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MotorHome

Travel, Tech, Lifestyle – For the RV Enthusiast

April 2016

14 TOP BUG CLEANERS
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Fin Ice Buildup
Pg. 60



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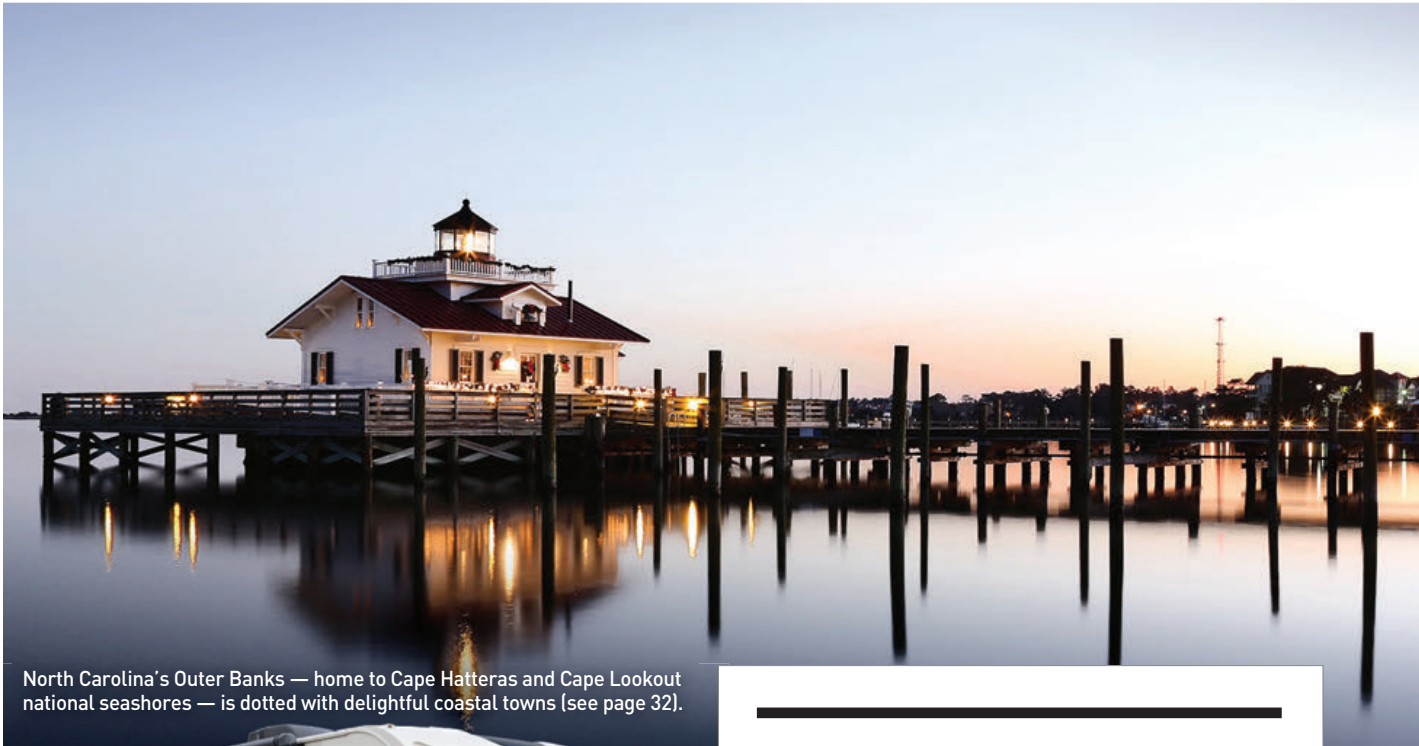
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North Carolina's Outer Banks — home to Cape Hatteras and Cape Lookout national seashores — is dotted with delightful coastal towns (see page 32).



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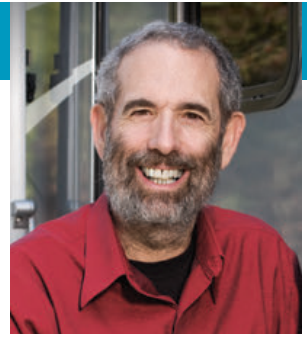
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ON THE COVER

The laid-back town of Cedar Key, which sits on Florida's upper Gulf Coast, is famous for its spectacular sunsets. Allegro Breeze photo courtesy Tiffin Motorhomes (see test on page 40).





By Bob Livingston

Bug Busters

I have a love-hate relationship with bugs. As an avid fly fisherman, entomology is intriguing; as an RV enthusiast, bugs can be infuriating. Although there's no way to avoid bugs being splattered all over the windshield and front end of a motorhome without keeping it parked all the time, I've learned to cope with my obsession for cleanliness. Don Smith really got my attention when he offered to test a number of products formulated to remove bugs. I have a garage full of cleaners designed to remove bugs and clearly, most do not work well. Smith's labor-intensive project to find out what works and what doesn't takes the legwork out of finding the right product to remove bugs. His solutions to this nagging problem start on page 46.

I've often thought that California's San Joaquin Valley was the buggiest place in America. I've traveled through this area countless times and find myself cringing every time another bug sacrifices itself on my windshield. As I complain, my wife, Lynne, only shakes her head and tells me to "get over it." Summer is the worst season to travel through California's central valleys, so I make it a point not to drive at dusk when the bugs are most plentiful.

My consolation is learning that the San Joaquin Valley is not the buggiest place in America. Not sure which state gets the prize, but the bugs in the South and Midwest can be ferocious — and really big — in summer. Since there is no way to win this battle, I

employ my own system for removing bugs when I get to an RV park. By the time we reach our destination, it's usually too warm and sunny to clean the bugs off the windshield and the front cap, air-conditioner shroud(s) and satellite dish without making a mess. I usually get up early the next morning and go through my bug-removal routine before the sun reaches the motorhome. It may seem silly to clean off the bugs if we're going right back on the road, but they really come off easier if they are not allowed to dry rock hard.

My secret weapon is the Love Bug

Eraser, a plain Jane-looking scrubbing pad that does an amazing job of removing bugs. If the bugs are fresh, all it takes is some water, but it works fantastic with a cleaner formulated to dissolve the mess, like those tested by Smith. The pad sticks handily to an extension-pole adapter that's lined with hook-and-loop material. Once the bugs are free, a microfiber towel takes care of the final cleanup. I really don't know how we survived before microfiber towels were invented. I can usually clean a well-splattered motorhome front end in around 30 minutes.

