do. You need to be a responsible drone owner/operator since some of these drones are more than a toy; they are very expensive — more than \$1,000. The operator also needs to have it registered with the FAA and have the decal on the drone itself. I don't think campgrounds should ban drones, but I think all campgrounds could have an open area where drones can be flown. It's an expensive hobby, just like RVing.

**Dave E. | Via email**

### zero-G, All Smiles

Just got home from a trip in my motorhome, after a fight with the lousy freshwater hose that kinked just looking at it. What a pleasant surprise when I read my new *MotorHome* with the article ("Crisp and Clean," April) about the zero-G hose. I ordered one and, wow, what a great hose. Thanks for a great magazine and please keep up the great articles written by people who actually use motorhomes.

**Michael Chapin | Via email**

### Where to RV?

Despite the enormous inventories I see on RV dealer lots, I read that about a half-million RVs were sold in the past year. Even allowing for some thousands of RVs retired from use, that still leaves

### Under \$8,000

Would you please be kind enough to advise me of any manufacturer of a small motorhome that is within the price range of a retired couple? Would like the vehicle to only sleep two, with sanitary facilities, gas refrigerator, stove and oven, sink, clothes closet and small living space. It would be used only for short trips, fishing and sightseeing. It would appear that there should be a good market for such a RecV, but we've been unable to locate one under \$8,000. I'm sure such a unit would be practical and have large sales.

Jerry E. Farmer  
Dallas, Texas

a lot of new and existing RVs whose owners are looking for a place to use them. Then I wonder if even 1,000 new camping sites are developed and added in a year in the whole United States? It's getting harder to find a campsite in many popular places, even six months to a year ahead, and prices are really going up due to supply and demand. I think the industry ought to begin investing in campground development.

**Bob Mahood | Parker, California**

### O<sub>2</sub> How-to

I am a *MotorHome* subscriber and I would like to hear from motorhome owners out there who travel using oxygen. I was recently placed on oxygen by my physician and I would like to know how others manage it while traveling. Thank you, in advance, for any feedback or tips.

**George Forson | Via email M**

## Question of the Month

**If you (or somebody you know) have been placed on oxygen by a physician, how do you manage the equipment while traveling? Do you have any tips on storage, usage, power, etc.?**

**Send your comments to:**

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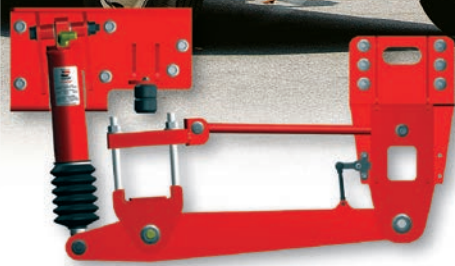
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## Aces High

The Flying Heritage and Combat Armor Museum in Washington features two hangars brimming with history, vehicles and technology

By Mary Zalmanek

**T**he Flying Heritage and Combat Armor Museum in Everett, Washington, is not a typical aircraft museum filled with relics whose flying days are over. In 1998, Microsoft co-founder Paul Allen began collecting and restoring rare combat aircraft from World War II. Planes from the United States, Britain, Germany, Russia and Japan were restored to flying condition. The collection, which currently contains more than 50 aircraft, tanks, combat armor and other technologies, is displayed in two hangars.

"Why War," the new 2,500-square-foot interactive exhibit that opened in March 2017, examines the causes and effects of conflict. The Interactive Timeline of American Wars

contains eight 98-inch touch screens that allow visitors to explore and discover the causes, settings, events and icons of American conflicts. At the four interactive screens in the Conflict Simulator, visitors can take on roles of world leaders, making critical decisions in fictional scenarios.

A full-sized replica of SpaceShipOne, the world's first private manned spacecraft, hangs above the collection in Hangar 2. The SpaceShipOne project, sponsored by Allen, won the \$10 million prize for being the first civilian team to launch a spaceship into suborbital flight twice within two weeks.

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By Bobbie Hasselbring

# Summertime Blues



If there's a summer berry that's truly American, it's the blueberry. While blueberries have naturalized throughout the world, more species of blueberries are native to North America than anywhere else; commercial blueberry production also originated here. "Blues," one of my favorite berries to enjoy fresh off the bush May through September, also make a great excuse to hit the road for blueberry-centric festivals.

Blueberries are second cousins to cranberries, bilberries and grouseberries (a huckleberry species). They grow wild, especially in mountainous areas (watch out for bears that love these sweet-tart treats, too). However, blueberries are no fuss to grow, and a few bushes in your yard will yield plenty of fresh blueberries. The shrubs range in height from 3 feet (lowbush) to about 13 feet (highbush) and make beautiful landscape plants with bright-green summer leaves that turn fiery red in fall.

Commercially, blueberries grow well in Canada and Northern U.S. states. Michigan, Washington, Georgia and Oregon are the top four states for production of highbush blueberries. Maine is the largest producer of wild lowbush blueberries in the U.S. (the wild blueberry

is also Maine's state fruit). The state holds several blueberry festivals in July, including those in Houlton, Waterford and Presque Isle; and, in August, in Machias, Rangeley Lakes, Union and Wilton. Other states hold fairs and festivals celebrating blues, too. Just Google "blueberry festivals" for more.

Whether you pick them wild, grow your own or buy blueberries at festivals or from your local farmers or grocery, they're delicious and good for you. They're a healthful "superfood" because they're loaded with antioxidants and anti-inflammatory phytonutrients that have heart-healthy and anti-cancer properties. Blueberries are also low in calories (a cup contains about 80 calories) and are low-glycemic, which is good for keeping blood sugar stable.

**If you'd like to share a blueberry recipe,** send an email to [bjhasselbring@gmail.com](mailto:bjhasselbring@gmail.com).

## BLUEBERRY COBLER

This cobbler recipe is adapted from the excellent *Cook's Illustrated Cookbook: 2,000 Recipes from 20 Years of America's Most Trusted Cooking Magazine*. Special thanks and credit to the editors at America's Test Kitchen, [www.cooksillustrated.com](http://www.cooksillustrated.com), for sharing this recipe.

- 1½ cups sugar
- 1 tablespoon cornstarch
- Pinch ground cinnamon
- Pinch salt
- 6 cups fresh blueberries (or 8 cups frozen and thawed)
- 1½ teaspoons grated lemon zest
- 1 tablespoon lemon juice

► Preheat oven to 375 degrees Fahrenheit.

In large bowl, stir together sugar, cornstarch, cinnamon and salt. Add berries and stir gently until evenly coated. Add zest and lemon juice and transfer to 9-inch glass baking pan. Bake for 25 minutes until hot and bubbly.



### Topping

- 1 cup all-purpose flour
- ¼ cup sugar
- 2 tablespoons stone-ground cornmeal
- 2 teaspoons baking powder
- ¼ teaspoon baking soda
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- ½ cup buttermilk
- 4 tablespoons unsalted butter, melted
- ½ teaspoon vanilla extract

► While berries are baking, prepare biscuit topping. Whisk dry ingredients together in a large bowl. In a small bowl, whisk buttermilk, butter and vanilla. Combine 2 teaspoons of sugar and the cinnamon in a small bowl and set aside.

One minute before berries come out of oven, add wet ingredients to dry ingredients. Stir just to moisten.

### Putting it Together

Remove berries from oven and increase oven temperature to 425 degrees. Pinch off six to eight equal-size dough pieces and place on top of hot berries, ½-inch apart. Sprinkle each dough mound with cinnamon/sugar mixture. Bake until golden brown, about 15-18 minutes. Cool on wire rack. Serves 6-8.

### Sprinkle

- 2 teaspoons sugar
- ½ teaspoon cinnamon





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## World of Color

With the variety of tire-pressure monitoring devices on the market, selecting the right one may be a difficult proposition. Truck System Technologies (TST) has introduced a new Full Color Wide Screen Display, which is the only TPMS color display available to consumers as of press time, according to the company. The monitor can be used with all of TST's existing 507-Series sensors, and is designed to monitor tire pressure and temperature of one primary vehicle and up to four towables — and as many as 110 total tires — at a range from 0 to 214 PSI (the sensors report while stationary or in motion). Unlike the previous TST black-and-white display that only indicated whether a problem was occurring with one of the tires, the new color display informs users of problems through audio and visual alerts. Another notable function of the new display system is the autosensing feature, which allows drivers to easily change dinghy vehicles or monitor when running solo. MSRP: \$99 for the display only; kits with sensors and display start at \$349.

**Truck System Technologies | 770-889-9102, [www.tstruck.com](http://www.tstruck.com)**

## Radio Rules

If you want to be the star of the campfire congregation, syndicated radio host Carl Amari and classic radio expert Martin Grams Jr. have introduced a tool that should help give you a leg up on the competition. "The Top 100 Classic Radio Shows" is a compendium of the top radio shows from yesteryear, including interesting facts and behind-the-scenes information about the best shows from every era — including the 1930s, '40s and '50s. The book features tidbits about the shows and performers, in genres that include comedy, Western, drama, variety shows, mystery and suspense, science fiction and even superhero. From "The Roy Rogers Show" to "The War of the Worlds" to "The Bob Hope Show" to "The Shadow," each program within the book's 224 pages has been given its own dedicated spread. Three audio CDs stored in a permanent enclosure in the back of the book feature six radio shows; additional shows are available for free download. MSRP: \$29.99.

**Available online at retailers such as [www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com) and [www.barnesandnoble.com](http://www.barnesandnoble.com)**



## Master Blaster

Without proper maintenance, a motorhome's holding tanks can be susceptible to buildups that can create messy clogs or cause sensor malfunction. Thetford's new Tank Blaster uses an enzymatic blend to neutralize clumps and clean tank walls and sensors. Tank Blaster has a light cherry scent and works overnight, utilizing Micro-Foam action to make better contact with tank walls, resulting in a more complete cleaning — even in hard-water situations — according to the company. Tank Blaster is sold in a resealable pouch with four single-dose, tear-open pouches of non-dusting granules to make it easy to dispense into gray- and black-water tanks. One pouch treats tank sizes up to 50 gallons. A pack of four sells at Camping World for \$8.99.



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

## Dual-Zone Delight

Music can be an important part of the motorhome lifestyle. Meals, entertaining guests or even simply relaxing in the living area are all enhanced by flipping on the radio and playing our favorite tunes. ASA Electronics recognizes this, and continues to upgrade its economical offerings with the release of the JENSEN JWM40 dual-zone wall-mount stereo. The JWM40 offers standard AM/FM tuning and presets, but users can also enjoy their personal music library with the CD/DVD player, plug in their favorite device with the 3.5 mm auxiliary or USB inputs, or stream audio files from a smart device using Bluetooth connectivity. The JWM40 is about more than music, as the unit is equipped with RCA input and RCA audio/video output on the rear of the stereo. A wireless remote is included for additional convenience. MSRP: \$169.99.

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**Natural Bridge, Virginia**

## Carved from Stone

Virginia's Natural Bridge State Park officially opened on September 24, 2016, making it the newest of 37 Old Dominion state parks. Located in Rockbridge County near Lexington, the eponymous 215-foot-tall natural bridge spans 90 feet across a limestone gorge carved out by Cedar Creek, a small tributary of the James River. Thomas Jefferson purchased the bridge, and 157 surrounding acres, from King George III of England for 20 shillings in 1774. He called it "the most sublime of nature's works." Today, the park consists of more than 1,500 acres and contains more than 6 miles of hiking trails, one of which is the Cedar Creek Trail that leads under the bridge to Lace Falls, Lost River and the Monacan Indian Village. The village hosts a new indoor naturalist exhibit and living-history programs about colonists' interactions with the Native American peoples; call ahead for exact dates and times of operation. **For more information**, call 540-291-1326 or visit [www.dcr.virginia.gov/state-parks/natural-bridge](http://www.dcr.virginia.gov/state-parks/natural-bridge) — James Richardson



Photo: James Richardson

**Middlebury, Indiana**

## Jayco Celebrates Major Milestone

Two chicken houses and a barn. Sounds like a true recipe to success, right?

When founder Lloyd Jay Bontrager developed his own prototype of a camping trailer using his collapsible design system in 1968, that unique landscape in Middlebury, Indiana, is where it all began. The following year, Bontrager was joined by Al Yoder, and the upstart manufacturer boasted 15 employees and sold 132 folding

camping trailers. These days, the company known as Jayco has grown to more than 4,000 employees spread across four campuses, and sells thousands of RVs each year — both towable and motorized. The familiar logo was designed to represent Bontrager's vision "To be free as a bird and fly away without any cares."

Today, Jayco manufactures motorhomes under the Jayco and Entegra Coach brands. The company is marking its golden celebration throughout the 2018-2019 model year by including special 50th Anniversary badges on its products.

**For more information**, call 574-825-5861, or visit [www.jayco.com/50th](http://www.jayco.com/50th)



1972 Photo of 1st Jayco Mini Home courtesy of Jayco

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# Pages From the Past

Retracing *MotorHome's* July issues over the years

**F**ireworks. Like brilliant, multihued supernovas, they dominate the skyline this time of year. They are a symbol of our freedom, our independence and a way to celebrate our great country. But fireworks can also symbolize change, a departure from the norm that sends ripples throughout the community. So, it is only fitting that we celebrate *MotorHome's* 50th anniversary as the No. 1 purveyor of such delightful explosions within the RV industry by examining the “fireworks” it has launched each July for the last half century.

Naturally, the first colorful salvos were sent flying with the inaugural issue; that such a publication could even be produced during a time when recreational trailering was king is a bit of a firework in itself.

The magazine flourished, and in the July 1974 issue, it announced the first ever Good Samboree, an unheralded gathering of Good Sam Club members in the Los Angeles, California, area.

Just two years later, the July '76 issue trumpeted the creation of the

GOOD SAMparks program, which would standardize the evaluations of campgrounds across the country, enabling apples-to-apples comparisons during pre-departure planning for RVers. That same issue called into question the state of run-down federal parks and campgrounds, pointing the finger at government in-fighting resulting in a disservice to the public.

The July '77 issue, in response to a federal cry to decrease fuel consumption by 10 percent, featured “10 Ways to

Save 10%,” detailing a handful of easy ways to reduce dependency on fuel.

In July 1980, *Motorhome Life* featured a special section on “Women in RVing,” adorning the cover with an illustration of the same. It should come as little surprise that the national attention the magazine was garnering would lead to it becoming a monthly publication just a couple years later.

Few things can illicit such discomfort as the words “Nuclear Radiation,” but we went there in the July 1990 issue, not for fearmongering but to educate, referring to the titular subject as “a natural phenomenon that’s part of our everyday lives both at home and on the road.” The conclusion that “Nuclear radiation is not nearly as mysterious, or as frightening, as it was only a few decades ago” is an anti-firework, so to speak, but *MotorHome* has never shied away from educating the readers in order to nurture a better understanding of hot-button issues.

The turn of the 21st century would continue the fireworks. The July 2002 issue included a feature on July Fourth displays by motorhome owners, and also tackled the controversial FeeDemo program that charges visitors entry fees to select public lands sites.

The July 2016 issue included a roundup of family-friendly Class C motorhomes, many featuring bunkhouses. Check out “A Lot of Bunk” on page 62 in this issue to see what two years of manufacturing progress will get you. July '17 would offer “Motorhome Nomenclature,” detailing the true definitions of motorhome classes and taking aim at some confusing designations (Class B-plus and Super C’s) that are little more than manufacturer-invented extensions of existing classifications. Cue the dramatic music. ... **M**



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# Here's to 50 Years

In 1968, two visionaries, Art Rouse and Lloyd Bontrager, had big ideas. Art published a first-of-its-kind 99-page exploration of motorhome products and lifestyle. Lloyd designed and built a revolutionary pop-up camper in a barn on the family farm. Today, we celebrate 50 years of Jayco RVs and MotorHome Magazine.



Celebrate with us and experience 50 years of Jayco at [Jayco.com/50th](http://Jayco.com/50th)



Generations of Family Fun







The Idaho Capitol was rededicated in January 2010 after three years of renovations.

## Oh, Boise!

Idaho's capital delights with outdoor recreation, delicious food and wine, and a tour through a "haunted" prison

By Mary Zalmanek

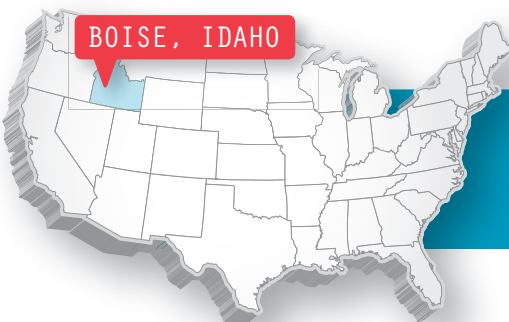
**B**oise, Idaho, has been on our list of places to explore ever since we traveled through the beautiful city on the way to somewhere else in 2009. Last year, my husband, Jim, and I finally returned for one glorious week. We knew which RV park we wanted — Boise Riverside RV Park, which is next to the Boise River Greenbelt, a 25-mile paved bike path that runs along the river through the city. It's also next to the fairgrounds, which unbeknownst to us, were hosting the 10-day Western Idaho Fair (August 16-26, 2018). We considered ourselves lucky to get one of the last RV sites.

When we saw the heavy traffic going to the fair, we also considered ourselves lucky that we could walk to it from the RV park. The fair had everything we expected: exhibits, carnival rides, food and entertainment. The expo building had displays of prize-winning photography, crafts, flowers, fruits and vegetables, including a 766-pound pumpkin. In the barns, we saw lots of livestock and watched two women spinning fleece into yarn. Draft horses pulled logs through

an obstacle course in a nearby arena. BMX bicycle stunt riders wowed the crowd with a breathtaking, action-packed show. We ate delicious tacos al pastor made from marinated pork grilled on a spit. The entire experience reminded me that we should go to state fairs more often.

Riding bikes on the Boise River Greenbelt is a great way to sightsee. We rode our bikes first on the south bank of the Boise River through the city. After we passed the campus of Boise State University, we rode back on the north side of the river. If you see this picturesque bike path, slap your forehead and say, "I shoulda brought my bicycle!" there's a solution: Boise Riverside RV Park rents bicycles and helmets.

The city has some beautiful parks, and the Greenbelt "serves as the uniting ribbon that links these precious jewels — the properties given to the city in honor of some of Boise's finest civic leaders." These nine parks, all part of the "Ribbon of Jewels," are legacies of remarkable women and their commitment to their community. It all started in 1907 when Tom Davis deeded 43 acres in memory of his wife, Julia Davis. That park, which has grown to 89 acres, includes a formal rose



### City of Trees ➔

Boise (pronounced "Boy-see") got its name after French-Canadian fur trappers, having just traversed hot, dry desert, climbed to the top of a hill and exclaimed, "Les bois! Les bois!" which means "Woods! Woods!" Fort Boise was established in 1863.

# GETAWAY

BOISE, IDAHO

garden, a zoo, an art museum and several other recreational, cultural and scientific facilities. Henry Morrison followed suit in 1959 when he developed and then donated the 153-acre Ann Morrison Park to honor his wife. It has a large spray fountain near its center, and plenty of space for play. There are courts for tennis, volleyball, softball, soccer, lacrosse, cricket, horseshoes, bocce ball and disc golf.

At the J.A. and Kathryn Albertson Family Foundation Boise Whitewater Park, we watched surfers ride the waves. While temperatures in the high 90s had almost given me the courage to try stand-up paddle boarding for the first time, watching these guys convinced me to play in the water, too — flat water, of course.

The next day we drove to the Bernardine Quinn Riverside Park, where we rented stand-up paddle boards from Idaho River Sports. Since we were beginners, we received basic instructions. I fully expected to fall, since I'd heard it was tricky to get the balance right. We took off and paddled around Quinn's Pond. Much to my surprise, neither one of us fell in the water, due in part I imagined, to the ideal conditions. The weather was hot and calm, not a breeze in the air or a



Above: Surfers wait in line at the J.A. and Kathryn Albertson Family Foundation Boise Whitewater Park to ride the Green Wave. Below: Idaho River Sports offers lessons to first-time paddle boarders at Quinn's Pond.

ripple on the water.