I also discovered that treating the front of a motorhome with Rejex takes a lot of the effort out of removing bugs. This stuff forms a protective barrier on the fiberglass and prevents bugs from sticking.

Although I freely admit my obsession with cleaning bugs, I know I'm not alone; I see many owners standing on ladders cleaning the front of their motorhomes in the morning or evening in RV parks.

It's part of the ritual, like fly-fishing. **M**

“ ... [I] find myself cringing every time another bug sacrifices itself on my windshield. ”

Contributors | April



Kristopher Bunker, the former editor of *Trailer Life* magazine, is an avid camper and has been RVing for more than a decade. He is currently a freelance writer living in the central Texas area.



Bill and Jenn Gehr, along with their two Boston bulldogs, are full-time RV adventurers who enjoy sharing their technical knowledge with fellow RV enthusiasts wherever they travel.



James Richardson is a photojournalist who has lived in west Tennessee most of his life. His interest in historical and scenic destinations has taken him to some of the most beautiful places in America.



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



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



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

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

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

Printed in the United States.

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How often have you been stuck behind another RVer who didn't use turnouts on a winding road? Do you think that type of driving is perfectly acceptable, hazardous or simply annoying?

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

What's the Hurry?

After reading Ed Pavone's letter, I had to comment. I agree that awareness and courtesy are, indeed, important. However, I must pass on some appropriate advice: "If you're in that big of a hurry, you should have left earlier!" When it comes to traveling two-lane roads, you pay your money and you take your chances. 'Nuff said.

David Goldenberg | Via email

The Golden Rule

It's definitely hazardous! I have heard fellow RVers say, "I am going the speed limit. No way am I going to pull over." We all have, for some reason, been in a big hurry to get someplace. Many times I have seen vehicles passing RVs when it is dangerous to do so. While

they are technically in the wrong, I feel that when I see impatient drivers to my rear, it is my "responsibility" to do what I can to lessen the danger to innocent drivers. The least I can do is use the pullouts even if it adds another few minutes to my trip. Do unto others as you would have done to you.

Terry Fulton | Entiat, Washington

School Bus Syndrome

I call it the school bus syndrome. They just got to pass ya. I don't have a problem pulling over to let traffic by if it is safe and the pullouts can accommodate a motorhome. However, a lot of times, the drop-off from the pavement onto the rutted gravel pullout isn't safe for my vehicle to pull off. If I can't find a pullout and am

not able to do the posted limit, I will pull over just as far as I can to let the impatient be on their way.

Ken Zimmerman | Via email

Take it Easy

I have traveled the Western U.S. and Canada in Class A's for many years. I always watch for vehicles behind me, as I prefer the backroads when possible. In Oregon, the law states that when you have five vehicles behind you, you are required to pull over at the first opportunity to let them pass. It might be a good item for *MotorHome* to research the state laws and put in a future issue.

I watch for vehicles following me and start looking for a place to pull over when I see two vehicles behind

Featured Letter

Don't Dawdle

Regarding Ed Pavone's problem with cars stacking up behind slow motorhomes on Oregon highways ("Mind Your Road Manners," January), under ORS 811.425, it is a class B moving violation for any slow-moving vehicle to refuse to pull off a two-lane highway to let legally overtaking vehicles pass. Washington's RCW 46.61.425 is similar. Oregon highway signs post the law, but the dangerous, selfish, arrogant, often illegal problem persists for at least three reasons:

1. Enforcement is lax.
2. Longtime Pacific Northwest drivers are notoriously and literally afraid of the left lane on two-lane highways. I have often passed 10, 20, even 50 drivers stacked up behind slow vehicles in one legal, polite and safe pass ... in my Winnebago.
3. Most drivers are ignorant of the safety-driven suspension of the posted speed limit when passing on Washington state two-lane highways. Don't dawdle; get out there, git 'er done quickly and safely, and get back in.

Mike Fick | Kennewick, Washington



me — sometimes by the time I find a safe location there might be many more vehicles. If it is a road that I know has few opportunities for pullouts, but does have some nice straight sections, I will move to the right and slow down to allow those behind to safely pass.

I would rather take an additional 10 minutes to get to my destination safely rather than possibly be involved in an accident that will spoil the day for many.
Jim Nice | Sandy, Oregon

State Law

In accordance with California law, if you drive slower than the speed limit and have five or more vehicles behind you, you must pull over and let them pass.
Rainer Soehnen | Merced, California

Using Turnouts When Towing

I drive a Class A and tow a Jeep behind me. You want to know why I don't pull over to a turnout to let people pass? First, not all turnouts are long enough to accommodate a motorhome with an attached Jeep. Second, exiting a turnout is almost always unsafe and sometimes seemingly impossible. Why? Because the same impatient people who give me hand gestures when they finally pass me are the same people who will never slow down to allow me to safely exit a turnout. A Class A motorhome with an attached Jeep going uphill goes 0 to 60 in about a day. Also, I do not need to apologize for legally driving on any public road.
Frank McEwan | Midland, Michigan

Share the Road

I have been driving a motorhome for several years and have encountered all sorts of people driving or towing various combinations of vehicles who could use a lesson or two in courteous driving. Not using turnouts on a winding road is just one of many inappropriate driving techniques people exhibit these days. Not only is it not acceptable and annoying, it can lead to hazardous situations.

Common road courtesy means if you are impeding traffic, use the turnouts — that is what they are for. If you are unable to maintain the speed

limit, use the turnout. If you are maintaining the speed limit and there is a line of three to five vehicles behind you, use the turnout. Are you in that big of a hurry that you cannot give up a couple minutes of your time to be courteous?
Jerry Vasser | Menifee, California

Pullouts and Passing Lanes

Since I live in a mountain community, I frequently encounter RVers who won't

use pullouts. Us locals call it the RV season. A trip to the nearest large city goes from being less than an hour to well over an hour, sometimes two during RV season. The closest wrecks I have witnessed happen when someone passes an RV on a double yellow, out of pure frustration.

But what is really maddening, is the RVer who maintains a pace between 5 to 20 MPH below the speed limit, never uses

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a pullout and then speeds up to 5 miles past [the speed limit] as soon as there is a passing lane. It is as though the RVer enjoys having five, 10, 15 people stuck behind him. I often wonder if they know how their rearview mirrors work.

When I drive my RV, I use a pullout even if I have only one car behind me. Also, during passing lanes, I slow down until everyone has passed me. I've seen some RVers nearly sideswipe

someone rather than slow down when the lanes are narrowing to two.

Rick Coleman | Weaverville, California

A Motorhome is Not a Race Car

I have been driving a 36-foot Class A for nine years and have visited every state. I drive the speed limit whenever safely possible. There is no such thing as a courteous driver toward a motorhome in my opinion. They will

pass you even though you are going the speed limit and then turn left or right immediately after they pass. Professional truckers call us geriatric gypsies. They do not acknowledge your courteous flashing of your headlights after they pass so they can safely return to your lane. I always use turnouts when I see them and have enough warning of their existence to make a safe stop. Remember, a 36-foot Class A is NOT a race car!

Michael Cooper | Via email

Use Common Courtesy

Regarding an RVer who does not use turnouts; it is hazardous, but let's broaden the topic. Many RVers drive 55/60 MPH on any road (to save fuel) immaterial of the speed limit. If a line of traffic builds up behind one, then common courtesy and safety says pull over and let the traffic file by. Enjoy the scenery, not the hand signals given by those passing.

Carl Wilkins | Via email

Watch for Dirt Shoulders

If I see someone behind me, I use only paved turnouts because I have hit some pretty ugly potholes in dirt shoulders. We often get a five-finger wave (opposite of otherwise) and the occasional beep-beep, which feels good. Not traveling all that fast kinda cancels that opportunity to catch up to another RV, but I would sure use my air horn if they passed up a turnout without good cause.

Judy and Dan Fregin | Chico, California

Go With the Flow

I live in the Rocky Mountain region and encounter few RV drivers who are not very courteous. The real problem appears to be drivers who are in a hurry and want to exceed the posted speed limits.

The states bear some of the responsibility for the problem by posting speed limits on designated scenic highways that are impossible for most RV vehicles to safely do, yet this is where many of us travel. Add those yellow signs suggesting a curve speed of 10-20 MPH below the max posted

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speed limit, which sometimes occur at least every half-mile, and you have aggravated drivers behind you. Why not just reduce the max posted speed?

There is no requirement for an RV driver doing the posted and then recommended safe speed limit to pull over so others can exceed the speed limit, so long as once through the curve the RV attempts to accelerate if there is enough distance to do so.

Robert Schmidt | Fort Collins, Colorado

Follow the Signs

A narrow, two-lane road is a challenge for passing poky drivers. I drove such a road a year or so ago, and the highway department had installed "pullout ahead" signs a little before, to signify to drivers there is a place to pull over and let others go by. This worked very well. Sometimes I was on the slow side and at other times I wanted around a slow vehicle. But, this worked very well for everyone.

Bev Cameron | Erie, Colorado

Impeding Traffic

We are winter Texans from Minnesota. We travel in November and March in our 2008 Fleetwood Bounder and tow a 2007 Pontiac G6 convertible hardtop. In Texas, we drive on U.S. Highway 77 from Waco south to Riviera and take state Route 285 to U.S. Highway 281 at Falfurrias. One time, I was going about 60 MPH traveling west on SR 285 and got stopped by the local police. I pulled

over to the edge of the road. The officer got right in my face and said, "You see the speed sign up there? It says 70 MPH. You drive 70!" I said my safety was more important than the speed sign. There were six vehicles behind me (one was a semi). I have traveled in all of the states west of the Mississippi and I respect other drivers. If there is a pullover and I need to use it, I do so.

Duane Hunstad | Via email

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P.O. BOX

Correction

In the January Wheels & Gear section, it was incorrectly stated that the King Portable Antenna Mount could be used on a ladder. The mounting system is only designed for use on windows or the side of an RV. *MotorHome* regrets the error.

Best to Buy Local?

My wife and I love your magazine and have used it to plan the purchase of our first motorhome in a couple of years. We have a preferred brand already picked out, but we are not happy with the local dealer in terms of its customer service and ability to repair RVs properly. Our experience with them these past five years has been less than satisfactory.

My question is, are we better off buying the motorhome we want at a different dealer with a better service reputation, even if that dealer is three hours away? I know the local dealer won't want to service our coach if we don't purchase it there, but there may be times when we have to have it serviced locally. What have other owners done? Another option is to buy our second-choice brand at a dealer with a better reputation that's located one hour away.

Second, what do RVers do when they are traveling far from their home/dealer and have immediate service needs? Do dealers understand and help out in these cases, or do owners get stuck waiting for days?

Steve Hansen

Manchester, New Hampshire

Question of the Month

Is it more important to buy from a local RV dealer for the sake of convenience, or from one with a better reputation that you feel more comfortable with that is located farther away? And, what has your experience been when working with your RV dealer when a problem arises far from the dealer's location?

Send your comments to:

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Winding River Resort

This Good Sam RV Park, located right next to Rocky Mountain National Park, caters to horse lovers

By Mary Zalmanek

Colorado's Winding River Resort is a popular destination for RVers, with its close proximity to the charming town of Grand Lake, Rocky Mountain National Park and Arapahoe National Forest. The Colorado River runs through this Good Sam Park resort. For horse owners, it gets even better. Horse runs are available at RV sites (or at the barn for people renting cabins). The resort offers direct access to miles of designated trails in adjacent Rocky Mountain National Park. One- and two-hour trail rides on the resort's horses are scheduled eight times a day from Memorial Day through September 30.

On Sunday mornings, the resort offers a delicious chuck wagon breakfast (with a gluten-free option) and then guests can hitch their horses to the posts by the Colorado River for Cowboy Church. Kids and adults alike will delight in the animal farm with baby goats, sheep, piglets and bunnies. In addition, moose, elk, foxes, coyotes, bears and birds can be spotted at the resort and on nearby hiking trails. The resort also has a Carriage and Sleigh Museum with restored horse-drawn vehicles dating back to the late 1800s. For more information, call 970-627-3215 or go to www.windingriverresort.com.



From far left: Horse lovers will appreciate the direct access to miles of trails at Winding River. The resort's Carriage and Sleigh Museum has restored horse-drawn vehicles dating back to the late 1800s. Horse runs are available at the park's RV sites.