I searched online to find other fun, interesting activities in Boise, and ended up booking an escape room, touring a prison museum, tasting wine and seeing a play.

At Boise Escape, we were teamed up with five other "escapees," the Owens family, to find The Lost City of Z. We had one hour to find the lost city and then find our way out of the room.

Fortunately for us, the teens and 20-somethings in our group were able to solve the hardest puzzles. When we posed for our victory photos afterward, I saw a sign that said only 15.7 percent of groups that played The Lost City of Z have escaped.

The escape rate was much lower at the Idaho Territorial Penitentiary. From 1872 to 1973, it housed more than 13,000 inmates, 215 of them women.



Photos: Mary and Jim Zaimanek

Photo: Idaho River Sports

The Old Idaho Penitentiary is now a museum. Our guide, Mary Beth, led us through the 30-building complex while telling us about “Old Pen’s” fascinating past. In its 101-year history, there were more than 500 escape attempts and at least 90 were successful. In most cases, the escapees enjoyed freedom for just a few months, days or hours. One notable exception was Charles Smith, who ran away in 1904 while working in the garden outside the prison walls. After an extensive search, it was believed that he drowned in the Boise River. Imagine the prison officials’ surprise when he voluntarily gave himself up and returned to the prison 36 years later!

Perhaps Charles Smith missed the hard labor and prison-grown food. Inmates removed sandstone from a quarry and constructed most of the prison’s structures. For 10 years, they also made shirts. During the Great Depression, lawmakers closed the factory because they believed “convict

labor and the goods it produced should not compete with ‘honest’ citizen laborers.” Prisoners raised horses and cows, and tended vegetable and rose gardens, including the test garden where the Jackson & Perkins rose company bred the first Tropicana roses in the U.S. Despite its auspicious name, the rose garden has a dark past; it was the site of six executions by hanging.

The rose garden and several other locations in Old Pen with a violent and tragic past are rumored to be haunted. Several times a year, Big River Paranormal, a company that gathers evidence and educates the public about the paranormal, shows up with specialized equipment and attempts to connect with inmates and guards of the past.

The Idaho Botanical Garden, established in 1984, sits next to Old Pen. The garden’s 33 acres was once known as #2 Yard of the Idaho Territorial Prison. The garden now features a diverse plant collection, water features and an outdoor art gallery on the 15 acres



Photo: Idaho Shakespeare Festival

Draft horses pulled logs through an obstacle course at the Western Idaho Fair. “A Midsummer Night’s Dream” played at the Idaho Shakespeare Festival’s amphitheater.

that are currently under cultivation. Part of its mission statement is to “provide a full garden experience for all ages,” and the specialty and demonstration gardens seem to do just that. The Children’s Adventure Garden features a kitchen garden, treehouses

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# GETAWAY

BOISE, IDAHO

and a carnivorous plant display. Adults can learn about water conservation, succulents, herbs and fire-wise plants, or simply relax in the Meditation Garden or English Garden.

Another activity adults might enjoy is following the Snake River Valley's Sunny Slope Wine Trail. There are 15 wineries in Idaho's first and largest American Viticultural Area (AVA). With its combination of microclimates, soil and other growing conditions, the Snake River Valley produces some excellent wines, including award-winning chardonnays, cabernet sauvignons, merlots, Johannisberg Rieslings and pinot noirs.

We picked out two wineries in the same general neighborhood and headed out to sip some wine.

Ste. Chapelle Winery was founded in 1975 and moved to its current facility in 1978. Its recently remodeled tasting room is surrounded by vineyards and overlooks the Snake River Valley. Our tasting included five wines to share. We also ordered a meat-and-cheese platter, which paired well with the wines. I especially enjoyed the chardonnay and the soft huckleberry wine.

Koenig Vineyards was founded in 1995, and the elegant tasting room opened in 2016. In addition to wines, the tasting room features vodka, brandy and whiskey from the Koenig Distillery. I particularly liked the Riesling ice wine. The grapes are hand-picked and pressed while frozen in the cold days of late December. With

---

The Snake River Valley's Sunny Slope Wine Trail features 15 wineries and vineyards, including Ste. Chapelle.



Top: The Idaho Botanical Garden was once known as #2 Yard of the Idaho Territorial Prison; a guard tower is visible in the background. Above: The Old Idaho Penitentiary, once home to some of the West's most desperate criminals, is now a museum.



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## **WINNEBAGO**

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# GETAWAY

BOISE, IDAHO

19 percent residual sugar, ice wine is a nice dessert wine.

While we fully intended to call it quits after two wineries, we passed another one that looked interesting. Huston Vineyards was on Chicken Dinner Road. The road name alone made us curious. Huston's tasting room was smaller than the other two, and not quite as crowded on a Sunday afternoon. Robin, our server, told

us how the road got its name. In the 1930s, Laura Lamb was well-known for her fried chicken and apple pie. She and her husband, Hugh, were also good friends with Governor Ben Ross and his wife. Laura invited the Rosses to dinner. They discussed the poor condition of the road, which was ungraded and full of pot holes. Laura told him he could have apple pie for dessert if he got the road oiled after

the county graded it. After the work had been done on the Lamb's road alone, someone envious of the preferential treatment painted the words, "Lamb's Chicken Dinner Avenue," in big yellow letters on the freshly oiled road. The name stuck.

Huston has two labels, Huston and Chicken Dinner. After tasting the wines, we bought several bottles each of the Chicken Dinner White and Red.

"A Midsummer Night's Dream," William Shakespeare's popular comedy, was playing at the Idaho Shakespeare Festival's state-of-the-art amphitheater. We arrived early enough to buy dinner before the show. When we bought our tickets online, the only seats available were general admission on the hillside. I was thrilled to discover we could rent lawn chairs for \$2 each, which allowed us to watch the entire show in comfort.

We had arrived in Boise with only a vague idea of how we would pass the time, but trusting we'd find some wonderful adventures to keep us busy. Riding bikes on the Greenbelt was even better than I'd hoped; in addition to seeing the sights, we learned about the inspiring women who helped make Boise what it is today. I checked two items off my bucket list: stand-up paddle boarding and getting out of an escape room alive (the first time we tried it, we were "killed" by a chainsaw murderer). And who knew we could have so much fun in a prison? Maybe it was Shakespeare's magical love potion that made us fall in love with an entire city. Oh, Boise, we'll be back! **M**

## FOR MORE INFORMATION

### Boise River Greenbelt

<https://parks.cityofboise.org/parks-and-facilities/parks/greenbelt/>

### Boise Riverside RV Park

208-375-7432, [www.boiseriversidervpark.com](http://www.boiseriversidervpark.com)

### Idaho Botanical Garden

208-343-8649, <http://idahobotanicalgarden.org>

### Idaho Shakespeare Festival

208-336-9221, <http://idahoshakespeare.org>

### Old Idaho Penitentiary

<https://history.idaho.gov/oldpen>

### Sunny Slope Wine Trail

<http://sunnyslopowinetrail.com>



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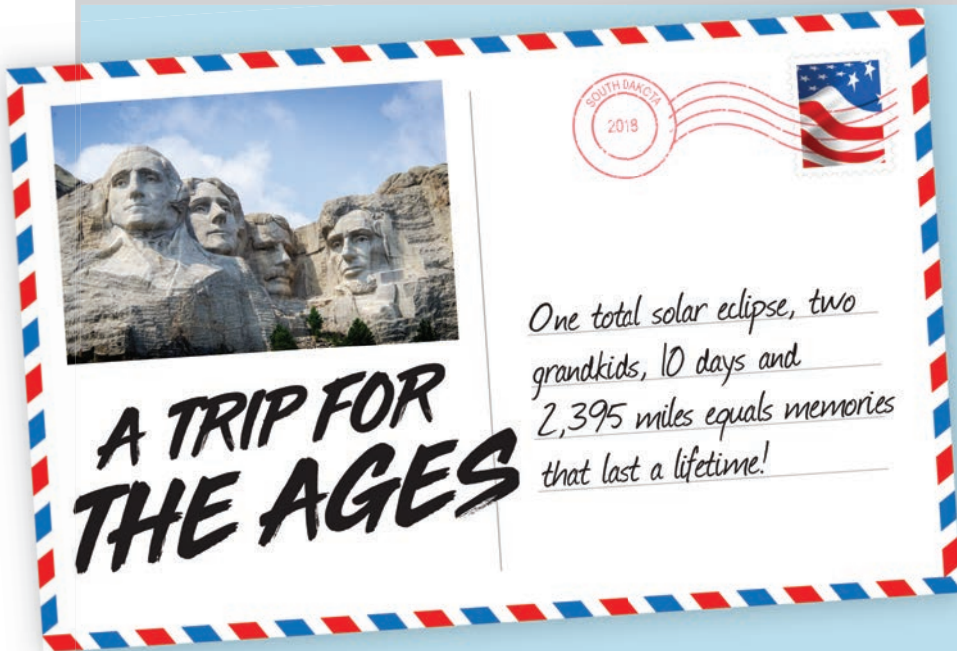
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That did it — now everyone was excited about the plan.

### Trip Preparation

Both Jack and Logan had traveled with us before in our motorhome for short three- or four-day trips, which had always been destination-based, but we wondered how it would be for them to spend more than 10 days traveling cross-country. That would require preplanning. Ruth and I worked out an adventure in advance for each day that the kids could look forward to. We'd include lots of stops along the way, special end-of-the-day activities, and even a workbook (fun and educational) for each of the grandkids. We reduced our normal driving time as much as possible (to less than six hours) in order to allow the kids to have time for playing, running and sightseeing.

### In-Vehicle Activities

We wanted to limit the kids' time spent on electronics — after all, there would be too many sights to see — so we created an activity sheet for every stop. Based on the ages of the kids, we included coloring pages, multiple-choice fact sheets, word search games and reading material. We discovered that many of the national parks offer worksheets and touring tips for kids on their websites.

We chose movies (particularly

**E**ach September, we leave our home on the East Coast and head out in our motorhome for months of RV travel. Last year, we changed our plans so we could get a good view of the once-in-a-lifetime full solar eclipse on August 21. We wanted to visit Yellowstone National Park and the Tetons, too, so we moved up our trip a month to coincide with the path of the eclipse, which would cross directly over Jackson, Wyoming. But August is also our month to watch our grandkids since school is out for the summer, so we asked our son, Dan, and his wife, Liz, if we could take our grandsons, Jack (age 11) and Logan (age 8) along with us.

As soon as they gave us their blessing, we went to work revising our itinerary; we also had to ask Jack and Logan what they thought about all of this. In typical grandpa fashion, I started telling them about the trip and the attractions along the way.

"We'll visit Yellowstone," I began. "Isn't that the place with geysers?" they asked, excitedly. "Yes, and we'll see the World's Only Corn Palace, The Badlands, Devils Tower, miles of corn, wheat and cows, and even cowboys!"



With their binoculars, Logan and Jack check out the Badlands landscape. We're now officially in the Wild West!

great for a rainy day) that were relevant and would add interest and wonder to the travel sites. Did aliens really land at Devils Tower ("Close Encounters of the Third Kind")? Did a snail really win the Indy 500 ("Turbo")? We're not telling!

Ruth and I like to listen to audiobooks to help the drive-time pass. We thought "Adventures of Huckleberry Finn" would be a hit, since we planned to spend a night camped along the Mississippi River. Unfortunately (or was it fortunately?), Huck Finn was not of interest to our grandkids. They had enough activities to keep them engaged as we drove across the country.

Good ol' fashion travel games never go out of style. We played I Spy, Spot the State Plate and our favorite — "Name the farmer's crop." Soon Jack and Logan became experts. "Corn, corn, beans, corn, beans, beans, corn, corn ..." all

The family lines up for a going-away photo. From left: Jack, Ruth, Logan and Morey.

correctly identified as we drove across the Midwest.

### Outdoor Activities

Whenever possible, we stopped for a hike, which was a great way to stretch our legs and to teach the boys about trail etiquette. We also allowed time to stop at a playground at the end of each day's drive so the boys could get some physical activity, which guaranteed them a good night's rest. We also enlisted Jack and Logan's help with setting up at each campground. Nighttime brought campfires, s'mores and stargazing.



Writing with a quill pen at Fort Frederick.

for our first overnight at Youghiogheny River Lake, which spans the Mason-Dixon Line between Pennsylvania and Maryland. Though rain was threatening, the boys were eager to play at the campground's playground.

### Day 2: Ohio to Indiana

385 miles

S&H Campground in Greenfield, Indiana ([www.sandhcampground.com](http://www.sandhcampground.com))

This was mostly a driving day — across Ohio and into Indiana. We ended the day at a private campground just before Indianapolis. We had built up the "wonders" of this night's campground, as we chose S&H Campground for its swimming pool, miniature golf course and "Fun Park." Logan shouted, "This is paradise!" when we drove in. Although we were somewhat disappointed that the inflatable climbing structures at the Fun Park were deflated, and the pool and mini golf were in need of upkeep, it didn't seem to detract from the kids' enthusiasm, and they were busy

### Day 1: The Trip Begins

327 Miles

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Outflow Camping in Confluence, Pennsylvania

We left in the morning, with hugs from Mom and Dad. Our first stop was at a real fort — Fort Frederick, Maryland. It was a great stop for lunch after a four-hour drive. We toured the fort and saw a live musket demonstration; what kid wouldn't like that! The boys also got to hold a musket, hear from a "real" red coat, write in a logbook with a quill pen and see the sleeping and eating quarters of early American soldiers. After several hours at the fort, we were ready to hit the road, traveling

### A FEW CONSIDERATIONS BEFORE EMBARKING ON THIS TYPE OF ADVENTURE

Thinking through some of the questions below, and discussing them with your grandkids and their parents, will help make the trip go more smoothly.

- ▶ How well do you know your grandchildren? Have they spent multiple days with you without their parents? What is their capacity for traveling, especially if long distances are in the mix? How can you pace the trip to meet the needs of the kids? What will the plans be for touching base with Mom and Dad?
- ▶ What do they like to eat? What activities do they enjoy? What will the rules be regarding electronic devices? How will spending allowances be determined? What tasks can each child handle to understand the importance of their participation in making a positive trip? What will the sleeping arrangements be? How is discipline handled at home, and how will you be expected to manage any issues that may arise?
- ▶ What medications do you need to bring along? How would you handle a need for emergency medical care?

From right: Logan and Jack marveled at the race cars during our half-day stop at Indianapolis Motor Speedway. On Day 5, we camped at Lake Mitchell in South Dakota, and had a picnic dinner with more fresh corn — the best sweet corn we ever had!





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Exploring a variety of sights and activities kept the boys interested and excited about things they had never seen or done before: The World's Only Corn Palace and its mosaics made of colored corn, a rushing mountain stream in Wyoming, and climbing a trail in Badlands National Park.

and happy. That evening, we watched "Turbo."

### Day 3: The Brickyard

295 miles

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Fishermans Corner campground in Hampton, Illinois

This would turn out to be Logan's favorite day — a half-day at Indianapolis Motor Speedway. Having watched "Turbo" the previous night, where a snail may or may not win the

Indy 500, we were ready to "kiss the bricks." Being a little concerned that we wouldn't clear the entrance into the museum with our 12-foot 4-inch-high motorhome (we made a call in advance and were assured that tractor trailers regularly make the drive), we swooped under the speedway track and found ample RV parking. We boarded the tram and drove the 2.5-mile track, stopping at the finish line to "kiss the bricks." Logan

discovered tire rubber on the track, and was thrilled with this souvenir. Next we walked the museum, filled with memorabilia from almost all of the Indy car winners for the last 100 years; even Turbo was there! We continued our drive through the corn belt, ending up at Fishermans Corner campground, an Army Corps of Engineers facility right on the Mississippi River. After a campfire by the river, it was time for bed.

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## Day 4: Forest City, Iowa

250 miles

Pammel Park in Forest City, Iowa

We headed to our motorhome's birthplace, the Winnebago factory in Forest City, Iowa. Because this was a pretty long driving day, we agreed to allow the boys to use their electronic devices, and they learned about "hotspots." We camped at the city park — Pammel Park — where we played the entire disc-golf course, and then met a local farmer who stopped at our campsite to give us free sweet corn from his field. The kids got to meet one of the Midwestern farmers who help to put food on our table. They were impressed by the kindness and generosity of the farmer, who refused payment for his corn. And we all agreed it was the best sweet corn ever! That night we watched "National Treasure 2."

## Day 5: Iowa to South Dakota

252 miles

Lake Mitchell Campground in Mitchell, South

Dakota ([www.cityofmitchell.org/448/Lake-Mitchell-Campground](http://www.cityofmitchell.org/448/Lake-Mitchell-Campground))

We packed up early and rolled into the Winnebago Visitor Center, where we signed in for our 9 a.m. factory tour (<https://winnebagoind.com/company/visit>). As we were led through the facility, Jack and Logan were amazed at what went into building a motorhome, especially some of the highly specialized equipment. Leaving Forest City, we headed to Mitchell, South Dakota, for a campsite at Lake Mitchell.

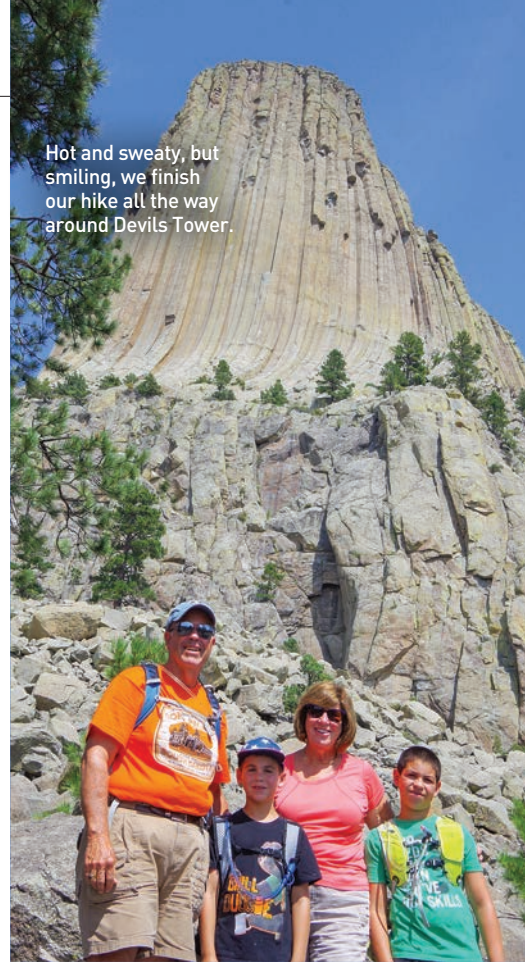
## Day 6: South Dakota

226 miles

Cedar Pass Campground in Badlands National Park, South Dakota ([www.nps.gov/badl/planyourvisit/camping.htm](http://www.nps.gov/badl/planyourvisit/camping.htm))

First stop this morning was the "World's Only Corn Palace." There were plenty of "gifts" to peruse, along with popcorn in all shapes, sizes, colors and flavors! But this was only the beginning, since Logan had already

Hot and sweaty, but smiling, we finish our hike all the way around Devils Tower.



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discovered the Great American Gift Shop ... fearing each one would be his last. We had to reassure him that everywhere we went there would be a gift shop. But our stop later that day at Wall Drug probably surpassed them all. We then drove through Badlands National Park, where we also camped for the night. "Is this the Grand Canyon?" the boys asked, peering down into a deep crevasse. They were thrilled that this park actually encouraged climbing around on the rocks (safely, of course). We ended the day with one of the park's Night Sky Programs, which included a star watch and a meteor shower!

### Days 7 & 8: The Black Hills

200 miles

U.S. Forest Service Horsethief Lake Campground in Black Hills National Forest, South Dakota

When we began planning this trip, we reviewed a number of possible travel options with Jack and Logan, and



In the Black Hills, we spot our first bison (with many more to come), and then we discover the "hidden" passageway in the rocks below Mount Rushmore where, thanks to the magic of a Hollywood blockbuster, we think the gold might be hidden.