By Bobbie Hasselbring

Easy-Does-It Sugar Pie

Who doesn't love pie? I discovered sugar pie, a dessert that originally came from Belgium and northern France, on one of my RV journeys and it's become a favorite. Today, RVers in North America can find sugar pie in the Canadian province of Quebec (where it's sometimes called maple pie), and in the Midwest where it's known as sugar cream pie, finger pie, Hoosier sugar cream pie, Indiana cream pie or Indiana farm pie.

This single-crust pie contains a creamy filling made from flour, butter, salt, vanilla and cream. Honey, brown sugar or maple syrup (sometimes all of them) is added for sweetness. When baked, the custardlike filling creates a smooth caramel that's heavenly.

In Indiana, America's sugar pie central, the pie originated in the early 19th century with Quakers from North Carolina who settled in cities like New Castle, Portland, Richmond and Winchester.

This easy-to-make pie is also a favorite among the Amish, especially the Pennsylvania Dutch, who make a version called shoofly pie that is sweetened with molasses. (The name comes from flies being attracted to the molasses and having to be "shooed" away.) Shakers bake a version of the pie too.

If you're on the road, you can visit Wick's Pies, the largest maker of sugar pies in the U.S. (750,000 sugar cream pies a year), whose plant is located in Winchester, Indiana. It has a restaurant and factory outlet store at 100 Cherry St. You can also purchase



Photos: Bobbie Hasselbring

From top: Wick's is the undisputed Midwest king of sugar pies. The sugar pie recipe served at Fairmont Le Château Montebello in Montebello, Quebec, calls for honey and real maple syrup.

its distinctive sugar pie, recognizable for the nutmeg dusting, in 25 states or online at www.wickspies.com.

Or you can make your own. Here's my favorite sugar pie recipe from Fairmont Le Château Montebello in Quebec. This recipe makes two pies — one for home, one for on the road.

Got a favorite pie recipe or pie spot you'd like to share?

Email bobbie@realfoodtraveler.com with "pie" in the subject line.

MONTEBELLO'S SUGAR PIE (TARTE AU SUCRE)

This pie travels beautifully. Make one up before your trip and pop it in your motorhome's refrigerator or freezer. Serve cool, at room temperature, or slightly warm.

Recipe courtesy of Fairmont Le Château Montebello (www.fairmont.com).

Yield: 2 pies

- 1¼ pounds brown sugar
- 2 ounces cake flour (Monarch or other brand)
- 6 large eggs
- 8 ounces brown sugar
- 3 ounces honey
- 3 ounces maple syrup
- 2¼ cups cream (35 percent fat)
- 3 ounces milk
- 3½ ounces butter, unsalted, melted

▶ In a bowl, mix the first quantity of brown sugar, cake flour and the eggs. Whisk until smooth and set aside.

In a saucepan, mix the second brown sugar, maple syrup, honey, cream and the milk. Place on the stovetop; using a wooden spatula, stir and bring to a simmer. Pour the first mixture into the saucepan, mix, and simmer for about 10 to 15 minutes. Then add the melted butter, mix, and remove from heat. Pour into a bowl and let it cool.

Refrigerate overnight.

Preheat oven at 325 F.

Pour mixture into two unbaked 9-inch pie shells. Bake for about 1 hour, 15 minutes. Cool to room temperature and refrigerate before serving.



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Sterling Capacity

Roadmaster has upped the capacity of its top-selling Sterling All-Terrain tow bar to 8,000 pounds. The rating increase from the previous 6,000 pounds means the bar can now accommodate many of the light trucks and SUVs on the road (given manufacturer approval). The Sterling is constructed of 6061 military-grade aluminum with solid stainless-steel inner arms, and comes complete with safety cables and a six-wire power cord. Both the cables and the cord are routed through a center channel for added safety and convenience, and a clean, uncluttered appearance. Sterling tow bars feature patented Freedom Latch nonbinding technology, a convenient storage latch and built-in channel guides. And the fact that the bars weigh 35 pounds makes them easy to lift, maintain and store. MSRP: \$1,068

Roadmaster Inc., 360-896-0407, www.roadmasterinc.com



Dry Run

In the confines of your motorhome, space is truly at a premium. So, when it comes time to dry your towels, swimsuits and other damp garments, a product like the RV Drying Rack comes in handy. The RV Drying Rack is made by Amish craftsmen using real maple wood and temporarily mounts on the motorhome's ladder for easy setup and use, which represents a true step up from the usual method that generally results in a soggy mess in the motorhome's shower. A total of eight arms (each 25½ inches in length) are available to hang wet items, allowing them to drip dry outside. And, at a folded size of 6 by 6 by 32 inches, the compact unit is easy to store and manage. Available online only, with free shipping. MSRP: \$68.95

Wooden Clothes Rack, <https://rvdryingrack.com>

Quantum Physics



With hundreds of Class C's available, it can be difficult to stand out from the crowd. Thor Motor Coach hopes its newest Class C, the Quantum, is able to do so by packing a multitude of luxury features in a relatively compact package. Powered by the 6.8-liter Triton V-10 engine, the Quantum is available in four floorplans from 26 to 31 feet in length. A front cabover window allows natural light into the interior, while the high-gloss, glazed cabinetry matches up well with the standard residential-type vinyl flooring throughout. A Leatherette Dream Dinette Booth expands to accommodate overnight guests, while the 40-inch LED TV on a swivel in the cabover is sure to entertain. Available solid-surface countertops and sink covers in the galley pair nicely with the optional stainless-steel 30-inch microwave. The master is high-lighted by a Denver Mattress queen-size bed and an optional 32-inch LED TV. Owners can also select luxuries such as a whole-coach filtration system, a leatherette jackknife sofa and upgraded captain's chairs in the cockpit. Base MSRP: \$94,350-\$113,400.

Thor Motor Coach, 800-860-5658, www.thormotorcoach.com

Fantastic Voyage

When towing a dinghy (or a trailer, for that matter), few things offer such peace of mind as being able to keep an eye on the vehicle or cargo out back. With its new Voyager WVO541, ASA Electronics has developed features that allow pairing of up to four wireless cameras. The kit includes a 5.6-inch color LCD monitor with a 12-volt DC plug and a single, auto-pairing, CMOS digital, wireless observation camera. The monitor features integrated audio from the camera and a suction-cup monitor mount. Each Voyager camera features wide viewing angles, infrared LED illumination for low-light performance and a built-in microphone. Separate cameras can be purchased as stand-alone units to help eliminate blind spots and allow owners to monitor the status of the dinghy with the touch of a button. The cameras can connect to any 12-volt DC circuit in the vehicle. MSRP for the kit: \$629.99; stand-alone camera: \$336.73.

ASA Electronics, 877-305-0445, www.asaelectronics.com



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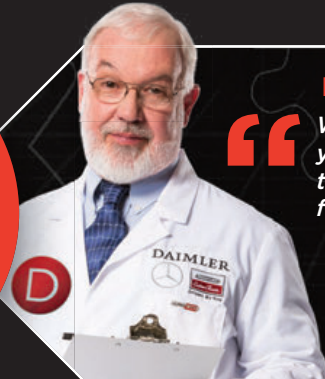


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ESCAPES CROSSROADS

Mount Airy, North Carolina

'Mayberry' Museum

The Mount Airy Museum of Regional History, located in Andy Griffith's hometown of Mount Airy, North Carolina, is housed in a restored mercantile store on Main Street. The museum collection has artifacts and photos depicting the area's history from the Saura Indians of the 1600s to the present day.

Among the museum's permanent exhibits are ones showing life in a typical pioneer village and a turn-of-the-century general store. Other exhibits include the area's music heritage and honors famous residents, like Donna Fargo, a country singer-songwriter of the 1970s and, of course, Andy Griffith. The basement of the museum tells the history of the Mount Airy Fire Department and has examples of firefighting equipment.

For more information, call 336-786-4478 or go to www.northcarolinamuseum.org — James Richardson



Photo: James Richardson

Calico, California

A Real Live Ghost Town

Just past Barstow, California, on the way to Las Vegas is the ghost town of Calico. Established in 1881, Calico quickly became a boomtown with a population of 1,200, supporting 22 saloons. More than 500 mines in the area produced \$86 million in silver, and \$45 million in borax. By the mid-1890s the value of silver had dropped by half, the miners packed up and left and by 1907, Calico had become a ghost town.

Walter Knott, founder of Knott's Berry Farm, acquired and restored the town in 1951, and then donated it to San Bernardino County in 1966. Today, Calico is an attraction and an

admission fee is charged. The site has more than 30 buildings — shops, a hotel, jail, some restaurants, and a saloon — that can be explored. Other activities include tours of the Maggie Mine, Calico Odessa Railroad and the Mystery Shack, as well as panning for gold and visiting the Lucy Lane Museum.

San Bernardino County Parks also operates an adjacent campground offering full or partial hookups and big-rig-friendly sites set among the foothills.

For more information, call 800-862-2542 or visit www.calicotown.com — Morey Edelman 



Photo: Morey Edelman

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Door County cherry trees bloom in May and are ready to pick in July. The annual harvest brings in 8-12 million pounds.

Spring Into Door County, Wisconsin

With its picturesque coastal towns, fish boils, cherry orchards and scenic beauty, this county is often called the ‘Cape Cod of the Midwest’

By James Richardson

There are few places that awaken as beautifully during springtime as Door County, Wisconsin. The cherry blossoms in the orchards, the wildflowers of the woodlands and the greening trees are nature’s welcoming ode to spring. They all seem to beckon visitors ... and many travelers heed the call.

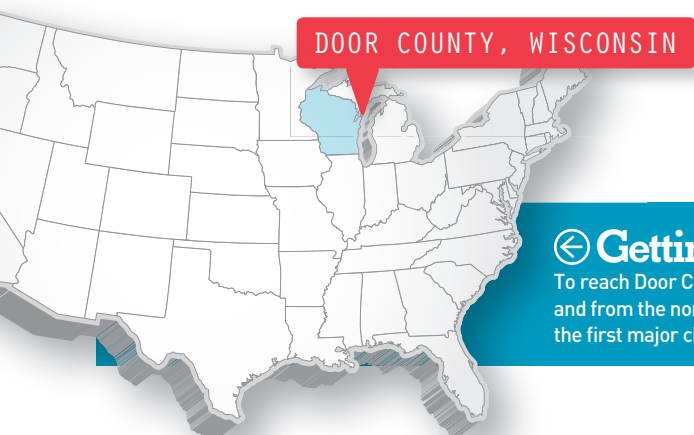
Door County is a superlative-enriched destination. It boasts more miles of shoreline and more state parks than any other county in America. The county, which is a 70-mile-long peninsula, extends into Lake Michigan from the Green Bay area. It has five state parks and 19 county parks, as well as a large number of local parks, nature preserves and state natural areas, giving visitors a variety of options

to explore its natural beauty. That totals to more than 23,000 acres of public and preserved land in Door County to explore and enjoy.

The county is among the top cherry-producing regions in the U.S., with more than 2,500 acres of cherry orchards. The cherry trees normally bloom in mid- to late May with cherries ready for picking in mid-July to early August. Hence, one of the reasons for the influx of visitors in the spring. It is a most beautiful time. But visitation continues through fall, when the landscape transforms into another colorful wonderland.

While traveling through the county soaking up local color, visitors have a host of options for outdoor recreation, absorbing history and culture, and for sampling the county’s cuisine at the many restaurants. The hiking, biking, golfing, fishing and boating keep visitors busy outside, while shopping allows time to peruse specialty shops. The numerous art galleries, museums, and lighthouses provide another side of the county. Door County has 11 historic lighthouses that dot the peninsula’s shores — one of the largest concentrations of lighthouses in any county in the U.S.

Door County is composed of a number of small towns with winter populations of only 200



← Getting There

To reach Door County from the south, take Interstate 41 or 43; from the west, use state Route 29; and from the north, take U.S. Highway 41. The county starts just north of the town of Algoma and the first major city is Sturgeon Bay.

to 300 that increases in the spring and summer to thousands. The towns are uniquely named; for instance, there's Fish Creek, Egg Harbor, Ephraim, Gills Rock, Baileys Harbor, Ellison and Sister bays. Each has its particular flavor and history. For example, the name of the town of Egg Harbor, established in 1855, is generally thought to have originated from an egg-throwing battle between two ship crews after a race to the harbor. Another version says the name came from an early pioneer who found a nest of bird's eggs along the shore. Take your pick.

Of the five state parks, Peninsula is Wisconsin's most popular camping destination. Peninsula's five campgrounds have more than 450 sites (157 sites with electric hookups) and accommodates large motorhomes. The park is also the county's largest state park, with 3,776 acres along the body of water called Green Bay, which is between the mainland of Wisconsin and Door Peninsula. There is an 18-hole golf course, hiking and bicycle trails, swimming and fishing at Peninsula State Park. Eagle Bluff Lighthouse is also located here and is open for tours.