Mount Rushmore got everyone's vote. For reasons we couldn't comprehend, both of them thought this would be the highlight of the trip. A few nights earlier, we had seen "National Treasure 2," which ends at Mount Rushmore. Arriving at this monument, both grandkids wanted to see the secret cavern under the carvings where all of the gold was hidden. Oops, guess the gold was removed! We also stopped at Crazy Horse Memorial and,

of course, the gift shop. Next, we drove on the Peter Norbeck Scenic Byway to see bison, donkey, deer and pronghorn sheep. Wild animals always rate well with kids. Even more was planned, with a tour of Jewel Cave the following morning and Custer State Park.

### Day 9: Devils Tower

270 miles

U.S. Forest Service South Fork Campground in Bighorn National Forest, Wyoming

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Today's first stop was Devils Tower, and again we preceded this with a movie, "Close Encounters of the Third Kind." A 1.3-mile walk around the entire base trail, watching the climbers, was a favorite. But where were the aliens? For the evening, we chose a U.S. Forest Service campground between Buffalo and Cody, Wyoming. Camped right along a rushing stream, the kids were mesmerized by the water bouncing off the rocks and the fields of wildflowers.

## Day 10: Cody, Wyoming

190 miles

U.S. Forest Service Wapiti Campground on the North Fork of the Shoshone River near Cody, Wyoming

This was our last day alone with Jack and Logan; their parents were flying in to Cody late that evening. We drove to Thermopolis, an unscheduled "find," and spent a few hours in the hot springs, pools and water slides. Then we toured the Cody area, including the Heart Mountain War Relocation Center before arriving at Wapiti Campground, where Dan and Liz met us.

For the next few days, with parents on the premises, we backed off to allow them to show their kids the wonders of Yellowstone and Grand Teton national parks. We were all together for the eruption of Old Faithful, but then we went on our own

hikes, while their parents took the kids to see the rest of the wonders.

So, what did we learn? As mentioned earlier, planning daily activities added to the fun of the trip. Between the project books we created, the attractions along the way, time allotted for playgrounds and the occasional Wi-Fi session, it all added up to a great cross-country trip.

It's also important to know your grandkids. Jack loves math and science, while Logan loves gift shops. The campground playgrounds — where the boys could really work off stored-up energy and interact with other kids — were a huge success, and only dusk falling could get them to come in for the night. They both loved to get outside for hikes (usually 1 to 3 miles) and evening campfires. We made sure to include those as often as we could.

As for the Great American Eclipse, it proved to be the perfect end to our trip for the ages. **M**

Reunited with Mom and Dad in Yellowstone National Park, the boys marvel at the geysers while sharing stories of their cross-country trip.



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By Rhonda Ostertag

# KEEPING AMERICA

The National Wild and Scenic Rivers Act and the National Trails Act celebrate 50 years of


**R**ivers and trails, the threads that opened expansion of the nation, today open the book to renewal, discovery, play and relaxation, thanks, in large part, to legislation passed in 1968. For 50 years, motorhome travelers have been the winners, with riverside campgrounds; launches into tranquil canoe waters, blue-ribbon fisheries and whitewater excitement; and access to trails through all kinds of habitat, reaching exciting destinations and entering moments in history.

The turning point came in 1965, when President Lyndon B. Johnson delivered his impassioned speech on the “Conservation and Preservation of Natural Beauty.” Decades of dam-building, stream diversions, development, land clearing, neglect and pollution fueled its immediacy.

In this speech, Johnson urged action in preserving the beauty of America’s great outdoor treasury because all humanity possesses a deep-seated need to connect with nature.

Wheels churned, and in 1968 the National Wild and Scenic Rivers Act and the National Trails Act passed into law.

Eight rivers were initially named: the Clearwater and Salmon (Idaho), Eleven Point (Missouri), Feather (California), Rio Grande (New Mexico), Rogue (Oregon), St. Croix (Minnesota and Wisconsin) and Wolf (Wisconsin). The National Wild and Scenic Rivers Act identified three river classes: Wild, the most isolated and untouched; Scenic, having exceptional quality and features, flowing through attractive and important corridors; and Recreational, often more developed, with greater access, ideally suited for recreation. Act protections extended beyond the rivers to the environs that



El Capitan looms over the Merced River in California's Yosemite National Park.

# A BEAUTIFUL

conservation and preservation of precious natural resources

contained them.

Today, of the 3.6 million miles of U.S. streams, the National Wild and Scenic Rivers Act protects 12,734 miles on more than 200 rivers in 40 states. Although this represents only 0.35 percent of our national inventory, it also signals ample resource for growth. Groups like American Rivers, Ducks Unlimited and Western Rivers Conservancy, as well as motivated local citizens, are nudging the way.

With regard to trails, the National Trails Act identified two classifications: National Scenic Trails and National Recreation Trails. National

Scenic Trails are 100 miles or longer, may pass through multiple states, and traverse areas of great national significance and beauty. National Recreation Trails can be of any length and are more local or regional in scope, but offer exceptional value (natural, historic and/or cultural). A later expansion of the law recognized National Historic Trails, paths that trace

the course of history.

Current trail inventory shows 1,250 national recreation trails, with national scenic and historic trails adding 30 more to the count, for a combined total of more than 60,000 miles. All 50 states participate in this wealth.

For travelers, the designated waters and trails point us on the track of a proven standard of excellence. Although one can always find a hidden treasure worthy of investigation, with the price of fuel and the value of time, a known winner eliminates the cost of trial-and-error. Another benefit is that many of these recognized routes can be found in federal and state parks and in the refuges, forests and recreation areas we are often already driven to seek out.

## A Windfall Year for Recreation

The year 1968 not only brought us the National Wild and Scenic Rivers Act and the National Trails Act, but it ushered in six new units to the National Park System and 800,000 acres of wilderness.



The Delaware River Canal towpath includes stretches in Delaware Canal State Park and Washington Crossing Historic Park; both parks are in Pennsylvania. Hikers pause at an interpretive board on Lava River National Recreation Trail in Oregon's Willamette National Forest.

## Wild and Scenic Rivers

Hushing, rushing, gurgling, crashing, lulling, roaring. Rivers lay out different soundtracks, different impressions, different experiences. Each tells a unique story and has its own past. Backdrops can vary from rugged mountains to deep basalt canyons, from prairie grasslands to draping hardwood forests, and from desert steppes to the currents that carried the birth of the nation (Minute Man National Historical Park in Concord, Massachusetts). Our travels have

shown us all.

From the start, we've been exposed to a great catalog of these exceptional waters. We live next to Idaho, whose conservation workhorse, Frank Church, co-sponsored the bill, and our home state of Oregon grabbed the baton and took off running. Oregon boasts 56 federal Wild and Scenic Rivers, including the Rogue River (one of the original eight) and the Styx River, a subterranean portion of Cave Creek (Oregon Caves National Monument and Preserve).



Over the years, we've stood hip-deep in golden reflections, enjoyed a lazy paddle, roared upriver aboard a jet boat, napped on shore, watched bald eagles and snow geese, encountered the camps of Lewis and Clark, viewed Native American petroglyphs and overhang shelters, and so much more. We've seen mink, ring-tailed cat, deer, bear, moose, otter and migrating salmon and steelhead. We've stood mesmerized by pristine blue-green, black-tannin and clear bubbling waters. And we've watched

Unspoiled views of Hauser Lake are breathtaking from Two Camps Vista along the Lewis and Clark National Historic Trail in Montana.





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## KEEPING AMERICA BEAUTIFUL

the salmon-fly hatch and baby ducks grow up along the river.

Recognized waters can be quiet and gently babbling, like the Eightmile River in Connecticut, or loud and in a hurry, like Idaho's Lochsa River. They can be desert contradictions, like the Verde in Arizona, or perfectly married to place, like Wyoming's Clarks Fork of the Yellowstone River. Or they can be celebrations of untethered freedom, like California's Smith River, the longest remaining free-flowing river in the state.

Rivers flow through special places. Their winding courses have suggested parallel footpaths, initially worn into place by wildlife, then traced by first peoples, followed by settlers and eventually tracked by outdoor recreationists. Many of those river paths have since become National Recreation Trails, doubling the prize.

The prestige and permanence associated with the Wild and Scenic River designation has sponsored a host of associated businesses that cater to travelers. Fishing guide services, whitewater rafting outfitters, canoe liveries, shuttle services, campgrounds, RV resorts, espresso stands, fly shops, tackle shops and more ease getting on the river and getting about. When farther from home, these services are great perks.

### National Trails

National Scenic and Historic Trails are fewer in number and bigger in scale, requiring approval by Congress. Maybe because of that, their names pierce our threshold of recognition. The Appalachian and Pacific Crest National Scenic Trails and the Lewis and Clark, Oregon, Iditarod, Santa Fe, Pony Express and Trail of Tears national historic trails all stand as examples.

National Recreation Trails, which



Rafting is a popular activity on the White Salmon Wild and Scenic River in Washington state's Klickitat County.

do not require Congressional action, are more numerous and proximal, with trails on state, county and federal lands in locations we travel daily. These trails may be on land or on water (a recent development). Familiarity is generally based on the place we live. When traveling, though, National Recreation Trails are easily found by perusing state indices, such as [www.americantrails.org/resources/statetrails](http://www.americantrails.org/resources/statetrails).

In 2016, six more trails joined the national system: California's Backbone Trail in Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area; Connecticut's Shetucket River Water Trail; Florida's Bartram Trail in Putnam County (honoring father and son naturalists from the 1700s who opened modern recreation in the region); Maine's Johnson Brook Trail in Sunhaze Meadows National Wildlife Refuge; Oklahoma's Turkey Mountain Urban Wilderness Area trails near Tulsa; and Washington's Roche Harbor Trails on San Juan Island, visiting 19th century cultural relics and structures.

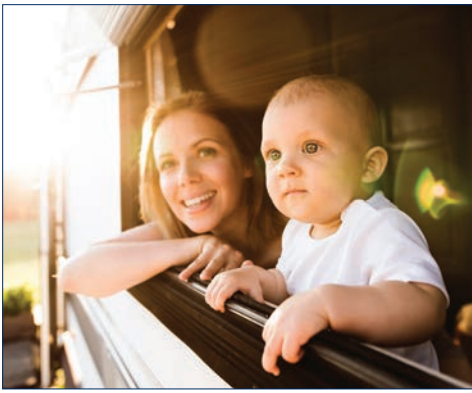
National Recreation Trails cover

### Speak of the River

In recognition of the 50th anniversary of the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act, [www.rivers.gov](http://www.rivers.gov) has assembled river quotes, inspirational and reflective, from river users, admirers and literature. Go to [www.rivers.gov/quotations.php](http://www.rivers.gov/quotations.php). Here's one from the collection:

"The river itself has no beginning or end. In its beginning, it is not yet the river; in the end it is no longer the river."

— T.S. Eliot, Introduction to *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*



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Idaho's Northwest Passage Scenic Byway follows a portion of the Lochsa Wild and Scenic River in Clearwater National Forest.

a wide range of subjects, travel all environments, have lengths to suit all abilities, offer bird and wildlife watching, encourage photography and hold welcomed surprises. Everyone is likely to find at least a few — or 100 — that delight.

Bottom line, motorhome travelers have been, and will continue to be, treated to outdoor experiences and lifetime memories along clean, significant and free-flowing rivers, and to celebrate trails that are preserved, cleared and maintained for generations to enjoy. What's more, this treasury continues to grow, bringing new opportunity to step off the busy highway of daily life — be it the transportation highway of Johnson's era or the information highway of modern times.

River and trail, it's quite an inventory, quite an achievement. So, here's to the next 50 years, and many more after that. **M**

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**Finding Rivers and Trails**

Four federal agencies oversee the bulk of designated rivers and trails: Bureau of Land Management, National Park Service, U.S. Forest Service and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Travelers can check agency maps and webpages — or ask at visitor centers — for river and trail information. Here are some additional resources:

**Rivers**

www.nps.gov/subjects/rivers/nationwide-rivers-inventory.htm  
www.rivers.gov

**Trails**

www.americantrails.org/NRTDatabase  
www.americantrails.org/resources/statetrails  
http://nationaltrailsguide.com/visit-a-trail  
www.nps.gov/subjects/nationaltrailssystem/index.htm



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# GOING FOR THE GOLD

AS MOTORHOME TURNS 50, WE TAKE A LOOK AT HOW  
MOTORIZED RVING HAS EVOLVED ALONG WITH THE TIMES

**T**here's a reason that the 50th anniversary is considered "golden." Five decades is quite a long time. Over that span of time, trends come and go; businesses start up, thrive and then ultimately shutter their doors; and a new generation is born and reaches adulthood. Through it all, from fuel shortages to natural disasters to a devastating recession, *MotorHome* has stood tall over the RV industry since its debut in 1968. We like to think the main reason RVing has stood the test of time is because the impulse to travel, to see the outdoors, and to share experiences with friends and family has been around since the dawn of time. But it wasn't until the beginning of the 20th century when the ability to cover long distances in shorter periods finally came to fruition.

**IN THE BEGINNING**

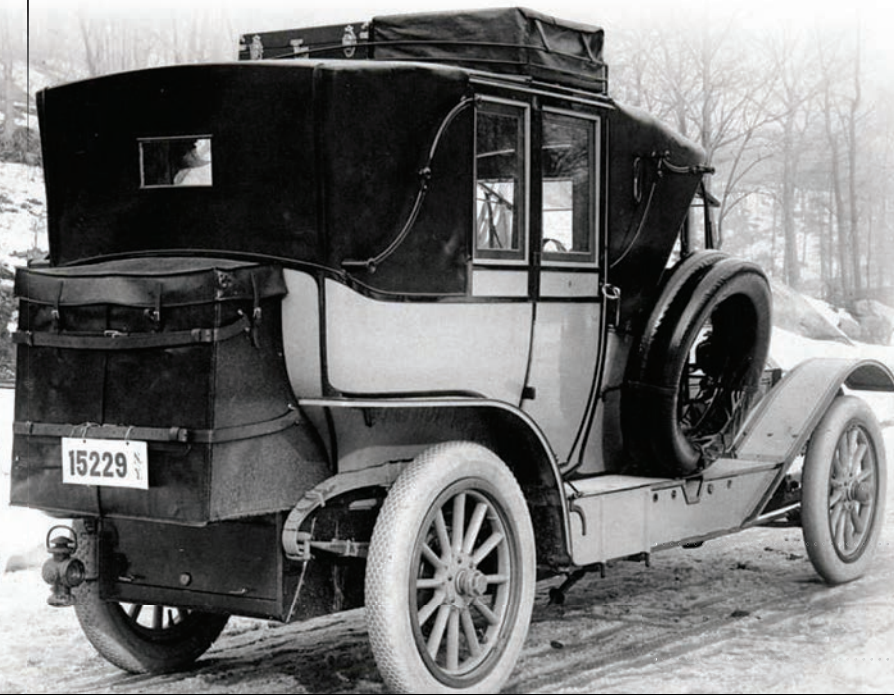
The history of motorhomes (or house cars, as they were originally known) goes back almost as far as that of the automobile. Shortly after Ford Motor Co. introduced the masses to the Model T in 1908, the Pierce-Arrow Touring Landau, generally regarded as the first RV of any type, made its debut at New York's Madison Square Garden in 1910. Accommodations on that Landau were sparse by today's standards, but the folding rear seat, fold-down sink and chamber pot were the absolute lap of luxury at the time. More important than the first Landau was the fervor it would spark among vehicle owners, who were generally affluent enough that they could afford to tinker with expensive automobiles. And tinker they did, as most of the earliest examples of house cars were homemade.



Those first house cars were far from fuel-efficient, and consisted mostly of rudimentary wooden boxes bolted onto automobile frames. But, necessity spawns invention, so some

pretty revolutionary designs were the norm: everything from employing Pullman-style sleeping quarters to fold-out panels to telescoping walls and panels.

Mobile camping perhaps rose to prominence beginning in 1915, when a group of heavy hitters including Henry Ford, Thomas Edison, Harvey Firestone and John Burroughs met each summer for extended camping trips. Calling themselves the Vagabonds, the historic group brought along a caravan of cars, vans, household staff and equipment — including the 1922 Lincoln Kitchen Truck, which toted food and utensils to be used on the expeditions. Alas, by 1924, the annual trips began drawing too much national attention, so the Vagabonds elected to stop making their treks. But the seeds were already planted.



The motorized Pierce-Arrow Touring Landau is generally considered the first recreational vehicle of any type.

**1968**

*MotorHome Life* debuts. The \$1 buyers guide highlights 88 models within its 96 pages, and offers additional motorhome-specific content.



**1969**

*MotorHome Life* goes quarterly. Publisher Art Rouse acquires the Good Sam Club, which at the time had a few thousand members. It would eventually grow to 1 million members due to its extensive list of benefits.

**1970**

An ad in the Spring issue offers readers six reasons to join the Good Sam Club: The GS Directory, low-cost insurance, rallies, the *Hi-Way Herald* newsletter, magazine discounts and to pledge to be a good Samaritan.



# THOSE FIRST HOUSE CARS WERE FAR FROM FUEL-EFFICIENT, AND CONSISTED MOSTLY OF RUDIMENTARY WOODEN BOXES BOLTED ONTO AUTOMOBILE FRAMES.

In 1929, during the dawning of the Great Depression, Wallace Merle "Wally" Byam hand-built a Torpedo Car Cruiser teardrop trailer in his backyard; he would later sell plans and kits that mimicked his design. A few years later, in 1934, Byam would collaborate with another designer, William Hawley Bowlus, before purchasing his company outright. Two years later, the Airstream Clipper was born, paving the way for the popular Airstream brand so often synonymous with RVing in general.

House cars would continue their popularity, though many manufacturers focused their efforts on trailers. One notable exception was the 1935 Hunt Housecar, which came equipped with a shower and toilet.



## THE GOLDEN AGE

In 1940, General Motors offered a glimpse into what house cars could become, in the form of Futurliner custom vehicles designed in collaboration with Harley Earl. The Futurliners were essentially traveling display stages as part of GM's Parade of Progress, each one measuring more than 33 feet long. Though not necessarily house cars, the Futurliners showed how bus-style chassis could be used to

help shape the house car industry.

*Western Trailer Life* debuted in 1941, a significant event in the history of the industry and *MotorHome* magazine. *Western Trailer Life* would eventually drop the "Western" from its title, resulting in *MotorHome's* familiar sister publication we know so well today. The latter part of the decade would also see the introduction of many RV-friendly appointments like butane-gas cylinders (which would later be replaced by propane gas), portable showers and onboard flushing toilets. Flexible bus conversions began popping up around 1948.

The early 1950s saw the introduction of the Volkswagen Van, which would eventually go on to feature the popular Westfalia pop-top for additional headroom and sleeping space. Around the same time, an entrepreneur named John Crean began building RVs and manufactured housing, and would ultimately go on to start Fleetwood



Photo: Courtesy of The Republican by Mark M. Murray



### 1973

The June issue tests the new Dodge Born Free, a "Midi" motorhome, describing it as "a big overgrown chassis mount, only they put the engine under the seats." This new style was a major step toward the proliferation of Class C configurations.

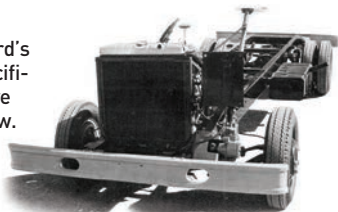


### 1975

*Motorhome Life* merges with *Camper Coachman*. The resulting publication was aimed at reaching a wider audience, that would now include truck camper enthusiasts.

### 1971

*MotorHome Life* goes bimonthly. Ford's new M-Series chassis designed specifically for motorhomes catches the eye of the *MotorHome Life* technical crew. The chassis was available in three designations, with GVWRs ranging from 8,000 to 13,000 pounds.