Besides Peninsula, only Potawatomi State Park has camping spaces for motorhomes (123 sites, 40 with electric hookups). This 1,178-acre park has more than 2 miles of shoreline on Green Bay and is located in the southern part of the town of Sturgeon Bay. There are biking and hiking trails as well as boating and

fishing opportunities. All the county parks have an abundance of springtime wildflowers, including trilliums.

A hike in Ellison Bluff County Park in northern Door will reward the careful visitor with a peek at the rare pink lady's slipper wild orchid. This 174-acre park also offers one of the most breathtaking views of the 100-foot-tall limestone bluffs as well as the waters of Green Bay.

The remaining state parks — Whitefish Dunes, Newport and Rock Island — are either day-use or only allow primitive camping. Getting to Rock Island requires two ferry rides. First, you'll have to take the Washington Island ferry (motorhomes welcome), and from there, park the coach and take the passenger-only Karfi Ferry to Rock Island. The primitive 912-acre island is home to the oldest lighthouse in the state, Pottawatomie Lighthouse, which is open for tours Memorial Day through Columbus Day. Back on Washington Island, the Washington Island Campground offers 45 RV sites, most with water and electricity.

Beyond the island, there are several private campgrounds and RV parks located in Door County. Baileys Grove Campground, Fish Creek Campground, Quietwoods South Camping Resort, and Rustic Timbers are favorites and have facilities for motorhomes.

Canoeing and kayaking are the best ways to explore the bays and rivers of



Sven's Bluff is one of the favorite overlooks in Peninsula State Park.

Climb 97 steps up the spiral staircase of the Cana Island Lighthouse for sweeping views of Lake Michigan and the Door County peninsula.



GETAWAY

DOOR COUNTY, WISCONSIN

Door County. The islands on the bay side, including Horseshoe Island in Nicolet Bay, are popular destinations for kayakers. Various outfitters can provide equipment or even guided tours to some of the area's waterways. Besides kayaking tours, outfitters offer fishing, sailing and even Segway tours. Take a trolley tour for an insider's look at some of the small towns and state parks.

The most visited lighthouses in Door County are the Eagle Bluff Lighthouse at Peninsula State Park, the Cana Island Lighthouse (one of the most photographed), the Pottawatomi Lighthouse on Rock Island, and Baileys Harbor Range Lights. The range lights are located in the 1,600-acre Ridges Sanctuary, which is a designated state natural area. Range lights differ from lighthouses in that range lights come in pairs and are used to precisely align a vessel within a narrow channel, such as in a river or the entrance to a bay. The one closer to the vessel is called the beacon, or front range, and the more distant and taller one is the rear range.

To get a feel of the county's nautical heritage, visitors should make stops at the three sites of the Door County Maritime Museum. The main site is located in Sturgeon Bay next to a historic steel bridge. Exhibits include model ships and boats, and displays on shipwrecks. Another site of the museum is located at the Cana Island Lighthouse. Operational since 1869, the lighthouse is located on an island,



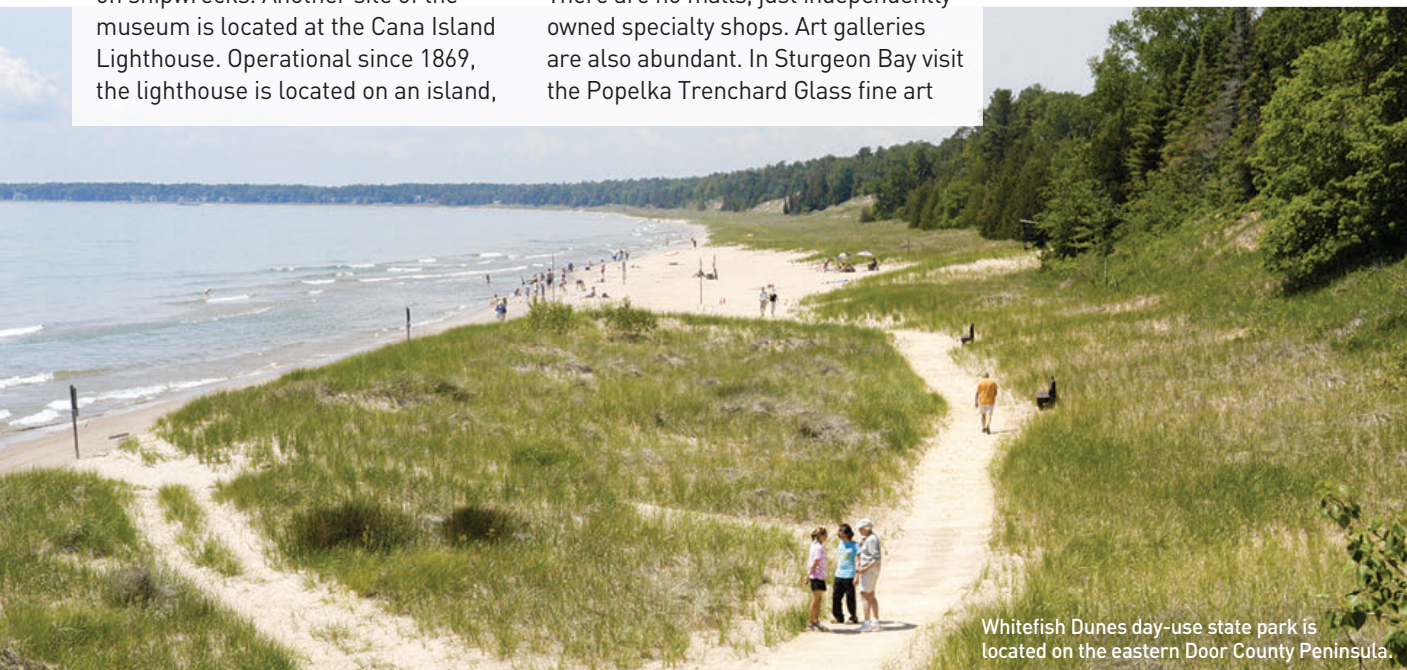
From above: Visitors can view the Baileys Harbor Range Lights from the hiking trails at The Ridges Sanctuary. Ephraim's Old Post Office Restaurant puts on a traditional fish boil — a Scandinavian tradition that dates back to the county's fishing heyday. The flames signal that dinner's ready.

just north of Baileys Harbor. But visitors reach and tour the lighthouse by walking across a causeway. The grounds contain several original buildings. A climb of the 97 steps of the light tower rewards with a view of the island, Door County peninsula and Lake Michigan. The third site of the museum is in the fishing village of Gills Rock, which is located at the northernmost point of the peninsula. The site consists of a wooden fish shack, a fishing tug, and exhibits on ice fishing and shipwrecks.