### 1974

The Argosy motorhome rolls out. Argosy manufactured a more economical version of Airstream trailers, and the motorhome shared design cues with its better-known siblings, including the (painted) hand-riveted aluminum alloy skin.





Trailer Co. in 1953.

The public was further introduced to the RVing lifestyle in 1954 when "The Long, Long Trailer," a movie starring Lucille Ball, Desi Arnaz and a lengthy New Moon trailer, made its debut. The film would include some of the more humorous pitfalls potential new owners could face, all in good fun, of course. In 1958, *MotorHome* founder Art Rouse would purchase *Trailer Life* magazine, setting the stage for what would spawn the

very magazine you're holding. That same year, Ray Frank founded Frank Motor Homes, and a new term was added to the RV lexicon.

### THE RISE OF THE MOTORHOME

As motorized RVs continued to increase in popularity, the general consensus was still that they were luxury items, nowhere near as in-demand as the more moderately priced

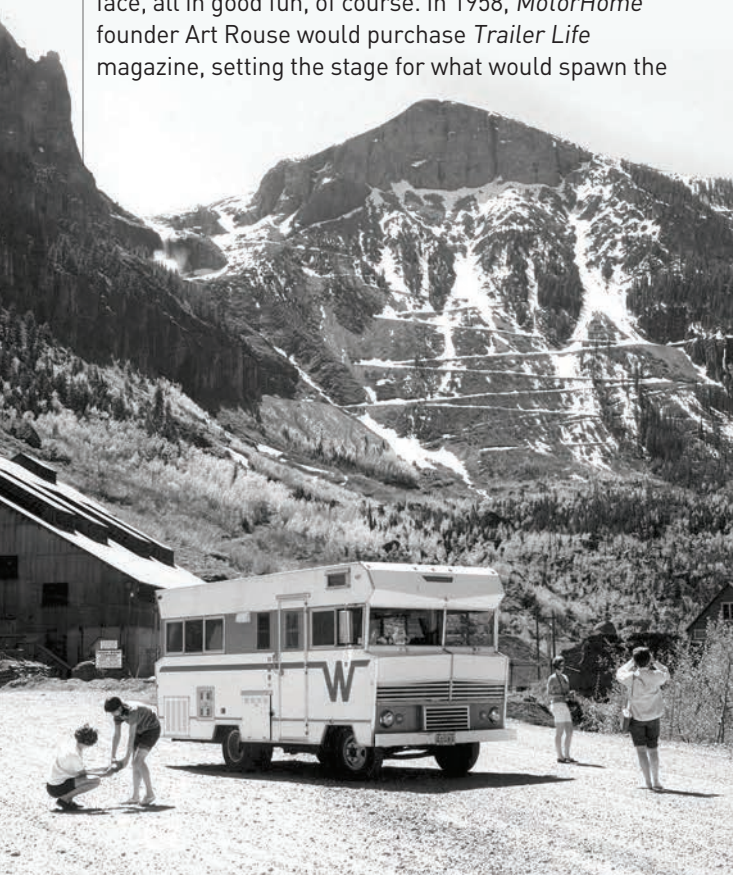


towables of that era. That would change with two major breakthroughs in particular: the Frank Motor Homes Dodge motorhome (which would eventually become the Travco in 1965) and the introduction of the 19-foot "Life-Time Premier" motorhome from Winnebago in '66. Winnebago would top this momentous occasion the next year by rolling out five new affordably priced, production-assembled motorhomes,

Movies and TV played a big role in popularizing RVs. Lucille Ball's "The Long, Long Trailer" debuted in 1954. Her show, "Here's Lucy," featured a Dodge Travco in 1969. TV stars like Andy Griffith and Fred MacMurray (pictured above) shared their motorhome experiences with readers.

### 1977

*Motorhome Life & Camper Coachman* expands to nine issues a year. President Carter urges Americans to reduce energy consumption. Jayco enters the Class C market with its JayMini motorhomes.



### 1976

An ad in the July issue declares that the star of "The Shootist," John Wayne, is on his second Apollo Motor Home ... and that he won't settle for less, pilgrim.



### 1979

Airstream's much-anticipated motorhome, the Excella, is tested and receives high marks in the April issue.

including the very first Brave model.

Charles Kuralt's famous "On the Road" program featured a Dodge Travco motorhome, with television again rekindling the country's love affair with recreational wanderlust. In 1967, what is now known as Newell Coach Corp. began, and would produce its first rear-engine gas motorhome within a couple years. Newmar also opened its doors, originally to manufacture towable RVs. A short time later, in 1968, the manufacturer that would become Jayco also began manufacturing camping trailers.

These changes in production methods, technology and overall popularity were enough: that year, publisher Art Rouse introduced *MotorHome Life* to the readers. And although the rest of that story is history we detail in each issue of 2018, the motorhome market continued to evolve.

## THE ERA OF INNOVATION

More innovations continued throughout the 1970s. FMC motorhomes — gas pushers with a low profile — would test the boundaries of the design envelope (and also be featured in Kuralt's TV show). Frank Motor Homes introduced the Xplorer 21, a motorhome built on a van chassis. Apollo motorhomes

made their way to the highways. GMC would develop a sleek front-wheel drive Class A. Revcon introduced monocoque construction and aluminum paneling, allowing motorhome frames to be lighter but more durable. Mini-motorhomes — built on minitruck chassis — gained in popularity. Family-owned and operated Tiffin Motor Homes would begin manufacturing motorhomes. After having offered a basement-storage model early in the decade, Newell developed its first diesel-powered motorhome in 1972, while the Mercedes-Benz

Motoroam Monarch would follow suit in 1973. That was also the year the nation was mired in a fuel-crisis, as prices at the pumps nearly tripled, seemingly overnight.

But motorhomes continued to gain traction. Celebrities from John Wayne to Mario Andretti to Bob Hope endorsed their preferred method of recreational travel, many within the pages of this magazine.

Airstream and its "economical" trailer division, Argosy, would produce the Argosy Class A, often referred to as the "painted Airstream."

GMC Class A motorhomes sported tandem rear wheels, front-wheel drive and were available in "Bittersweet" orange.



AS MOTORIZED RVs CONTINUED TO GAIN IN POPULARITY, THE GENERAL CONSENSUS WAS STILL THAT THEY WERE LUXURY ITEMS.



**1981**

An advertisement for Airstream diesel motorhomes claims the vehicles are capable of up to 15 mpg, with 0-50 mph times of less than 30 seconds. "Hot Line," our consumer advocacy column, makes its debut.

**1983**

In response to overwhelming demand, *MotorHome* magazine is offered as a monthly publication. *MotorHome* anoints computers as "Space Age Travel Companions."

**1980**

*Motorhome Life* begins to incorporate *Van Life & Family Trucking* to include coverage of those vehicle types. The marriage would be short-lived, as just a year later the vans and trucks were dropped in order to offer more in-depth, targeted motorhome content.



**1982**

After an extensive redesign, *Motorhome Life* becomes simply *MotorHome*. A popular feature questions whether design quality is a lost art.

**1984**

*MotorHome* features its first ever towed-vehicle guide, offering ratings on 85 cars that are manufacturer-approved for dinghy towing behind a motorhome.

Longtime (now defunct) manufacturer Born Free opened its doors, offering a unique camper built onto a truck with tag wheels. Recognizing the need for a governing body for the booming RV industry, the Recreation Vehicle Industry Association (RVIA) was formed in 1974. The end of the '70s would see a call from our government to reduce energy consumption, a plea that is still heard loud and clear to this day (and is reflected in many of the popular designs of the early '80s). And in 1979, Airstream would finally deliver its own long-awaited motorhome — the Excella Class A.

## THE MTV YEARS

The 1980s would kick off with a bang: yet another energy crisis would affect fuel costs. But that didn't stop Wade F.B. Thompson and Peter Busch Orthwein from purchasing the popular Airstream brand, and then forming Thor Industries (using the first two letters in each of their last names). Many early-decade motorhomes featured sloped noses and were low-slung, all in the interest of squeezing out a few more mpg. That made the introduction of one of the industry's most popular configurations even more exciting: in 1985, Fleetwood introduced the Bounder, an affordable Class A that

made basement storage a must-have. That same year, Coach House RV would debut; the factory-direct manufacturer of Class B and Class C motorhomes continues to prosper today. The decade would also see the introduction of a new RV roof type: ethylene propylene diene monomer (EPDM), which is an extremely durable synthetic rubber roof material still in wide use.

Perhaps all the fuss about achieving improved fuel economy through more aerodynamic exteriors led to the top trends of the early 1990s, where bigger was generally considered better. After having entered the Class A market in the 1980s, Newmar

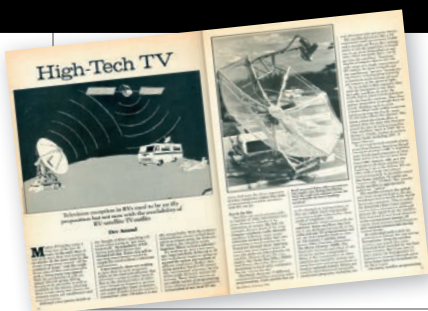
MANY EARLY-1980S MOTORHOMES FEATURED SLOPED NOSES AND WERE LOW-SLUNG, ALL IN THE INTEREST OF SQUEEZING OUT A FEW MORE MPG.



1979 Fleetwood Southwind

## 1986

*MotorHome* tests the Fleetwood Bounder, which made its debut the previous year. The Bounder would help popularize basement storage in affordable Class A's.



## 1985

The February issue examines the emergence of satellite-TV programming in RVs; the antennas were much more cumbersome than today's units. The selection of channels is miniscule by today's standards.



## 1991

The Newmar London Aire becomes the first production motorhome equipped with slideouts; the 37' we tested was outfitted with two.



Blue Bird Wanderlodge motorhomes made their luxurious debut in 1963.



announced its "official" arrival in 1990 with the Dutch Star and Mountain Aire motorhomes. A year later, *MotorHome* would test Newmar's 37-foot London Aire Class A, which is credited as being the first production motorhome to include powered and flush-floor slideouts, greatly expanding the potential living space inside a motorhome. Toy haulers began to ramp up in popularity, though they were mainly associated with towable units.

But "bigger" isn't necessarily confined to space, as the latter half of the decade saw lightweight diesel motorhomes continue to get bigger and beefier engines, without sucking the fuel pumps dry. In 1995 RVIA began requiring manufacturers to include weight labels on their new models, to help further clarify the differences between dry and loaded weights. Whether those early attempts were successful remains a sticking point today. The end of the decade would see *MotorHome's* then-parent company, Affinity Group Inc., acquire Camping World, which has quickly become the No. 1 destination for all things motorhome.

## GREENER AND LIGHTER WEIGHT

The market would again shift after the turn of the century, with a focus on more environmentally, eco-friendly RVs with

lighter weights and lower profiles. The RVIA responded by requiring manufacturers to include cargo carrying capacity (CCC) on all new models, another step toward full transparency. In 2005, billionaire Warren Buffet and Berkshire Hathaway purchased Forest River Inc., which has since become one of the top RV- and manufactured-housing companies in the United States. Winnebago became the first North American manufacturer to build Class C motorhomes on Sprinter chassis (which was being done overseas for quite some time), offering buyers two choices: the View and the Itasca Navion.

As the decade progressed, the industry (and overall economy) was hit with one of the worst recessions on record. Many longtime manufacturers were forced to close their doors, and even titans like Fleetwood and Monaco weren't exempt. Their time out of the spotlight wouldn't last long, as both companies were eventually purchased (and revived) by the corporation that would become REV Recreation Group.

For a country looking to reduce its carbon footprint, Azdel composites began their rise to prominence at just the right time as we entered the 2010s. The materials were lightweight, moisture-resistant, odor-free and easy to assemble, making them the perfect kickoff to a greener era of RV construction.

Just a few years later, an oft-overlooked segment of the motorhome population would begin to break out, in a big way. Class B motorhomes, once characterized as glamorized soccer-parent vehicles, began to take full advantage of the new chassis, composites and manufacturing processes.

## 1994

The Foretravel Unicoach becomes the company's first bus-style model aimed at the high-line Class A market.



## 1996

Master Concepts introduces the Brake Buddy auxiliary braking system, which uses a pendulum and microswitch to activate the dinghy brakes. *MotorHome* would put it through the testing paces in the October 1997 issue.

## 1999

The annual "Dinghy Towing Special" is one of the most highly anticipated issues, some 15 years after its debut. It remains so to this day.



In 2015, Erwin Hymer, a popular RV manufacturer across the pond, joined forces with Roadtrek to form Erwin Hymer Group North America. Their first official stateside offering would be the 2016 HymerCar Grand Canyon. When combined with some of the popular models that were already well established at that time — including those from Airstream, Winnebago, Pleasure-Way and Sportsmobile, among others — their alliance would signal that the Class B market was here to stay. The proliferation of these van conversions on the roads today — combined with the emergence of Class B manufacturers like Dolphin Motor Coach, and longtimers like Coachmen and Coach House rebooting their Class B divisions — only confirms our suspicions.



Furrior's Elysium concept motorhome is equipped with the latest technology and appliances.

## THE FUTURE

So, where to next? That's difficult to say, as the motorhome industry seems to evolve with the times as rapidly as a new iPad. But since we knew you'd ask, we consulted with *MotorHome's* publisher emeritus, contributor and 2014 RV/MH Hall of Fame inductee, Bob Livingston. As a recipient of the RVIA Distinguished Service in Journalism award — and with nearly 50 years in the RV industry — we can't imagine somebody more qualified to offer insight into what's on the horizon for motorized RVs. "More efficient technology," he said. "Appliances that are easier to maintain and that are very efficient. As we move into the future, energy efficiency — both appliance-wise and vehicle-wise — will be important. Electronics will continue to play a big role." Livingston also predicts a continued trend toward the less-is-more mind-set. "As far as

the rigs are concerned, I think there will be a focus on smaller units with more livability. A lot of people want to downsize, but they don't want to give up the conveniences and accessories. As people find themselves not wanting to pilot bigger rigs, they will be happy with the fact there is so much luxury and livability in a smaller package." So, does this mark the end of large Class A or Class C motorhomes? Not at all, according to Livingston. "There will always be a market for motorhomes earmarked at enthusiasts who desire the utmost in space and livability."

That expert insight is far from the 1950s-fueled dreams of flying vehicles or hologram technology, but it still portends a bright future for the motorized segment. And for as long as the industry changes with the tides of new generations, *MotorHome* magazine plans to be there every step of the way. **M**



## 2011

*MotorHome* features a Walk-through of the 2012 Thor Outlaw Class A toy hauler. The Outlaw 3611 can comfortably sleep seven and offers a unique side-entry door in the 96-by-122-inch garage area.



## 2005

Winnebago offers the View and the Itasca Navion, becoming the first North American manufacturer to offer Class C motorhomes built on the Sprinter chassis.



## 2017

Class B motorhomes continue to enjoy a resurgence in popularity. *MotorHome* tests the Hymer Aktiv Class B built on a RAM ProMaster chassis.



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- Horseshoe Pit
- Fenced Dog Park

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# WINNEBAGO CHANGING THE GAME

Winnebago has an unparalleled track record developing groundbreaking RVs. In this history segment, we walk through the company's fifth decade, a span that includes a product launch that revolutionized Class C motorhomes.

## ► THE FIFTH DECADE: 1998 - 2007

The nation was stunned by 9/11. Against the backdrop of a tumultuous decade, the RV industry, and Winnebago in particular, continued to forge ahead. The company celebrated a trifecta of milestones in 1998: its 40th anniversary, 300,000<sup>th</sup> unit,

and record sales and revenue. Winnebago went on to expand every category with new concepts.

In 2000, Winnebago introduced the Ultimate Freedom and Ultimate Advantage, new top-of-the-line diesel pushers. The following year, the company topped both Class A and Class C

sales charts for the first time in 20 years.

In 2004, Winnebago's annual sales exceeded \$1 billion for the first time in history. That same year, the company's focus on developing innovative, well-built motorhomes was recognized when Winnebago was named the

"most-admired RV manufacturer" by *RVBusiness* magazine.

Winnebago rocked the Class C category in 2005 with the first North American motorhomes built on the Mercedes-Benz Sprinter chassis: the View and Navion. Their style, efficiency and performance propelled Winnebago to become the world's leading builder of RVs on the Sprinter chassis, a position the company holds to this day.

A year later, the company introduced the Vista and Sunstar, two affordable Class A models that remain among the category's top sellers. And as Winnebago's 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary approached, it continued looking ahead to new ways of serving the evolving motorhome consumer.

➤ **UP NEXT:** How Winnebago crowned its sixth decade with a "Best of Show."

1998 Rialta



# "A" IS FOR ATTAINABLE: THE VISTA

AFTER DEBUTING MORE THAN A DECADE AGO, THE VISTA CONTINUES TO BE WINNEBAGO'S BEST-SELLING CLASS A GAS MODEL, APPEALING TO EVERYONE FROM YOUNG FAMILIES TO DOWNSIZING RETIREES.

Credit "user-friendly floorplans, accessible price points and Winnebago's focus on safety and structural integrity," says Rick DeVries, Product Planner for Winnebago's Class A gas lineup.

Two recently introduced floorplans illustrate the Vista's enduring appeal.

At just 28' 8", the 27PE is an easy-to-drive coach with a long list of standard features (see below). And thanks to two slideouts, swivel cab seats and an optional sleeping loft, this

compact motorhome lives much larger than it feels on the road.

The 32YE is longer — an inch shy of 33', it's the longest Vista floorplan — but is still compact and maneuverable. Yet thanks in part to its two slideouts, it boasts big-coach features like a walkaround king bed and large bedroom wardrobe.

Like every Vista, the 27PE and 32YE are built on Ford's V10-powered F-53 chassis, and come with a generous list of features and amenities, including:

- Primera-covered cab seats with

swivel and recline

- Child-seat tethers
- Powered MCD blackout front shade
- MCD blackout roller shades
- Available powered StudioLoft bed
- 3-burner glass top range and stainless double sink
- Powered patio awning with LED lighting

The Winnebago Vista and its sister, the Sunstar, are available in four floorplans and a variety of interior decors.

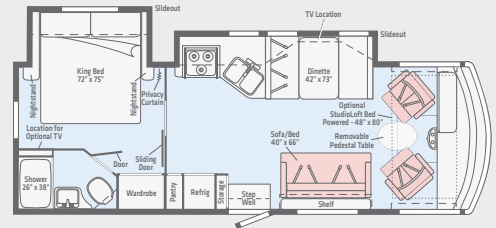


The Vista



## 2018 VISTA

EXTERIOR LENGTH:	28' 8"–32' 11"
EXTERIOR WIDTH:	8' 5.5"
EXTERIOR HEIGHT:	12' 2"
INTERIOR HEIGHT:	6' 8"
SEATING CAPACITY:	6–7
GVWR:	18,000 LBS
MSRP STARTING AT:	\$123,865



"We loved that the Navion Class C is powered by the Mercedes-Benz Sprinter chassis," say Lindsay and Dan McKenzie, "We are continually blown away by its maneuverability. It feels no different than driving a large SUV."



"We chose the Vista LX, with its large L-shaped kitchen counter, dual sinks and workmanship that was of higher quality than other brands we looked at," note Kenny and Sabrina Phillips. "We have had our Vista LX for a year now, and have put more than 30,000 miles on it. Each and every day it reminds us we made the right choice."



# A LOT OF BUNK

WHETHER ENTRY-LEVEL GAS OR LUXURY DIESEL, TODAY'S FAMILY-FRIENDLY MOTORHOMES OFFER SOMETHING FOR EVERYBODY

**T**o the uninitiated, the world of motorhomes must seem a strange and complicated one. There are bus conversions, motorhomes built on Class A or cab and chassis platforms, and, well, Class B's. Some have engines in the front, some in the back; some are gas, some are diesel. Perhaps strangest of all, however, is an unwritten rule that often dictates a family's buying choices: The largest Class A models are designed for traveling couples, and modestly sized Class C models are crafted for kids. We get it — Class C's have that big overhead bunk, and when fitted with a sofa bed and a convertible table, a sizable family can travel (and sleep) in relative comfort. But what if you want something larger and more luxurious? Is there a sweet spot between capacity and comfort? You betcha — and they call it a bunkhouse.

As the name would imply, these are motorhomes that have a dedicated bunk area in addition to the usual convertible sleeping spaces. Of course, the concept isn't totally new; it started with travel trailers, and has been gradually working its way into motorhomes. What's interesting is that this option isn't limited to value-priced models, either — it is possible to spend more than a cool million on a bunkhouse diesel pusher if you feel so inclined. So to give you an idea of what's available, we've put together a list of some of the newest, most popular models on the market today. Keep in mind that we're essentially staying away from traditional Class C's in this one because, well, an overhead bunk is their reason for being. The idea is to amaze and amuse you with some cool motorhomes you wouldn't expect could fit the whole family.

## FLEETWOOD RV DISCOVERY 38N

Packing unexpected features into a motorhome is easy when the sky's the limit — but when you're competing in the hotly contested mid-priced diesel-pusher market, the right balance of

luxury and value is what separates a top-seller from next year's clearance model. Fleetwood's Discovery 38N gets it right in all the right places. A full-wall streetside slideout opens the

living space front to rear, providing the feeling of abundance and luxury that is enhanced by a 7-foot interior ceiling, gleaming tile floors, polished solid-surface countertops and hardwood



cabinet doors/drawers. A roomy galley in the opposing slide incorporates a 22-cubic-foot residential refrigerator, while the sofa bed and 44-by-72-inch dinette provide plenty of entertainment space. The two 28-by-73-inch bunks are located directly across from the amidships full bathroom, leaving the bedroom suite — with its separate bath and king bed — to Mom and Dad.



**Chassis** Freightliner XCM

**Engine** Cummins ISB 6.7L diesel

**Horsepower** 340 @ 2,400 rpm

**Torque** 700 lb-ft @ 1,500 rpm

**Exterior length** 38' 8"

**Exterior height** 12' 10"

**Notable standard features** King bed, Firefly Integrations electronic control system, Aqua-Hot 400D hydronic heating system, water filtration system, central vacuum system, solid-surface kitchen countertops, full-body paint

**Available options** L-shape sofa, exterior entertainment center, queen drop-down bed, KING stationary satellite dish, roof vent covers

**Approximate retail price (base)** \$298,840

**Fleetwood RV**

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



## FOREST RIVER LEGACY 340BH

If you've been shopping for a well-equipped Class A for your family, but didn't think you could afford a diesel pusher, check out Forest River's Legacy 340BH. Featuring a full-wall streetside slide, the Legacy makes for easy entertaining with a large booth dinette positioned across from a 68-inch sofa. The streetside galley, a somewhat uncommon feature these days, features a solid-surface countertop with a ton of workspace offered by the stove and sink covers. An overhead residential microwave and opposing stainless-steel refrigerator, combined with abundant drawer and cabinet space, provide all the comforts of home. Toward the rear of the coach in the same slideout is a plush pair of 30-by-73-inch bunks, each with its own 20-inch TV and accordion-style doors that turn the space into a cozy sanctuary. The amidships bath is logically located across from the bunks, and

the bedroom features a walk-around queen bed surrounded by cabinets, two wardrobes and a chest of drawers in a small curbside slideout. For so-named "Super C" bunkhouse alternatives, check out the Force 35DB and 37BH from Dynamax ([www.dynamaxcorp.com](http://www.dynamaxcorp.com)), a division of Forest River.

**Chassis** Freightliner XCS

**Engine** Cummins ISB 6.7L diesel

**Horsepower** 340 @ 2,400 rpm

**Torque** 700 lb-ft @ 1,500 rpm

**Exterior length** 36' 2"

**Exterior height** 12' 4"

**Notable standard features** Multiplex wiring controls, Magnum 2,000-watt Pure Sine Inverter with Auto Gen Start, full-body paint, Truma AquaGo water heater, Samsung HDTVs, double locking insulated baggage doors

**Available options** Electric Easy-Bed (cockpit area), plank wood vinyl flooring

**Approximate retail price (base)** \$240,435

**Forest River Inc.**

574-522-3693, [www.forestriverinc.com](http://www.forestriverinc.com)





**FORETRAVEL IH-45**

If you've always dreamed of taking the family on the road to discover America, or even to live full-time, the Foretravel ih-45 spares nothing in the way of amenities, technology or comforts. It is, for all intents and purposes, your own personal tour bus, sans the bedraggled roadies and fast-food wrappers. Each ih-45 is built to order from one of five basic floorplans with a list of standard features you didn't even know you wanted, but are sure nice to have. The FP5 is the bunkhouse model, which offers a cozy L-shape front lounge, behind which is a state-of-the-art galley with two-burner induction cooktop, GE Advantium convection/microwave oven, GE Café Series refrigerator with built-in Keurig K-Cup coffee-maker, and natural quartz countertops. An amidships half bath accommodates the bunk bed sleepers, while Mom and Dad will no doubt get restful sleep on their Slumber Ease king bed. All the way at the rear is the master bath suite with a single vanity and large residential shower. There's so much more to talk about, but really, you need to see an ih-45 to believe it. Of course, if a million-dollar-plus coach is too rich for your blood, there's also the amazingly well-equipped Realm FS6 Luxury Villa Bunk (LVB) model built on the Spartan K3-GT chassis and powered by a 600-hp Cummins diesel.

**Chassis** Foretravel Travelride III chassis by Spartan  
**Engine** Cummins ISX diesel  
**Horsepower** 605 @ 1,800 rpm  
**Torque** 1,950 lb-ft @ 1,100 rpm  
**Exterior length** 45'  
**Exterior height** 13' 2"  
**Notable standard features** Flush and pneumatically sealed slideout rooms, electric sliding cargo trays, full-body paint with clear coat, one-piece CosmoLite roof, Xenon low beam/LED high beam headlamps, nine cameras (backup, four perimeter, sideview mirrors, forward-facing and interior), residential Villa six-way power seats with foot and headrests (Knoedler air ride for driver), SilverLeaf Electronics 12-inch digital glass dashboard, 5.1 surround sound in living room, stereo sound in bedroom and patio, iPad with Crestron integration for A/V and SilverLeaf controls, central vacuum system, water filtration system, CAT6 network cabling  
**Available options** Solid walnut or African mahogany cabinetry, outdoor entertainment package, in-motion satellite, drawer dishwasher, wine chiller, trash compactor, washer/dryer (combo or stacked)  
**Approximate retail price (base)** \$1.4 million

**Foretravel Motorcoach**  
 800-955-6226, <http://foretravel.com>

**Motorhome Specialist RV** (exclusive dealer of the Foretravel Realm FS6), 800-335-6054, [www.mhsrv.com](http://www.mhsrv.com)



**JAYCO ALANTE 31R**

Jayco's Alante 31R is a classic Class A motorhome with a few interesting twists. The simple white gelcoat exterior belies an inviting living space with rich earth tones in either Chambray or Nantucket décors, and faux-wood plank flooring that lends a beachy vibe. A streetside slideout houses a fixed dinette, but also contributes to a noteworthy and effective kitchen layout that quite literally wraps around you when the slideout is deployed. The bunk beds, each equipped with a TV, are located in a curbside slideout directly across from a good-sized bathroom, and offer privacy curtains when it's time for some shuteye. The rear bedroom features a walk-around queen bed, as well as dual wardrobes and a dresser with optional TV. An available drop-down bunk above the driver's compartment brings the Alante's total sleeping capacity up to 10.



**Chassis** Ford F-53  
**Engine** Ford 6.8L V-10 gas  
**Horsepower** 320 @ 4,000 rpm  
**Torque** 460 lb-ft @ 3,000 rpm  
**Exterior length** 34' 10"  
**Exterior height** 12' 5"  
**Notable standard features** Walk-around queen bed, bunk beds with TVs in each bunk, 13-foot awning, outside entertainment center, JRide (Hellwig helper springs, rubber isolation body mounts, Billstein shock absorbers, jounce bumpers, stabilizer bars and computer-balanced driveshaft)  
**Available options** Drop-down cab overhead bunk  
**Approximate retail price (base)** \$130,971

**Jayco Inc.**  
 574-825-5861, [www.jayco.com](http://www.jayco.com)





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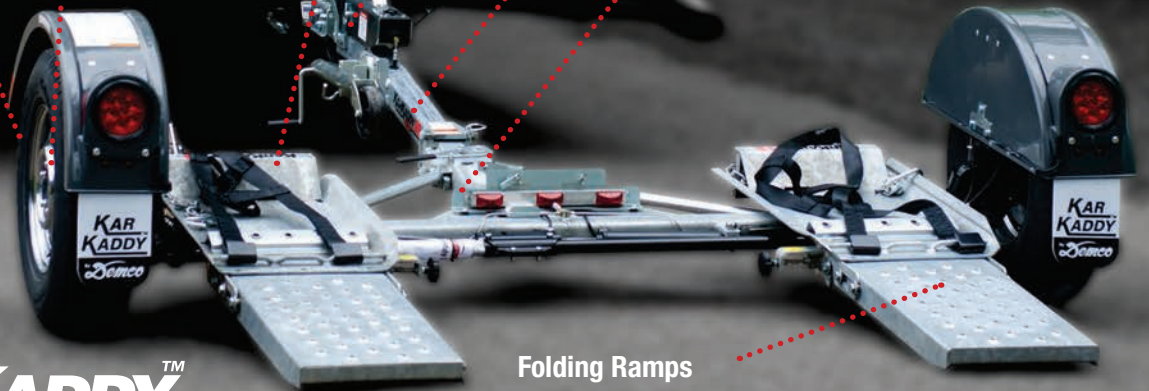
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After

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By using only half the space, you can fit both the motorhome and tow dolly comfortably in almost any RV lot. Or you can store your tow dolly in front of your car in your garage at home.

Dethmers Manufacturing, Circle 109 on Reader Service Card





**NEXUS RV MAYBACH 37M**

It may be named after a famed ultra-luxury car, but it costs roughly half as much and you can live in it very comfortably. So take that, Mercedes. The 37M stands out with its full-body paint and graphics, but it's more than just a pretty face. An abundance of basement storage features semi-pass-through compartments, and fully automatic leveling jacks come standard. Inside, Beauflor vinyl flooring lends a homey touch, with warm tones that complement the glazed maple residential-style cabinets. A large streetside slideout incorporates a sofa and fixed dinette, with a 50-inch flatscreen on the rear feature wall. The bunk beds are located in a curbside slideout, right across from a half-bath in the middle of the interior. At the rear, the master suite boasts a walk-around king-sized bed and a full bath with shower.



**Chassis** Ford F-53  
**Engine** Ford 6.8L V-10 gas  
**Horsepower** 320 @ 4,000 rpm  
**Torque** 460 lb-ft @ 3,000 rpm  
**Exterior length** 37' 5"  
**Exterior height** 12' 5"  
**Notable standard features** Full-body paint, slideout toppers, seamless fiberglass roof, Azdel Composite substrate, steel cage, 50-amp service, water filtration system, washer/dryer prep  
**Available options** Theater seating, MCD Innovations roller shades, in-motion satellite system, outside entertainment center, electric fireplace  
**Approximate retail price (base)** \$151,898

**NeXus RV**  
 855-786-3987, [www.nexusrv.com](http://www.nexusrv.com)

**RENEGADE RV VALENCIA 38BB**

Do you gaze longingly at semi trucks, wondering what it might have been like to be a big-rig driver? If so, the Valencia 38BB from Renegade RV could be your dream incarnate. Riding on the Freightliner S2RV chassis and sporting a front-engine diesel, this "Super C" is uniquely qualified to accommodate your friends and family in heavy-duty comfort. Above the cab is a 60-by-80-inch bunk, and both a fixed dinette and sofa reside in the streetside slideout. On the opposite wall, a compact but well-equipped kitchen features a solid-surface countertop and sink, plus residential appliances like the stainless convection microwave and 19-cubic-foot refrigerator (washer/dryer prep is standard as well). The dual 30-by-77-inch bunks feature their own TVs and privacy curtains, and are located across the hall from the nicely equipped bath area. The rear sleeping quarters feature a 72-by-74-inch king bed with nightstands and overhead cabinets, plus a dresser, two closets and a 32-inch TV. For an even bigger bunkhouse experience, consider the Renegade Verona 40VBH or Renegade XL X45BB.



**Chassis** Freightliner S2RV  
**Engine** Cummins ISB 6.7L diesel  
**Horsepower** 360 @ 2,600 rpm  
**Torque** 800 lb-ft @ 1,800 rpm  
**Exterior length** 38' 2"  
**Exterior height** 12' 6"  
**Notable standard features** Full-body paint, powder-coated steel storage compartments with carpet, frameless tinted windows, Equalizer Systems four-point leveling, 8-kW generator, 2,000-watt inverter, power-retractable 50-amp power cord reel, air ride driver/front passenger seats, exterior entertainment system, solid hardwood cabinetry  
**Available options** Stackable washer/dryer, theater seating, Winegard in-motion satellite system, power retractable hose reel  
**Approximate price range (base)** \$229,500

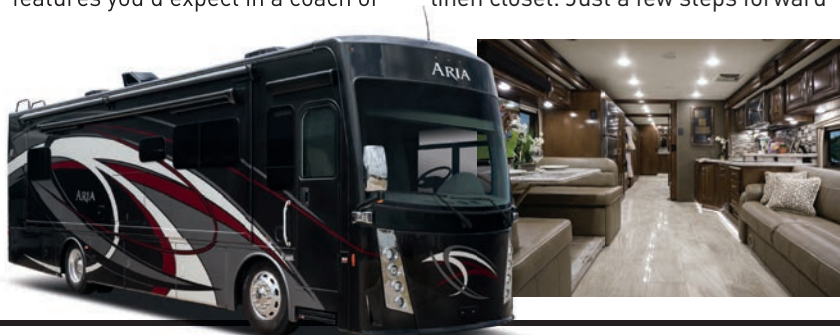
**Renegade RV**  
 574-966-0193, [www.renegaderv.com](http://www.renegaderv.com)



**THOR MOTOR COACH ARIA 4000**

In an opera, an aria is a long song for a solo voice, usually one that is accompanied by an orchestra. In the RV world, the Aria is a Class A diesel pusher — but if luxury travel is on your agenda, it's likely that you and your family will be singing its praises. The Aria 4000 is loaded with all the features you'd expect in a coach of

this class, plus a few you may not. For example, the rear master suite houses not only a king bed, but a Tilt-A-View inclining mattress so you can sit up and watch the 32-inch LED HDTV in supreme comfort. And, the rear master bath offers dual vanities, plus a shower, toilet and linen closet. Just a few steps forward





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## A LOT OF BUNK

of the bedroom are dual 28-by-74-inch bunk beds, which enjoy direct access to another full bath just across the hall. A full-wall slideout curbside gives the Aria's living space the feel of a downtown high-rise apartment, with its gleaming floors, dark cabinets and abundance of LED lighting. An 88-inch Dream Dinette opposes the contemporary galley and a 70-inch sofa bed, and if that's not enough sleeping space for the family, a 48-by-76-inch bunk with a Cotton Cloud mattress drops down from above the driver's compartment. For a lower-cost bunkhouse alternative, consider Thor's Windsport 34J.

**Chassis** Freightliner XC-R  
**Engine** Cummins ISB 6.7L diesel  
**Horsepower** 360 @ 2,600 rpm  
**Torque** 800 lb-ft @ 1,800 rpm  
**Exterior length** 40' 11"  
**Exterior height** 12' 6"  
**Notable standard features** 16-cubic-foot stainless-steel residential refrigerator with icemaker, 50-amp service, Air-Ride suspension, dual 15,000-Btu air conditioners, exterior 39-inch LED TV with sound bar and Bluetooth, multiplex wiring, stackable washer/dryer  
**Available options** 32-inch LED TV in cockpit overhead  
**Approximate retail price (base)** \$296,940

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



## WINNEBAGO INDUSTRIES FORZA 38W

"Cozy and contemporary." Those are the words that come to mind when we think of Winnebago's new family-friendly Forza 38W. It's got the modern feel so popular in today's diesel pushers, with the unexpected surprise of a streetside entertainment center featuring a 48-inch HDTV with home theater sound bar system and an electric fireplace, standard. And, it's all located directly across from a Flexsteel Fold-N-Tumble 60-by-73-inch sofa and 40-by-70-inch BenchMark dinette so you won't miss a moment of your favorite movie. Meal prep will be a breeze in the well-appointed galley, featuring solid-surface countertops, a stainless-steel microwave/convection oven and Whirlpool refrigerator. Located smack dab in the middle of the coach are the

bunk beds (28-by-73-inch lower, 26-by-73-inch upper) and a full bath with shower. A sliding door separates the kids from Mom and Dad's master suite, which features a 60-by-80-inch queen bed, large wardrobe, flip-down TV and a rear full bath with washer/dryer prep space. Expecting unexpected guests? Opt for the available powered StudioLoft bed that lowers from above the cockpit.

**Chassis** Freightliner XCS  
**Engine** Cummins ISB 6.7L diesel  
**Horsepower** 340 @ 2,400 rpm  
**Torque** 700 lb-ft @ 1,500 rpm  
**Exterior length** 39' 9"  
**Exterior height** 11' 11"  
**Notable standard features** Tinted, dual-glazed windows; KeyOne lock system; dual 15,000-Btu air conditioners; 2,000-watt inverter/charger; 6-kW generator; four deep-cycle batteries; water filtration system  
**Available options** Washer/dryer, powered StudioLoft, Truma AquaGo instant water heater, exterior entertainment center with 32-inch TV  
**Approximate retail price (base)** \$243,338

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



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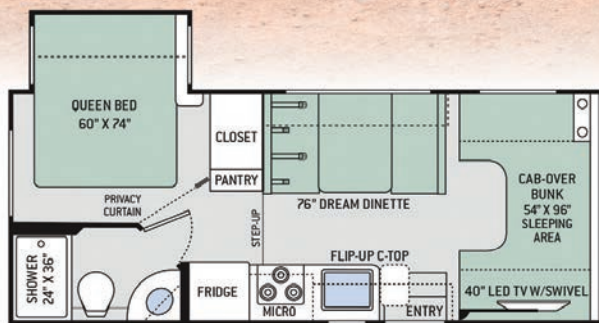


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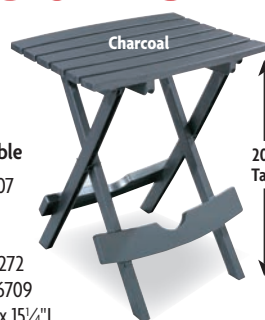
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# Art of Opulence

Veteran builder Newell pulls out all the stops when it comes to creating a super luxury coach destined for only a few **By Bob Livingston**

**OK** I'm going to cut to the chase. The article you are about to read may seem like it applies only to those who are wealthy. Let's face it, getting into a luxury motor coach like a Newell requires great financial resources — or enough luck to win the lottery. Clearly, with only 26 Newells rolling off the assembly line each year, the vast majority of motorhome enthusiasts will never own such a coach. But don't let that fact dissuade you from reading all about the 2019 Newell. It's a magnificent machine loaded with cutting edge technology, some of which is sure to trickle down over the years to conventional Class A builders who will likely implement these ideas (on a more practical scale) when designing their future models.

Newell is no ordinary builder of super luxury coaches; it does not start with a bus shell. When the first piece of metal is pulled off the shelf, the process of building the manufacturer's

proprietary bridge-construction frame is started. Emulating aircraft-type construction using aluminum in a semi-monocoque configuration, the entire body becomes part of the

chassis support system. The result leads to a highly refined and gorgeous body that's created in cooperation with Porsche Design, the folks who create luxury sports cars.

Every coach is built to order, so no two are alike, other than the exterior lines, which are personalized by graphics and color schemes. Once an order is initiated, the company applies a coach number and the process of choosing a floorplan and all the ancillary componentry needed to produce a custom coach begins. Newell provides a brochure with a number of common floorplans, but

**ABOVE:** Newell's high-luster paint and graphic treatment complement the body styling beautifully. Surroundings clearly reflect on the shiny paint.