For shoppers, there are plenty of opportunities in the small towns. There are no malls, just independently owned specialty shops. Art galleries are also abundant. In Sturgeon Bay visit the Popelka Trenchard Glass fine art

gallery and studio. A new gallery in Egg Harbor, the Cappaert Contemporary Gallery, is located in an 1873 log house. It features sculptures, paintings, glass, clay and jewelry. In Fish Creek, the Hands On Art Gallery allows visitors to create their own piece of art in glass, mosaics, jewelry or in paint.

There are several restaurants and eateries that most visitors will want to try. A good way to start the day is to make a stop at the Door County Coffee and Tea Co. for some gourmet coffee and a homemade breakfast. Another breakfast option, or any meal for that matter, is Al Johnson's Swedish



Whitefish Dunes day-use state park is located on the eastern Door County Peninsula.



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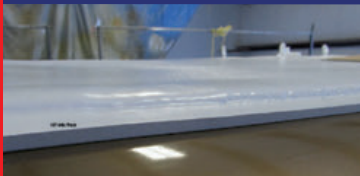
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GETAWAY DOOR COUNTY, WISCONSIN



From above: South Shore Pier in Ephraim rents all types of boats. Door County's Peninsula State Park has one of the state's busiest public campgrounds, so make reservations early.



Restaurant & Butik. This is probably the most famous restaurant in Door County, due to the fact that, on most days, there are goats grazing on the restaurant's sod roof. The Swedish pancakes are the restaurant's most popular breakfast dish.

A good lunch stop in Ephraim is Wilson's Restaurant and Ice Cream Parlor. It features hamburgers and sandwiches, an old-fashioned soda fountain with home-brewed root beer and ice-cream flavors that will satisfy any taste. Another lunch option is the Wild Tomato Wood-Fired Pizza and Grille located in Fish Creek opposite the entrance to Peninsula State Park.

No visit to Door County would be complete without attending a fish boil.

Fish boils are offered at many Door County restaurants and are popular meals for visitors. Potatoes, onions and locally caught whitefish are cooked together in a large kettle over a wood fire. At the end of the cooking, the cook, called the boil master, throws kerosene onto the fire, which causes the water to boil over, burning away the fish oil. The fish and vegetables are then served inside the restaurant. The meal is traditionally followed by cherry pie. Fish boils were originally used to feed large crowds of lumberjacks and fishermen. It was a quick and economical way to feed large

groups of people. As the area grew as a tourist destination, it became a popular attraction at local restaurants. Two restaurants that have fish boils are Pelletier's Restaurant & Fish Boil in Fish Creek and at the Old Post Office Restaurant in Ephraim.

With so many opportunities for outdoor recreation in Wisconsin's Door County, and so many great places to eat and camp, the peninsula called Door is an excellent motorhome destination for spring. Or any season for that matter. **M**

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Baileys Grove Campground
866-839-2559, <http://baileysgrovecampground.com>

Door County Maritime Museum
920-743-5958, www.dcmmm.org

Door County Visitor Bureau
800-527-3529, www.doorcounty.com

Fish Creek Campground
920-495-2267, <http://fishcreekcampground.com>

Quietwoods South Camping Resort
920-825-7065, www.quietwoodscamping.com

Rustic Timbers Door County Camping
920-868-3151
<http://rustictimbersdoorcountycamping.com>

Washington Island Campground
920-847-2622
www.washingtonislandcampground.com



Golden Giveaway: Win a free night's stay at any Good Sam Park, including Oregon's Emerald Valley.

SCRATCH 'N' CAMP

Good Sam and Camping World celebrate 50 years with a \$5 million camping giveaway



Good Sam and Camping World are giving away \$5 million worth of free camping nights as part of the brands' twin 50th birthday celebration this year. Shoppers who make a purchase at any of the 115-plus Camping World locations through September 11 receive a Golden Giveaway scratch-off card. Thousands of lucky scratchers will win a Free Night of Camping Certificate worth up to \$25 at any of the more than 2,100 Good Sam Parks across North America.

Free camping isn't the Golden Giveaway's only prize. Five scratch tickets will award Coleman travel trailers, and the grand-prize winner receives the keys to a 2016 Thor Windsport Class A motorhome.

For members of the Good Sam Club, the camping giveaway is a bonus. Members already get a 10 percent discount on nightly stays at Good Sam Parks, which uphold uniformly high standards for amenities, appearance and cleanliness.

www.campingworld.com/goldengiveaway

Spring Cleaning with Good Sam

Members will exchange their barbecue tongs for trash bags during Good Sam Club Cleanup Days, May 14 and 15. Each year Good Sam members and chapters head outdoors in force to pick up litter, prune branches, paint fences, restore hiking trails and whatever else needs doing.

Volunteering for the 21st annual Cleanup Days is as easy as contacting the campground or public area you or your group would like to tidy up and coordinating an activity. After filling your trash bags, you can drop them in the dumpsters at Camping World, cosponsor of the spring-cleaning event.

As a thank you, participating chapters are eligible for a random drawing. To enter, email a photo displaying your group's hard work to gsclubsupport@goodsam.com by May 31 and include the chapter's name and the Cleanup Days activity, location and number of participants. Each member pictured in the winning photo will receive a \$25 Camping World merchandise certificate. www.goodsamclub.com/community



Idaho's North Kootenai Sams: Sprucing up the Panhandle.