**BELOW:** Large windows with classy décor treatments provide clear views to the outside. Dinette, swivel rocker and hutch fill out the patio-side slideout. Opposing galley and couch add high level comfort and visual appeal. Accent lighting and rich-looking floors elevate livability to luxury.



that's only to get the new owners started with the planning phase of their coach. From there, buyers work closely with the design and engineering teams to create a coach that portrays individualism and satisfies personal requirements, all revolving around intense comfort and convenience. In just about all cases, customers start at the top of the food chain when picking appliances, entertainment systems, electronics, décor packages and furniture. It's an exercise in opulence that potential owners have no interest in compromising. The end result is nothing less than spectacular, and requires a check for just shy of \$2 million.

Coach No. 1643 was built to display at shows, so we were given a chance to spend time with it until it was sold. That timeframe was short — a prime example of how fast these RV

mansions are being gobbled up by discriminating buyers. The factory sold out its latest production run by last December.

The test coach had its own pedigree, one that is a departure from the norm when it comes to bus-style floorplanning. Conventional wisdom encourages designers to focus on a front entry door in diesel pushers, which is something the big-rig community has grown to expect.

Newell bucks that trend by offering a mid-entry, which we questioned until stepping inside.

While there is no universal protest against front doors, entering through the spiral staircase into the center of the Newell has its inherent benefits, including the ability to be where the "action" is on most RV sites. Once the button is pushed and the pneumatic apparatus sounds off its melodically pleasing *whoosh*, the solid door pops



Rear bathroom suite offers exceptional beauty using Art Deco décor elements and high-end fixtures expected in a luxury motor coach. Bidet-equipped toilet is a popular option; customers make the ultimate decision on how their coach will be provisioned.

WHAT'S HOT

Exterior design, paint and graphics; center entryway; sophisticated electronics; exquisite cabinetry; high-end appliances; décor package; customer interaction with build process; superior drivability

WHAT'S NOT

Price; unrelenting stares from other RVers



out and moves gracefully to the side; you immediately know the stairs will lead to something special. Surprisingly, this particular coach is void of an overly glitzy décor treatment, and some who relish a more showy atmosphere might even think it's too understated. But, it didn't take long for us to really like the softer colors and overall stately look.

The back portion of this coach is definitely more exotic. Spanning across the very rear is the bathroom, which enhances the bedroom suite in both form and function. A big hatch in the ceiling, covered when needed by a sunshade, provides plenty of ambient light to shine brightly on the Art Deco motif gracing the corner sink and counters. Mosaic flooring complements the bathroom fixtures, including the large glass-clad shower, beautifully. The shower is right sized for the bathroom and has the expected

high-line faucets and accouterments. It's certainly a nice place to linger, and the water will always be warm, compliments of the Aqua-Hot comfort and water heating system. Lots of glass and mirrors surround the sculpted sink and faucet, and the large wardrobe closet that butts up to the lavatory structure is lined with cedar. A closet with the washer and dryer occupies the space across from the shower and has doors that can be pushed out of the way when doing the laundry.

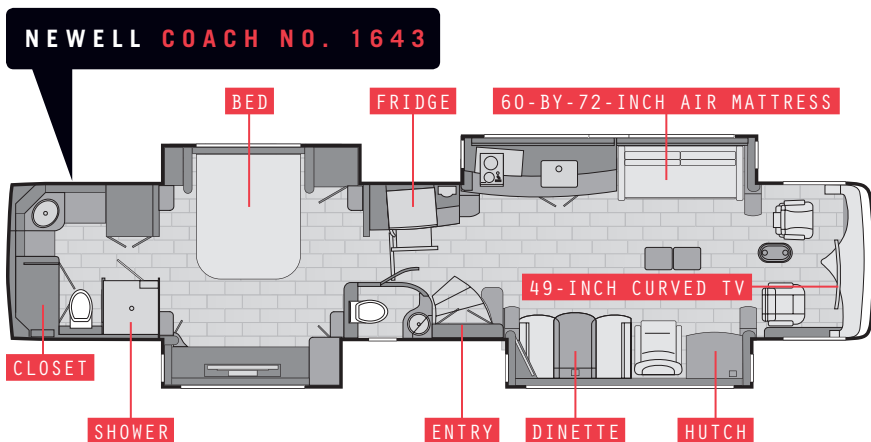
As expected, the toilet is not standard-issue. Here, a Blooming seat on a Headhunter toilet offers a well, you know, great experience. Unless you're familiar with this type of toilet seat, it's best to read the manual before trying to work the controls on the side of the seat. Don't worry about the close proximity of the shower and wardrobe; this bidet-equipped seat makes toilet

paper almost obsolete.

Connecting naturally to the bathroom is a stately bedroom that has an exceptional amount of room when the opposing slides are extended and the power mattress is retracted. The mattress is 9 inches thick and offers dreamy comfort. To get below the mattress, a button is pushed (of course) and the platform rises to access a large storage area.

Across from the bed is a beautiful array of cabinetry that blends seamlessly with the large picture window. The cabinet doors are almost undetectable, a tribute to the craftspeople who work in the cabinet shop. There are a number of cubbyholes and shelves that add to the décor, blending with the ceiling sculpting; a TV can be raised in front of the window for bedtime viewing.

Switches, tied into a multiplex wiring system, can be found everywhere, and all the controls are loaded into a touch screen next to the bed. The screen is duplicated in a number of locations throughout the coach and allows the user to operate just about anything, including the power blinds that are sheer until the internal slats rotate, providing total privacy. These blinds are used universally throughout the interior and match the décor perfectly. A touch pad, similar in size and style to a tablet,





is magnetically attached to the wall near the entry so users can pull it off and work the systems remotely. It's all part of the Intrepid 2.0 Coach Management System that can also be connected to any handheld device, like a smartphone or tablet.

As you move toward the front parlor, you'll pass through a dividing corridor with the half bath on the right and refrigerator on the left — before getting to the aforementioned entryway. Guests using this bathroom can get the same Blooming toilet seat experience, and can clean up in the opposing sink.

The GE Monogram refrigerator and adjacent pullout pantry are concealed by integrated cabinetry and door panels. While the refrigerator might seem to be on the small

Cabinetry in the bedroom suite blends into the curvaceous structure, and hardware is concealed. The TV can be raised for bedtime viewing. The king bed has a 9-inch-thick mattress for the utmost in comfort; platform raises electrically. Lighting for dressing or reading is perfect and controls for systems are mounted on the wall (not visible).

size visually, the main door and two pullout freezer drawers (the top one for ice) swallow up quite a bit of food. Again, this is personal preference, dictated by the buyer.

Up front, the galley, couch, dinette and recliner are configured in a rather conventional pattern, but the materials, floor and sculpted ceiling are definitely the handiwork of an experienced decorator. Opposing slides open up the space dramatically and the mechanism is choreographed artistically, leaving the floor flush and

seamless.

For those who can break away from the restaurant scene, the galley offers enough space to spread out, featuring a clean-looking solid-surface counter and a large rectangular sink. The appliances and fixtures are top-notch and compare favorably with components in a custom-built luxury home. Appliances, like the Wolf two-burner induction cooktop, dishwasher in a drawer, built-in coffeepot and microwave convection oven, fit smartly within the smooth-





## NEWELL COACH NO. 1643

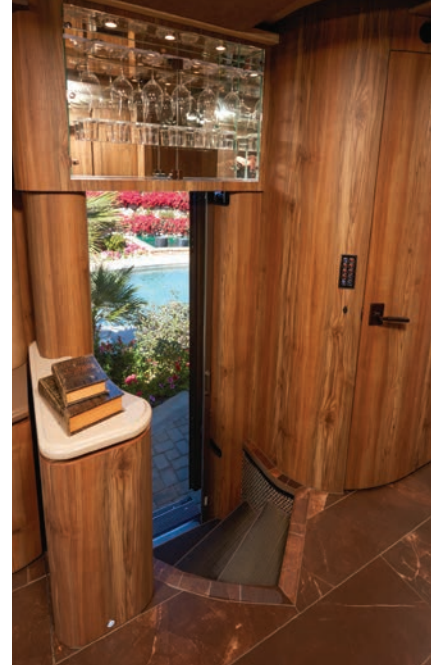
looking cabinetry. Concealed cabinet hardware works flawlessly, and there's exceptional room in the abundance of drawers and cabinets for storing foodstuffs and cooking implements. Again, the stately décor kicks in, using a beautiful backsplash presented in a very tasteful manner. Cooks never need to leave the kitchen to control other systems, as there is another monitor panel located strategically within reach. And the heated floor (throughout the interior) and toe-kick areas make standing in the galley comfy in cold weather.

Adjacent to the galley counter and filling out the remainder of the front slideout is the couch. While leather seems to be the fabric of choice among luxury coach owners, this couch is upholstered in plush material that's very friendly to your skin. It makes into a bed for sleeping two adults, and for lounging it's very comfortable. A big window behind the couch offers a commanding view of

the outside, and a massive array of lighting (throughout the interior) keeps things bright.

On the other side, and in the opposing slide, is an interesting use of space. Close to the entry door is a standard-style booth dinette with plush leather cushions that offer plenty of support. The solid-surface table can be expanded for additional diners with the use of additional cushions, and is fitted with a pop-up utility center for powering and/or charging electronic devices.

Nothing extraordinarily fancy here, but adjacent to the dinette is a leather-covered swivel rocker flanked by a hutch with a solid-surface countertop and storage areas. According to Newell, this arrangement has become more popular than a desk/work station, since laptops seem to do the trick these days. Above the counter is a TV, which is viewable from the couch and/or by people gathered in the galley. A bigger TV is mounted



Center entry leads to the best part of most RV sites. Spiral staircase and glass cabinet exude luxury. Countertop is a great catchall; an array of controls are built into the side.

over the dashboard complex. Once the cockpit seats are swiveled toward the action, the front of the coach can comfortably handle quite a crowd. Accent lighting used liberally under counters

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and toe-kicks, and around window valances, provides great ambience when the evening mood inspires.

Future buyers can easily take the elements in this coach and modify them to suit their personal tastes, and Newell excels in this department. Seasoned professionals from all the departments contributing to the build process are at the customer's beck and call until the coach is completed — and Newell has established an exemplary reputation among highline aficionados.

Outside, the exercise in opulence continues with stunningly shiny and smooth full-body paint, handsome graphics, integrated awning and flush slideout seams that are hard to detect. Add the wheels, flush-mounted and dark-tinted windows, LED lighting and the four air conditioners that are hidden from view, and the profile is a sight to behold.

Storage compartments also blend perfectly with the exterior lines and all are fitted with latches that activate the lift mechanism, which stops precisely at a safe point when the slides are out all the way or when the coast is clear. Access to the tremendous amount of goods that can be stored is via stout slide-out trays that extend with a push of a button (of course). Utility centers are robust and include all the hookup items, including a power umbilical cord reel that features a remote control. A Lippert Components Waste Master RV Sewer Management System (hose and nozzle permanently attached and secured in a dedicated housing) is built in on the left side of the coach and the standard type dump fitting (for a hose) is ready to go on the other side. There's only one holding tank for the black and gray water but it's 143 gallons. Another TV is mounted in one of the patio-side compartments and when swung out, owners can access the Aqua-Hot components.

One of the great attributes of owning a Newell is driving it. The driver's compartment is plush and exudes an electronic sensory overload. Push the ignition button and the dash lights up dramatically with

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**NEWELL COACH NO. 1643**

instrumentation and controls that give the driver full command of the driving experience. The feel, especially for the co-pilot, is quite different without the front door and floor cover over entry steps. If you like the center entry, you'll undoubtedly love the coziness afforded by the lack of a cockpit door, which also circumvents the need to climb around the passenger seat to get to the living area.

Driving this coach is definitely worthy of the sticker price. Beyond the comfortable captain's chair, which is designed for long stints behind the wheel, the powerful 605-hp Cummins ISX diesel engine propels the coach with quiet brilliance. The six-speed Allison is perfectly matched to the engine and the ZF active tag axle steering and suspension systems make the ride hard to beat. This coach is fast, smooth and hugs the highway so well that seat-of-the-pants speed perception is virtually impossible. Thankfully, speed is clearly visible in the electronic instrument cluster, and the coach is fitted with a radar detector.

Make no mistake, this is a 45-foot coach, and even with the driver enhancements — like powered tilt and telescoping wheel, the Total Vision camera/monitor system and the EasiSteer electric steering assist — there's an acclimation period for new owners. Fortunately, becoming an accomplished Newell pilot takes less time than expected, especially since the coach handles so well and can turn more sharply than its profile suggests.

Newell may not be the only player in the super luxury motor coach space, but it has managed to perfect the process through its commitment to excellence over many years. Those fortunate enough to own a Newell will have an ultimate RVing experience, while the rest of the motorhome community reaps the benefits of advanced technology that can be designed and applied when money is no object.

If nothing else, it's fun to dream. **M**

**Newell Coach Corp.**

888-363-9355, [www.newellcoach.com](http://www.newellcoach.com)

## Specifications

### Chassis

Model	Newell
Engine	Cummins ISX
SAE hp	605 @ 1,800 rpm
Torque	1,950 lb-ft @ 1,200 rpm
Transmission	Allison HD4000MH 6-speed
Axle Ratio	3.83:1
Front and Tag Axle Tires	365/70R22.5
Rear Tires	315/80R22.5
Wheelbase	302"
Brakes	Air disc
Suspension	ZF Active/wide base; ZF independent front; ZF active steer tag axle
Fuel Capacity	200 gal
Warranty	2 years/24,000 miles chassis; 2 years/250,000 miles engine 5 years/500,000 miles major engine components)

### Coach

Exterior Length	45'
Exterior Width	8' 6"
Exterior Height with A/C	13' 1"
Interior Width	7' 10"
Interior Height	7' 5"
Construction	Aluminum semi-monocoque; fiberglass exterior
Freshwater Capacity	143 gal
Black-/Gray-water Capacity	143 gal combined
Water-heater Capacity	Instant/Aqua-Hot 675D
LP-gas Capacity	N/A (all-electric)
Air Conditioner (4)	15,000 Btu
Furnace	72,000 Btu
Refrigerator	14.09 cubic-foot
Inverter/Charger	(2) 2,800 watt/125 amp
Batteries	(2) 6-volt 8D AGM chassis, (6) 6-volt 8D AGM house
AC Generator	20 kW
MSRP	\$1,661,000
MSRP as Tested	\$1,994,076
Warranty	2 years/24,000 miles

### Wet Weight

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

Front Axle	18,640 lbs
Rear Axle	25,920 lbs
Tag Axle	13,560 lbs
Total	58,120 lbs

### Chassis Ratings

GAWR, F/R/TAG	20,000/28,000/16,000 lbs
GVWR/GCWR	63,600/88,600 lbs
ROCCC	5,480 lbs (deduct weight of passengers for net cargo capacity)

GAWR	Gross Axle Weight Rating
GVWR	Gross Vehicle Weight Rating
GCWR	Gross Combination Weight Rating
ROCCC	Realistic Occupant and Cargo Carrying Capacity (Full Water, No Passengers)



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Coverage in US, Canada, Mexico, Puerto Rico, and US Virgin Islands	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>
Flat Tire Change and Roadside RV Tire Delivery	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>
Certified RV technicians on staff and the nation's largest RV-specific dispatch network	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>
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<sup>1</sup>According to TopConsumerReviews.com, available on TopConsumerReviews.com published on 3/12/2018.

<sup>1</sup>Standard membership does not provide benefits for Motorized RVs. If you wish to receive benefits for your Motorized RV, please purchase Platinum, Platinum+, or Platinum Complete. Motorized RVs are classified as the following RV types: Class A, Class B, Class C, Van/Truck/SUV Conversion, Bus Conversion.

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# THOSE WERE

RARE, VINTAGE MOTORHOMES BUILT BEFORE MASS PRODUCTION ARE WELL WORTH THE EFFORT

**F**rom the development of the horseless carriage, people have sought for ways to take their house on their travels. Long before 1958, when Winnebago was launched and Travco architect Ray Frank first coined the term “Motor Home,” innovative Americans were refitting production cars and trucks with living quarters, turning them into custom-made, often one-of-a-kind creations. Their designs tested out the possibilities and boundaries of motorized camper construction and laid the foundation for the incredible variety of modern Class A’s, B’s and C’s.

These icons from the past would be lost were it not for the dedicated efforts of vintage-RV enthusiasts. With little information, few available parts and an abundance of optimism, they have preserved pieces of our history for all of us to see and enjoy. In honor

of *MotorHome*’s 50th Anniversary, we’d like to take a look back at some of these classic machines, built in the years before our first issue was ever published, and share the stories of the men and women who brought them back to life.

The Automobile Telescoping Apartment was one of the earliest motorhomes, complete with a fold-down kitchen compartment and a double bed.

## A Model T with Slideouts

For Herb Spies, the journey into the past began with a TV show. He was watching PBS and caught a glimpse of the oldest and most unusual motorhome he had ever seen.

“It looked like a pickup camper installed on a 1915 Model T. The amazing thing about this camper was that it was like a Swiss Army Knife — it kept unfolding!”

Called the “Automobile Telescoping Apartment,” it was the invention of Gustav De Bretteville of San Francisco, who designed it as an add-on to the Ford Model T. An antique motorhome buff, Spies was immediately intrigued. He did a little research and found six different articles in 1916 magazines

Photos: Herb Spies



# THE DAYS

— AND EXPENSE — TO MAKE THEM ROADWORTHY ONCE MORE



Herb Spies recreated Gustav's original design using a 1924 Model T runabout. He was assisted in his restoration by the RV/MH Hall of Fame in Elkhart, Indiana, that let him interact with the original.

about Gustav's camper, including a spread in *Popular Science*. The Telescoping Apartment sold for about \$100 when it was introduced, but only a few had survived into the 21st century. One, used by Henry Ford on his famed Vagabond Camping Trips, was owned by the Edison & Ford Winter Estates in Florida, and another had been donated to the RV/MH Hall of Fame and Museum in Elkhart, Indiana. While there were plenty of Model T's still in existence, if Herb wanted a Telescoping Apartment of his own, it looked like

he would need to build it himself.

He broached the topic with his wife, Sidra, who was "all for it," and bought a 1924 Model T Runabout at auction in 2010. He drove it for a few months to become familiar with its problems, then took it apart and restored it. The engine needed new rings and valves but was essentially in fair shape, as was the transmission. The T's total restoration was completed in the fall of 2011, and then it was time to outfit it with its own "Swiss Army Knife."

Herb and Sidra took a trip to Indiana to visit the RV Museum's Telescoping Apartment. Once the staff heard what Herb planned to do, they allowed the couple to "touch, move, measure and photograph everything."

"I couldn't have built it without actually seeing one. I couldn't figure out how the slides worked," Herb says.

The original Gustav-designed camper consisted of four sections: an outer cabin, an inner cabin and two sliding cabinets. The cabins slide open to create a double bed, one of the side cabinets opens to create a fold-down kitchen and the side is used for storage. A separate dressing room/washroom could be attached to the back of the sleeping area. The

Telescoping Apartment even included a heat exchanger to provide hot water for washing.

While the Spies' Telescoping Apartment is, in part, a replica, Herb kept it as close to the original as possible. The camper parts were all constructed of wooden frame covered with sheet metal skin. While he did get a little help in bending metal parts and fabricating a side-mount spare tire carrier and angle braces, Herb did most of the construction himself. He also credits his wife for her assistance.

"A lot of times it takes two people to do something," he points out. "I couldn't have gotten this done without her help."

Once the Telescoping Apartment was built, the couple scavenged through antique shops and estate sales to find period accessories to complete their motorhome. They added a vintage Coleman stove and lantern; 1920s-era pots, pans and silver plate utensils; period enamelware; and even a vintage "auto refrigerator" that bolts to the running board. They even found a link for Gustav's 1916 patent for his telescoping cabin.

The couple recently started touring with the Telescoping Apartment at RV shows. On one of their first outings in Tampa, Florida, they were surprised when a group of men in suits came to hear Sidra's presentation, followed later in the day by an even bigger group, including one gentleman who "asked a lot of questions about the patent." Herb and Sidra found out later he was the CEO of a large motorhome manufacturer, apparently interested about the ownership of the original slideout concept.

"Of course, the patent didn't call them slideouts," Herb says with a laugh, "and it had expired long ago."

Still, there is no question that today's luxury motorhomes owe a debt to this early design. One of the first examples of a motorized vehicle that "carried its home on its back," the Telescoping Apartment was a precursor for several decades of "house cars" that followed.



## EARLY MOTORHOMES

*Popular Science Monthly* featured the Telescoping Apartment in 1916, lauding the ability to travel with all of the comforts of home. The original included an outer cabin, an inner cabin and two sliding cabinets; when in camp mode, the Telescoping Apartment featured a double bed, a fold-down galley and storage.

# The Classic Ride

## 1927 Studebaker House Car

As motor vehicles became larger, designers went to greater lengths to create a dry, comfortable camping space within them. One of the earliest of these was the Studebaker House Car. Starting in 1925, Studebaker began producing a commercial Big Six chassis with a choice of 158- and 184-inch wheelbases. Advanced Auto Body Works, a Los Angeles, California, company, began custom-producing camping bodies for the versatile chassis, and the House Car was born. With an interior appearance similar to a luxury railway car, these motorhomes included features like Pullman-style bunks, washbasins, chamber pots and even small baths. Unfortunately, the Great Depression resulted in the removal of these buses from production. An original Studebaker House Car is a rare find today, which is one reason Gary Kandel looked twice when he saw one sunk in the mud behind a U-Store lot in Columbus, Ohio. The proprietor of the lot told Gary it had been stored there about 30 years and he hadn't received any rent payment for the past 20.

"At the time ... I didn't know

anything about house cars, but I thought it could be a neat project, and at least the initial financial investment wouldn't break me if I had to abandon it," Gary says, laughing now about his overly rose-colored view.

Gary agreed to send a registered letter to the owner and if it came back (which it did) the U-Store proprietor agreed to sell it to the Kandels for \$1,500. That seems like an amazing deal — until you see the photos. The entry door had long since been broken and removed, so the Studebaker had sat open to the weather and wildlife for two decades.

"I can't begin to tell you the condition of the interior. I moved it into my workshop in October when I got it home. I turned on the heat, and when I came out the next morning there were roughly 500,000 flies that had hatched overnight. I didn't count them exactly, but I think the number is pretty close," Gary explains.

It was hard not to feel a little discouraged. Still, Gary had convinced his wife, Marilyn, that they could tour the country in the House Car when he retired in three years. Now he was committed. As for Marilyn, she had faith.



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"Everything Gary brings home is in need of repair," she says half-jokingly. "He has a vision — he can see things I can't."

After taking two truckloads of filth from the interior to the landfill, Gary discovered the framework from the windshield back was wood covered in aluminum skin. The only truly reusable parts were the two steel frame rails.

"Had I known the condition of all the wood, I probably wouldn't have ever started the project," Gary admits.

Gary stripped all the aluminum sheetmetal off the vehicle and ended up reproducing about 90 percent of the wood framework, including the entire top. The aluminum sheetmetal was repaired and then reinstalled on the vehicle. Mechanically, the rebuild involved quite a few "donor" parts from other vehicles, including an engine, transmission, rear axle and brakes from a 1984 Ford one-ton pickup; a front axle from a 1954 Ford dump truck; and a power-steering rack from a 1984 Thunderbird.

The vehicle was originally equipped

with an icebox (which had provisions for a 25-pound block of ice and a drain) and had a gas-fired camp stove with a chimney through the roof, a water tank and double sink, and a bed that ran across the back of the vehicle.

The bed could only accommodate someone 5-feet, 9-inches tall, so that was one of the things Gary changed in the remodel, adding a new fold-down couch/bed mounted longitudinally. This modification forced a redesign of the interior layout.

"The three years turned into eight due to my inability to properly estimate project time," says Gary.

Today the House Car is wired for 120-volt AC electric, has standard water and electric hookups for camping, and is equipped with new bucket seats, power steering, power brakes, tilt/telescopic steering column, two air-conditioning systems, two 10-gallon water tanks, a gray-water tank (a repurposing of the original fuel tank) and power windows all around. The entire inside floor is tongue-and-grove hardwood, and the rear door,

initially an exit only, was completely remade to be an in-and-out door. In terms of electronics, the House Car has a stereo system, TV and rearview camera. Gary even custom-made the trunk on the back to haul a 2,000-watt generator, lawn chairs, tools and miscellaneous equipment. The fold-down door on the back of the trunk serves as an outdoor deck.

"We call it our patio," Gary laughs.

He completed all of the work himself with the exception of the chrome, upholstery of the bucket seats and the pinstriping.

And while it is true that the three-year project stretched to eight, the couple is enjoying the reception they get now as they take their Studebaker out on the road. Thus far, they've logged about 3,000 miles, and they hope to spend even more time camping this summer. As for Marilyn, she says she has learned to trust Gary's instincts, and is clearly proud of the House Car he has brought to life.

"It's amazing to see what he can do with a big piece of junk!"

## Funky Junk Farms

No one is better proof that one man's trash is another's treasure than Johnny Agnew, aka the "Junkyard Genius." Agnew has a passion for history and campers, and was a key figure in getting Monterey Trailer Park, once known as an "auto camp," named a Los Angeles Historic-Cultural Monument in 2002. And he has the perfect job for a vintage RV lover — Agnew works with Hollywood studios driving and maintaining the cars used in period films, with a resumé that includes work on 12 years of Oprah Winfrey movies. Beginning in the early 1990s, Agnew also began collecting and restoring vintage trailers and motorhomes for actors and other celebrities; expensive renovations that can cost anywhere from \$100,000 to \$1 million. He has owned 30 to 40 antique motorhomes himself over the years, which begs the question — which one is his favorite?

Johnny laughs. "When people ask me that, I always say, 'The next one.'"

One of Agnew's most unique finds is a 1951 Boyertown Tour Wagon with an unusual modification — an Elvis-like pompadour (see photo at right), making it unlike anything else on the road. Agnew explains that the evolution of what we now call motorhomes really came to a halt with the Great Depression and World War II. While Boyertown



Photo: Johnny Agnew

Auto Body Works in Pennsylvania produced truck bodies for commercial and government use as far back as the 1920s, it wasn't until after the Second World War that some were modified for use as recreational vehicles. The Tour Wagon was first produced in 1949, and only a few hundred were sold, with a starting price of \$3,500 — quite a bit of

This unique Boyertown Tour Wagon may not be aerodynamic, but its cabover "pompadour" ensures that it does have style.

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# The Classic Ride

money considering the average annual income of Americans at the time was only \$2,950. The design included a sofa/bunk on each side, icebox, sink, an LP-gas stove, and touches like a built-in, stainless-steel bottle opener. The over-cab sleeping area was a later add-on, one which gives this Tour Wagon its unique appeal.

Another motorhome in Agnew's collection is a turquoise and silver 1964 Ford Condor. This Class A was one of the first luxury motorhomes available. Among its unique qualities is the Thermasan waste disposal system, which used the heat from engine exhaust to literally vaporize black water.

The Condor's asking price in the 1960s was about \$14,000.

"Anyone who had one had deep pockets," Agnew says, pointing out that Condors were primarily the property of Hollywood studio executives and entertainers.

Agnew stockpiles RVs and other



1964 Ford Condor

Photo: Johnny Agnew

antique vehicles on a 1920 fish farm he christened Funky Junk Farms, eventually compiling such a collection that the location is now used for photo shoots and is a venue for parties and other events.

"I'm kind of addicted to them," Johnny says.

He sees Funky Junk Farms as an eclectic combination of art gallery and museum, and it is clearly an all-encompassing passion for the California native. But Agnew admits there are some challenges to surrounding yourself with RVs more than

a half-century old. He points out that most motorhomes built prior to the 1960s were "one-offs," meaning they were conversions of modified trucks or buses, made one at a time, and often in such small numbers that finding information about them — not to mention parts — is a challenge. He is currently involved in marketing a television pilot about his restoration projects, appropriately titled "Junkyard Genius." What, I ask, will he do if the pilot sells?

"Well," he says with a laugh, "There's this 1927 Chevy house car sitting out in the desert ..."



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# The Classic Ride

## The Last of the One-of-a-Kinds

Like the Junkyard Genius, Jim Holcomb and Pete Fullerton know firsthand the difficulties of buying and owning a rare, vintage motorhome. Both men have mystery RVs from the 1960s, perhaps the last of the one-of-a-kind, non-production vehicles for which there is little or no history available.

"I even called the RV/MH Hall of Fame and Museum in Elkhart," says Fullerton of his 1967 Scandia. "They said they've heard of it, but they couldn't find any information."

Built on a Chevrolet chassis, the 26-foot motorhome looks much like production Class C's of the 1970s, but Pete only knows of one other Scandia in existence. That RV is a smaller version of the Fullertons', and it was built on 1965 Ford chassis, which supports Pete's theory that both were custom "one-off" motorhomes.

The same is likely true for Holcomb's 1963 Corvair Sani-Cruiser.

One of the early forerunners to the Class C, it features a fully self-contained custom camper permanently mounted to a Corvair Rampside pickup. It is the only one of its kind he has ever seen, and though it bore the

Sani-Cruiser nameplate, the Carsonville, Michigan, company that produced it has long since closed. Jim's research turned up photos of Class A motorhomes manufactured at the plant in the 1950s and early '60s, but



With a custom camper mounted to a Corvair Rampside pickup, the 1967 Scandia is a forerunner of the modern Class C.

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An extensive renovation, with an emphasis on bright-white woodwork and an open floorplan, updated the interior of this antique Scandia. Space-saving features include a combination sink/LP-gas stove, in-wall LP-gas heater and a toilet tucked away in a cabinet.

no evidence of another motorhome like his — all of which makes the restoration process a little trickier.

The Sani-Cruiser was in a state of disrepair when the Holcombs purchased it in 1995, and Jim “sat on it” for about 16 years, keeping it in storage until he found the time to take on such a large project. While

resources do exist for the Corvair chassis, the one-of-a-kind RV itself was all custom work. The restoration included a total gutting, from interior walls to exterior siding. Holcomb was so committed to taking the Sani-Cruiser to its 1963 condition that he had a special short production run done of siding that matched the

original. He was also able to salvage the unit’s unique space-saving features, including a combination sink/LP-gas stove/refrigerator, in-wall radiant LP-gas heater and a fully functional toilet tucked away in a cabinet. The project took five years to complete.

Like Holcomb’s Sani-Cruiser, the Scandia was also in rough shape when Fullerton, and wife Cindy, purchased it in 2011. In addition to mechanical improvements that included replacing the original 327 Chevrolet engine with a rebuilt 1971 472 Cadillac engine, the interior also needed major work. Water had gotten under the layers of old roof coat, and all of the interior paneling had to be replaced as part of Pete’s renovation. His original purchase, made

**“KNOW THAT IT’S GOING TO TAKE A LOT OF WORK — A LOT MORE THAN YOU THINK. BUT IN THE END, IT’S WORTH IT.”**

Photos: Pete Fullerton

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# The Classic Ride

for a trade of “about \$800 worth of labor” in exchange for the Class C turned into a six-year project — and he estimates the total cost at close to \$10,000.

“But it’s a nice space now, and it’s been Cindy-approved,” he jokes because initially his wife was not quite as taken with the Scandia as Pete was.

As for anyone else thinking about buying a “one-off” vintage RV, “Examine your bank account,” advises

Pete with a laugh.

“And know that it’s going to take a lot of work — a lot more than you think,” adds Holcomb. “But in the end, it’s worth it. The project is about more than renovating a motorhome — it’s about having a goal as a family, and

the rewards come in the time spent together.”

Sage advice from men who took on RVs built before the first issue of *MotorHome* ever hit the newsstands, and wise words for anyone looking for their own classic ride. **M**



The Sani-Cruiser, a one-of-a-kind converted Corvair Rampside, had to be totally stripped and rebuilt from the frame up.



Photos: Jim Holcomb

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## Blade Runner

I was tired of the premature deterioration of my motorhome's windshield wiper blades due to exposure to the weather and hot sun. To protect the blades, I cut a piece of ¾-inch pre-slit polyethylene pipe insulation a little longer than the wiper blade and covered the whole assembly with it. The pipe insulation is very flexible, and will contour itself to the shape of the windshield. It's also soft and thick enough to cushion the blade from the hard windshield, preserving it for a longer life as well as from the elements.

**James W. Goddette** | Vergennes, Vermont



## Classic Cranium Saver

Ever walk around your motorhome and accidentally bang your head on the corner of one of the slideouts? Me too. To save your head, slice a foam swim noodle on one side, slide it over the edge and *voila!* It may not stop you from bumping your head, but at least the jolt will be more cushioned.

**Robert Webster** | Moneta, Virginia

## It's a Shoe-in

I absolutely love shoes, and when I travel, I enjoy bringing along a variety of them. However, with space at a premium, I had a hard time organizing and storing my shoes. So, after first trying to reduce the number of shoes I took on my trip and then trying to store them in different places, I came up with an idea to use a plastic container (from Rubbermaid) that measures 11 inches long by 8 inches wide by 13 inches deep. Turned on its side, it works perfectly for my needs. To maximize the space, I pair the shoes heel to toe. Sometimes I bind them with a large rubber band. I am able to get six pairs of shoes in the tub. I bought another tub and bonded the two together, so now I can bring along 12 pairs of shoes. Of course, the type of shoe will determine exactly how many will fit.

**Bev Milligan** | Hooper, Nebraska



## Crack a Window!

Our motorhome has a large bathroom window, with only a darkening shade. When the shade is down, there is no natural light in the bathroom. To let in some light, we applied window film with a cracked glass design (can be purchased at home-improvement stores or online, in a variety of patterns) to the glass. It's important to follow the instructions that come with the film, but the entire process is easy. Use a thin, sharp knife (or razor blade) to make things go smoothly. We had some leftover film, so we put it on the lower part of the other bathroom window. Once the film is in place, it affords good privacy, and also allows light to come through. Even through extreme temperatures both hot and cold, it has stayed perfectly intact.

**Carolyn Ach** | Beavercreek, Ohio 



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Customer Rating **★★★★★**



• 1.3 GPM  
• Adjustable spray nozzle

**NOW \$199** ~~\$399~~

COMPARE TO BRIGGS & STRATTON \$179.93 **SAVE \$99**

MODEL: 20800 ITEM 63255/63254 shown

12247035

LIMIT 5 - Coupon valid through 10/12/18\*

**drillmaster** **SUPER COUPON**

**18 VOLT, 3/8" CORDLESS DRILL/DRIVER WITH KEYLESS CHUCK**

Customer Rating **★★★★★**



Includes one 18V NiCd battery and charger.

**NOW \$169** ~~\$199~~

COMPARE TO BLACK & DECKER \$59.99 **SAVE 71%**

MODEL: DC1801 ITEM 69651/62868 62873/68239 shown

12247684

LIMIT 7 - Coupon valid through 10/12/18\*

**GENTECH** **SUPER COUPON**

**2/10/50 AMP, 12 VOLT BATTERY CHARGER/ENGINE STARTER**

Customer Rating **★★★★★**



**NOW \$299** ~~\$499~~

COMPARE TO SCHUMACHER ELECTRIC \$69.99 **SAVE 57%**

MODEL: SE1250 ITEM 60581 60653 shown

12249729

LIMIT 3 - Coupon valid through 10/12/18\*

**THUNDERBOLT** **SUPER COUPON**

**100 WATT SOLAR PANEL KIT**

Customer Rating **★★★★★**



**2X MORE POWER**

**NOW \$149** ~~\$199~~

COMPARE TO SUNFORCE \$325.92 **SAVE \$175**

MODEL: S0180 ITEM 64335/63585 shown

12264146

LIMIT 4 - Coupon valid through 10/12/18\*

**SUPER COUPON**

**7 FT. 4" x 9 FT. 6" ALL PURPOSE/WEATHER RESISTANT TARP**

Customer Rating **★★★★★**



**NOW \$299** ~~\$499~~

COMPARE TO BLUE HAWK \$8.58 **SAVE 65%**

MODEL: 98BX10-Y ITEM 69249/69115/69137/69129/69121/877 shown

12266384

LIMIT 9 - Coupon valid through 10/12/18\*

**JUPITER** **SUPER COUPON**

**2000 WATT CONTINUOUS/4000 WATT PEAK POWER INVERTER**

Customer Rating **★★★★★**



**NOW \$129** ~~\$169~~

COMPARE TO STRONGWAY \$249.99 **SAVE \$120**

MODEL: S3071 ITEM 63426/63429 shown

12271229

LIMIT 5 - Coupon valid through 10/12/18\*

**PITTSBURGH** **SUPER COUPON**

**CLICK-TYPE TORQUE WRENCHES**

Customer Rating **★★★★★**



• Reversible Item 239 shown

**LIFETIME WARRANTY**

DRIVE ITEM

1/4" 2696/61277/63861  
3/8" 807/61276/63880  
1/2" 62431/239/63882

**NOW \$99** ~~\$199~~

COMPARE TO HUSKY \$84.97 **SAVE 88%**

MODEL: H20TWA ITEM 63426/63429 shown

12277330

LIMIT 5 - Coupon valid through 10/12/18\*

**SUPER COUPON**

**LED WORKLIGHTS**

A. 27 LED  
ITEM 69567/60566/63601 63878/63991/64005/67227 shown

B. 39 LED EMERGENCY  
ITEM 62417/62574/63722 63879/64115/62158 shown



**NOW \$299** ~~\$399~~

COMPARE TO UTILITECH \$4.97 **SAVE 39%**

MODEL: FT-L0W1424-1 ITEM 62417/62574/63722 63879/64115/62158 shown

12277596

LIMIT 7 - Coupon valid through 10/12/18\*

**PORTLAND** **SUPER COUPON**

**7 AMP ELECTRIC POLE SAW**

Customer Rating **★★★★★**



**NOW \$599** ~~\$799~~

COMPARE TO WORX \$99.98 **SAVE \$39**

MODEL: W309 ITEM 68862/63190/62896 shown

12287082

LIMIT 4 - Coupon valid through 10/12/18\*

**SUPER COUPON**

**AMMO BOX**

Customer Rating **★★★★★**



**NOW \$399** ~~\$699~~

COMPARE TO RANGEMAXX \$99 **SAVE 60%**

MODEL: 1312-92 ITEM 63135 61451 shown

12308204

LIMIT 8 - Coupon valid through 10/12/18\*

**HaulMaster** **SUPER COUPON**

**4 PIECE, 1" x 15 FT. RATCHETING TIE DOWNS**

Customer Rating **★★★★★**



• 400 lb. working load

**NOW \$699** ~~\$1199~~

COMPARE TO ATE TOOLS \$40.88 **SAVE 82%**

MODEL: S3079 ITEM 63057/63056/63094 90984/63150/61524 shown

12309770

LIMIT 5 - Coupon valid through 10/12/18\*



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**SCISSOR**  
SUPER COUPON

### 3500 WATT SUPER QUIET INVERTER GENERATOR



3500	MAX. STARTING WATTS	3000
3000	RUNNING WATTS	2800
100 LBS.	WEIGHT	131 LBS.
2.6 GAL	TANK SIZE	3.4 GAL
4	OUTLETS	4
YES	OVERLOAD PROTECTION	YES
212 cc	ENGINE SIZE	196 cc
YES	LOW OIL ALERT	YES
YES	PARALLEL CAPABLE	YES
YES	POWER SAVER	YES



**NOW**  
**\$699<sup>99</sup>**

**\$749<sup>99</sup> PRICE \$1,999**

**PREDATOR 3500**  
Customer Rating  
★★★★★ ITEM 63584



LIMIT 4 - Coupon valid through 10/12/18\*

**HONDA EU3000iS1A**  
\*HONDA EU3000iS1A stated specs

**SCISSOR**  
SUPER COUPON

### HIGH WATT PORTABLE GAS GENERATOR



8-13 HRS	RUN-TIME**	8-13 HRS
8750	MAX. STARTING WATTS	6500
7000	RUNNING WATTS	5500
420 cc	ENGINE SIZE	389 cc
YES	ELECTRIC START	YES
YES	★ BEST BUY WINNER★ 3 YEARS IN A ROW***	NO

**NOW**  
**\$529<sup>99</sup>**

**\$599<sup>99</sup> PRICE \$2,699**

**PREDATOR 8750**  
Customer Rating  
★★★★★  
Wheel kit and battery sold separately.  
ITEM 63086/68530/63085 shown  
ITEM 63087/63088/68525  
CALIFORNIA ONLY



LIMIT 5 - Coupon valid through 10/12/18\*



**HONDA EM6500SXK2AT**  
\*HONDA EM6500SXK2AT stated specs  
\*\*Based on actual product comparison testing  
\*\*\*As rated by leading consumer product testing publication

**PREDATOR**

**SCISSOR** SUPER COUPON

Customer Rating  
★★★★★



#### 2000 WATT SUPER QUIET INVERTER GENERATOR

- 4.7 hours run-time
- 79.7cc air-cooled OHV gas engine
- Recoil start
- Low oil indicator

**NOW**  
**\$449<sup>99</sup>**

**\$499<sup>99</sup> SAVE \$549**

COMPARE TO **\$999**  
HONDA MODEL: EU2000i

ITEM 62523



LIMIT 5 - Coupon valid through 10/12/18\*

**PREDATOR**

**SCISSOR** SUPER COUPON

Customer Rating  
★★★★★



**SUPER QUIET**

#### 4000 MAX. STARTING/3200 RUNNING WATTS 6.5 HP (212 CC) GAS GENERATOR

- 10 hours run-time @ 50% capacity
- Low oil indicator / low oil shutdown

**NOW**  
**\$289<sup>99</sup>**

**\$339<sup>99</sup> SAVE \$1,709**

COMPARE TO **\$1,999**  
HONDA MODEL: EM4000SX

Wheel kit sold separately.

ITEM 69729/63080/63079 shown  
ITEM 63090/63089  
CALIFORNIA ONLY



LIMIT 4 - Coupon valid through 10/12/18\*

**HaulMaster**

**SCISSOR** SUPER COUPON

Customer Rating  
★★★★★

#### STEP STOOL/WORKING PLATFORM

- 350 lb. capacity



**NOW**  
**\$199**

**\$299<sup>99</sup> SAVE 65%**

COMPARE TO **\$5755**  
GPL MODEL: H-21

ITEM 62515/66911 shown



LIMIT 5 - Coupon valid through 10/12/18\*

**SCISSOR** SUPER COUPON

#### SOLAR ROPE LIGHT

- Great outdoor accent lighting
- Super bright light



**NOW**  
**\$899**

**SAVE 70%**

COMPARE TO **\$2997**  
HAMPTON BAY MODEL: 82056-055SR

ITEM 62533/63941  
68353 shown



LIMIT 8 - Coupon valid through 10/12/18\*

**CHICAGO** ELECTRIC POWER TOOLS

**SCISSOR** SUPER COUPON

Customer Rating  
★★★★★

#### 12" SLIDING COMPOUND DOUBLE-BEVEL MITER SAW

- Laser guide



**NOW**  
**\$1299**

**\$194<sup>99</sup> SAVE \$169**

COMPARE TO **\$299**  
KOBALT MODEL: SMI05SLM

ITEM 61969/61970/69684 shown



LIMIT 5 - Coupon valid through 10/12/18\*

**HaulMaster**

**SCISSOR** SUPER COUPON

Customer Rating  
★★★★★

#### 72" x 80" MOVING BLANKET



Customer Rating  
★★★★★

**NOW**  
**\$599**

**COMPARE TO \$1999**  
BLUE HAWK MODEL: 77280

**SAVE 70%**

ITEM 69505/62418/66537 shown



LIMIT 8 - Coupon valid through 10/12/18\*

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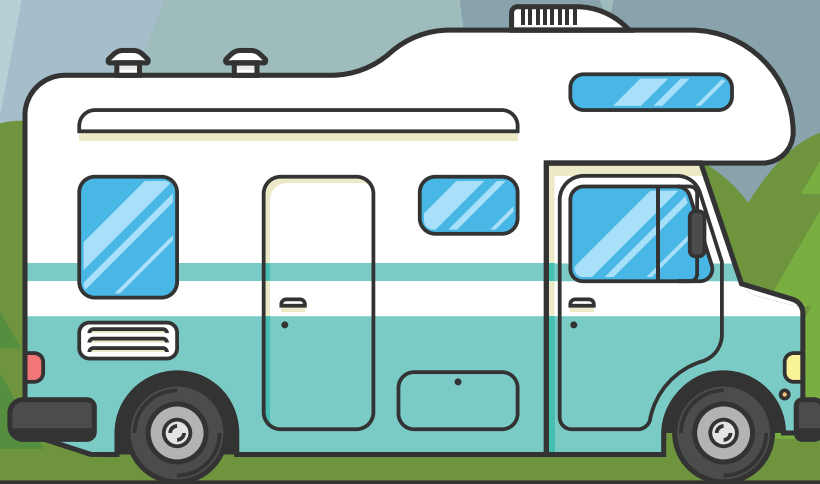


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on loan amounts of \$50k+

## 5.69%

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## 5.89%

on loan amounts of \$15k to \$24,999

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### CALL

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### VISIT

**GoodSamRVLoans.com/478**

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\*\*Minimum FICO Score of 740.

†Processing fee of \$399 waived for refinance applications submitted by July 31, 2018. Official fees such as state title, state registration, FL doc stamp fee and/or UCC filing fees will apply.

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By Ken Freund

## Towing a Cadillac

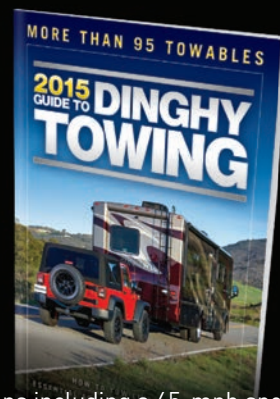
**Q** This is in regard to your 2018 Guide to Dinghy Towing. We recently purchased a 2017 Jayco Seneca motorhome and are wondering if you have any information on the use of a 2015 Cadillac SRX4 as a dinghy vehicle. This car is an AWD with automatic transmission and a button in the console to push in so that the transmission can be taken out of park to neutral so it can be towed.

**Jim and Bev Earll | Mokelumne Hill, California**

**A** Past dinghy guides are available for free at [www.motorhome.com/download-dinghy-guides](http://www.motorhome.com/download-dinghy-guides). The 2015 SRX is flat towable; I checked with Blue Ox and

Roadmaster, and they both offer the equipment needed to tow your car.

Each has a baseplate-finder section on their respective websites; those will outline what you need. Refer to your car's owner's manual, which lists recommendations including a 65-mph speed limit, starting the engine during rest breaks and proper shifting techniques. Keep in mind that you should also use an auxiliary braking device.



### ABS Light On

**Q** We bought a pre-owned 2007 Holiday Rambler Neptune. It is a great motorhome; however, ever since we drove it off the lot the ABS light has been on. After talking to the owner of the lot, we discovered the problem with the light had been ongoing before we even bought it. I asked the owner of the dealership and he said it's not a problem and would only be of concern if we were driving on icy roads. However, we live in Washington state, where there is lots of rain. We are taking it back to adjust the air bags because the coach is not sitting level, so I'm wondering how important it is to require them to fix the issue with the ABS indicator light.

**Jacque Pasa | Via email**

**A** The anti-lock braking system (ABS) is an important safety system, which takes over whenever skidding is detected and pulses the brakes to allow the driver to retain control. This can be on wet roads or dry, any time the coach needs to stop fast — not just on ice and snow. Your dealer is apparently

trying to dodge responsibility because of the potential cost involved. Some parts are cheap, others very costly. I strongly suggest you have the ABS diagnosed with the correct electronic tester and repaired as soon as possible.

### How to Determine Towing Capacity

**Q** I am shopping for a motorhome and I have a concern about calculating the weight of a towed vehicle that is within the weight range of the coach. Every dealer is quick to point out the weight the hitch will accommodate. However, just because there is a 10,000-pound-rated hitch on a Class A motorhome, that doesn't necessarily allow it to tow a 10,000-pound vehicle. I have searched several sites on how to calculate what a Class A will safely tow, but they all use various acronyms for the calculation and there seems to be little agreement on the correct way, or which acronyms to use to determine the weight any Class A can tow. It may be a good time to revisit the best way to calculate the maximum weight a Class A can safely

tow when purchasing a coach.

**Jerry Straw | Round Lake Beach, Illinois**

**A** Very few motorhomes, other than large bus-type coaches, have a 10,000-pound towing capacity. Unfortunately, there is a lot of misinformation spread by dealers who should be knowledgeable about their products. Never use the hitch rating as the tow rating, as this could lead to serious overloading. Many motorhome manufacturers provide maximum tow ratings for their coaches; these are often posted with the specifications on their websites, and they are just a guideline. To determine a towing weight, you'll need the gross vehicle weight rating (GVWR), which is the maximum amount the loaded coach should weigh, and the gross combination weight rating (GCWR), which is the maximum amount the chassis manufacturer recommends for a combination of the motorhome and trailer or dinghy vehicle (including necessary hardware). The difference between these two numbers will give you a starting point. From here, it's important to weigh your coach, loaded for a typical trip, **(continued on page 104)**

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(continued from page 99)

with passengers, and subtract that number from the GCWR; that will give you the accurate tow rating.

## Temporary Brake Loss

**Q** I have a 2002 Winnebago Brave 32V on a Ford F-53 chassis. I was in heavy bumper-to-bumper traffic when the brake pedal sank to the floor. Then both the ABS and brake warning lights came on. After a cool down and a few teaspoons of brake fluid in the master cylinder (it overflowed with just an ounce or two in each reservoir chamber), the pedal was fine and has stayed that way. However, the brake light and ABS lights remain on. I took the motorhome to the local Ford dealer, who read the codes (no fault found) and then reset the ABS. The brake light was still on, and 10 miles later the ABS light came back on. I'm a skilled mechanic and want to know how to proceed with solving this. The rig only has 50,000 miles on it, so I think the pads are fine. There are multiple replacement sensors according to sites on the Internet (center differential, left rear wheel, right rear wheel, right front, left front). How do I determine which one is faulty? Note — when the brakes were hot, only the rears were really throwing off heat and odor.

**Jack Duich | Via email**

**A** I think the brake fluid got so hot it boiled, and this caused expansion and overflow out the reservoir cap vents. This is a serious situation and needs to be addressed before the motorhome is returned to service. Very often this occurs when old brake fluid that has absorbed moisture from the atmosphere through the cap vents heats up. The fluid and system should be flushed approximately every two years, depending on dampness of climate. If the rear brakes overheated, even with only 50,000 miles of service, they must be inspected. The calipers should be carefully inspected to determine if any pistons are sticking on and not fully releasing. This could cause the overheating, and the pads and rotors may be damaged from



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the excessive heat. The regular brake warning may be triggered by the shuttle between front and rear systems, but should be diagnosed, according to the Ford shop manual. You really need a code reader to determine what's wrong with the ABS; perhaps you should take it to a shop that's more experienced. The dealer should not have released your motorhome with serious brake problems.

**'Chirping' Sound — Tip**

I read the question in the May issue about a chirping sound in a Ford V-10 Minnie Winnie 31C. In my opinion, the sound is probably coming from the idler pulley on the serpentine belt. After sitting for a long period of time, the bushing will start to deteriorate and may need to be replaced. As a rule of thumb, when you replace the

serpentine belt, replace the idler pulley at the same time.

**Charles Allen | Lansing, Michigan**

We had several readers write in mentioning belt idlers as a cause, which is a good possibility. What threw me off was the description of the sound. All the idlers I've heard with bad bearings (not bushings) have produced what I consider to be a squealing sound. I think of chirping as more of an intermittent on-and-off high-frequency sound. In any case, the sound changes directly with engine rpm, not road speed, and since it occurs while idling, it can be checked and pinpointed easily.

**'Chirping' Sound — Comment**

Regarding the letter in the May issue, I found that on our Class C on a Sprinter chassis, the valve stem extensions (necessary because of the tire-pressure monitors) protruding through the small hubcap openings were rubbing on the edge of the hubcap opening, causing a chirping sound. I only discovered this by accident when I took the hubcaps off to clean brake dust off the wheels. I have since slipped a piece of vinyl tubing over the valve stems. No more chirping sound.

**Larry Weyand | Yakima, Washington**

Thanks for sharing your experience Larry. We have had several comments on this subject, but yours is the only one regarding hubcaps. If the sound only occurs when you are moving and continues if you shut the engine off and coast, it's in the chassis. Try driving slowly past an assistant on the side of the road, who may be able to pinpoint which area the sound is coming from.

**Dinghy Disconnect — Solution**

This is in reference to the "Dinghy Disconnect" letter in the May issue. I have a Dodge Dakota that has the same requirement of having to disconnect the battery after configuring for towing. After resetting the clock and radio for a year after



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## COACH & POWERTRAIN

(continued from page 106)

each tow event and losing the radio settings, seat adjustments and other settings that depend on continuous battery power, I installed a TOAD-CHARGE unit. The wiring is integrated into the seven-way receptacle at the motorhome end and also at the dinghy end. When the intervening power cable is installed for towing, the dinghy's battery is automatically charged by the motorhome's alternator. There is no need to disconnect or reconnect anything, and the dinghy and the motorhome electrical circuits are protected by the circuit breakers included as part of the installation kit in the tow vehicle and the dinghy. While a battery disconnect switch will do the job, this is much more convenient, and for the cost of the kit and an hour's labor, it removes the requirement to remember to disconnect the battery on departure and reprogramming the on-board devices in the dinghy on arrival. It also eliminates the occasional annoyance of contact between one's shins and the tow bar.

**Don Smith | Edmonton, Alberta, Canada**

Thanks, Don. I also recommend using some kind of system to keep the dinghy battery charged, especially when auxiliary braking devices are drawing current. Deep discharging of batteries shortens their life substantially. The product you mention is sold by LSL Products, 877-257-4655, [www.lslproducts.net/ToadChargePage.html](http://www.lslproducts.net/ToadChargePage.html).

### Parking Brake Problems — Comments

In reference to the J71 AutoPark Brake "Parking Brake Problems" letter in the April issue, I, too, have experienced a problem with the braking system on my 1997 Itasca SunCruiser. After several unsuccessful attempts to find someone who knew about this problem and could fix it, I found a large truck sales and repair operation in Hyattsville, Maryland (K. Neal Truck and Bus Center), which also has a maintenance contract for school buses. This is important because the mechanic who explained the entire system to me, and

eventually fixed it, indicated that the reason they know about this system is that it is (or was) used on many school buses. I would like to share the following points:

Few mechanics understand this system. On my motorhome's system, there are two main switches; one controls the error light on the dash, and the other is linked directly to the hydraulic brake system (which is on the driveshaft) using something similar to an old car brake system that uses brake shoes. Both illuminate the same warning light, so you don't know exactly where the problem is when the light goes on.

In my case, the error light was linked to the hydraulic brake switch in the system. Placing the gearshift in park did not activate the brake — I heard the usual whining noise, but the brake never moved, and the brake light on the dash stayed lit. Once fixed, the light went out, as it should. (The hydraulic brake pump will whine for a couple of seconds when you put it into park and when you take it out.)

If the auto park brake system is working properly, once applied, you won't feel any tension on the foot pedal, which passes for an emergency brake if you depress it. That's because the brake has already been set in the park position. Depressing this pedal will set the brake, but only if the transmission is not in park (i.e., when the transmission is in neutral). Knowing this helped me drive my motorhome home because I was able to test the brake to ensure that the malfunction had not caused the brake to lock up in the park position. To test this, I held the normal foot brake down and put the transmission into neutral and depressed the emergency foot brake. I felt tension, which indicated the driveshaft brake or auto brake was not engaging the driveshaft. Also, the motorhome coasted freely down an incline. Often the brake will lock up even while you are driving, bringing the motorhome to a sudden halt, which could be dangerous.

If the emergency brake pedal is properly adjusted, and you depress it

while driving down the road, you will feel tension and the brake will act like a normal emergency brake. This is important in case the normal brakes give out. I hope this information will help those who have a motorhome with this type of auto park brake system.

**Ted Kaminski | Cheverly, Maryland**

Thanks for writing, Ted. There are a lot of motorhomes still on the road with this problematic system, and many owners and mechanics don't fully understand it, so I'm sharing your letter to help educate our readers. **M**

### Have a Tech Question?

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# I've Been Everywhere

Think you're well-traveled? Allow us to present a musical checklist, complete with at least a few places we'd wager you haven't visited

By Alan Rider

**M**agazines are a lot like motorhome travel: they both exist in the present moment but can only be fully appreciated when you stop to look back. Which is, not coincidentally, what I've been doing in preparation for this 50th anniversary issue — looking back at all the places *MotorHome* has been.

In this column alone, I've taken you to a hole-in-the-wall Cajun bar in Mamou, Louisiana, and to the rim of the Grand Canyon under a night sky so filled with stars they cast their own shadows. Together we've nosed our way from one end of New York City to the other and seen eye-to-eye with the gentle manatees of Crystal River, Florida, with a notable detour through the Middle of Nowhere (if you'll recall, it's just west of Johnstown, Nebraska).

All this reminiscing got me to thinking about one of my favorite songs, written by Geoff Mack and made famous by legendary country singer Hank Snow. The title of which — "I've Been Everywhere" — sort of says it all.

Now, I can't personally claim to have been everywhere. But I have been around and, based on my experiences over the years, it seems to me that the lyrics to this tune (by all means, Google them) are something to which most any veteran RV traveler should be able to relate. Especially the chorus' final line: "Of travel, I've had my share, man; I've been everywhere."

My real point here, however, is this: when you stop to think about it, the words of this rousing refrain succinctly sum up one of the best things about motorhomes in general, and *MotorHome* in particular. They're both built to take us somewhere we've never been before.

While the generations of writers

and editors who have brought you these tales of adventure throughout this publication's illustrious past may not literally have been everywhere, I'd wager that — collectively, at least — they've come pretty darn close.

In fact, a quick perusal of some of *MotorHome's* back issues ([www.motorhome.com/article-indexes](http://www.motorhome.com/article-indexes)) reveals that the magazine has taken you from one end of the U.S. (and Canada) to the other, with a handful of foreign countries thrown in for good measure. In each case, teasing you

with just enough fascinating details to make you want to go there.

Which is what the song is really all about as well, with verses that admittedly amount to a little travel braggadocio. A recitation you can't help but listen closely to in order to see how many of the nearly 100 places mentioned you've actually been to. Sort of like a rhythmic checklist of your travels.

Thinking about all this, I couldn't help but look back over my own motorhome adventures. In the rhythm of the song, I've been to Peach Springs, Hot Springs, Moose Jaw, Bella Coola; Shamrock, Little Rock, Bagdad, Homosassa; Nags Head, Marfa, Pocatello, Winnemucca; Fairbanks, Queen Creek, Cripple Creek, Coachella. That's only a partial list, of course, but you get the idea.

Ultimately, though, I encourage you to write your own lyrics and share them with the rest of us. Because where I've been is a lot less interesting to me than where you've traveled. So drop us a line ([letters@motorhomemagazine.com](mailto:letters@motorhomemagazine.com)) and tell us about your most memorable motorhome trip (or where you've always wanted to go). Then get out there and explore some of the unforgettable places you'll find still waiting for you along The Road Ahead. **M**

**“ I encourage you to write your own lyrics and share them with the rest of us. ”**



## Map Quest

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