Club Events

2016 Good Sam get-togethers

Taste of Southern California

April 22 through 24

Golden Village Palms RV Resort
Hemet, California

North Carolina Campout

April 28 through May 1

Yogi Bear's Jellystone Park at Daddy Joe's
Tabor City, North Carolina

Southwest Washington FunFest

May 9 through 13

Washington Land Yacht Harbor RV Park
Olympia, Washington

Rayne Frog Festival

May 11 through 14

Frog Festival Pavilion
Rayne, Louisiana

Old Fashion Dirt Track Weekend

May 27 through 28

Perris Auto Speedway
Perris, California

Campout for Charity 2016

June 3 through 5

Iroquois County Fairgrounds
Crescent City, Illinois

Western Weekend – Above and Below

June 3 through 5

Grand Canyon Caverns
Peach Springs, Arizona

Good Sam Fun Weekend

June 10 through 13

The Villages at Turning Stone
Verona, New York

Jenny Brook Bluegrass Festival

June 23 through 26

Tunbridge World's Fairgrounds
Tunbridge, Vermont

Oregon Jamboree Music Festival

July 29 through 31

Sweet Home, Oregon

Great Prosser Balloon Rally

September 23 through 25

Wine Country RV Park
Prosser, Washington

► Find the full schedule of upcoming Good Sam regional events and State/Provincial Rallies at www.goodsamclub.com/events.



► July's Oregon Jamboree

PHOTO: JON CURRIER

◀ **THE START OF SOMETHING BIG** In 1968, two years after the launch of the Good Sam Club, the club began negotiating with RV parks across North America to offer discounted camping to members. This year, as Good Sam celebrates its 50th anniversary, members enjoy 10 percent savings on overnight RV stays at more than 2,100 Good Sam Parks — from Fairbanks, Alaska, to the Florida Keys.



GENEROSITY ON WHEELS

VOLUNTEERISM IN THE RV COMMUNITY

RVers are a fascinating bunch. Most of the people I meet during my travels are either retired or have the flexibility to work while on the road. Not only do they pass their time in creative and adventurous ways, they are generous. Volunteerism is strong in this mobile community. Some people work with Good Sam chapters; others find independent causes.

The Good Sam Club is the world's largest organization of RV owners with more than 1.65 million members. Many of those members are also active in the nearly 1,500 grassroots Good Sam chapters in the U.S. They get together for RV campouts, good times

and community service. Members volunteer thousands of hours annually to help their communities.

While each chapter adopts its own favorite causes, there are some that are supported on a national basis. Dogs for the Deaf is a nonprofit with a mission of rescuing dogs and helping people. Chapters have raised hundreds of thousands of dollars that help this charity spare the lives of shelter dogs, train them and give them to people who need hearing dogs. During annual Cleanup Days in May, chapters help prepare a campground, park or other public land for the camping season by picking up branches and trash. Good Sam members take being a "good Samaritan" seriously.



GOOD SAM MEMBERS



Doug Moloney:
Storm Spotter

▶ Doug Moloney is a member of the Hammin' Sams, a Colorado Good Sam Chapter located in Colorado Springs. Most of the Hammin' Sams are volunteers with one or more of the following groups: SKYWARN, El Paso County or Colorado Springs Emergency Management, Red Cross and Salvation Army. SKYWARN is a volunteer program established by the National Weather Service. Nearly 290,000 trained storm spotters identify and describe severe local weather. These real-time reports, along with Doppler radar technology, improved satellite and other data, provide timely and accurate reports to help keep local communities safe. When storms arise while the Hammin' Sams are camping, they are the National Weather Service's trained eyes in the field.

Doug, a Colorado native, started supporting emergency communications in 1977 during the worst blizzard he had ever experienced. Ham radio operators supported the U.S. Army and the El Paso County Sheriff for four days by providing communications during the rescue missions the Army was running on behalf of El Paso County. After that experience, he began volunteering with SKYWARN. When county- and statewide police, fire and emergency communications infrastructures



Jerry Kirby (at far right in the red shirt) and the Flat Rock Campers, a Good Sam Chapter in North Platte, Nebraska, collaborated to build flower boxes for a community garden.

were badly damaged by a tornado that struck Limon, Colorado, in 1990, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) weather radar at Limon was able to communicate with Colorado Springs via ham radio, thanks to Doug and his fellow ham radio operators.

Jerry Kirby: Community Garden Builder

▶ Adopt-a-Park is another one of Good Sam's national initiatives. Members volunteer to do whatever is needed, such as planting new gardens, maintaining existing landscapes or building shelters.

Jerry and Janice Kirby are members of the Flat Rock Campers, a 3-year-old chapter in North Platte, Nebraska. When Jerry heard about a new community garden, he joined other Flat Rock Campers to help build flower boxes for it. This Good Sam Chapter also has fundraisers for Dogs for the Deaf and Special Olympics. They've organized garage sales and a "no-bake bake sale," donating the money they would have spent on baked goods.



Harold Jacklin:
Knitter

▶ As Good Sam regional directors for the Central Plains Region, which includes Colorado, Iowa, Nebraska, Utah and Wyoming, Harold Jacklin and his wife, Rosalie, are active members of the Utah Deer Sams in Provo. In an average year, this group of 20 couples will volunteer 13,000 hours and make 100 quilts for newborns and cancer patients. The chapter also raises \$12,000 to \$15,000 dollars that will be donated to their two favorite charities, Dogs for the Deaf and Shop with a Cop, the latter of which allows children from low-income families to shop for a Christmas gift of their choice accompanied by a policeman. This generous group was named Chapter of the Year for 2008.

All of this is very impressive, but nothing impressed me more than the fact that Harold alone knitted more than 500 hats for cancer wards, a Native American reservation, and



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homeless and battered women’s shelters. Occasionally Harold gets together with other men in the chapter to knit.



*Carla Gries
Community Volunteer and Singer*

▶ After retiring as a high-school vice principal in 2005, Carla Gries and her husband, Doug, joined Good Sam in 2006. A year later, Carla was elected president of the Pathfinder Good Sams in Fremont, Nebraska. She’s also active in her church and the Omaha Optimists, does publicity for the Summer Bash for Childhood Cancer, and participates in the Assistance League of Omaha’s Operation School Bell and Operation Teen Parent. Through Operation School Bell, each year 4,000 kids are given \$90 clothing vouchers at JCPenney, plus a shoe voucher. Operation Teen Parent encourages

students to complete their high-school education. Carla feels blessed to have a fine voice, and has sung the national anthem at Samborees in seven states. “I like being involved,” Carla explained. “Some of us have ‘yes’ written on our foreheads.”

Carla has served as the Nebraska state director since 2009. After losing her husband of 47 years in 2013, she ran for another 2-year term. “Good Sam is the family we choose,” Carla said. “I probably would have died right along with him if not for Good Sam.”

INDEPENDENT CAUSES

Here are some creative ways RVers give back to their communities through independent causes.

Mary Lou Wilton: Toy Drive Organizer

▶ Mary Lou Wilton and her team of volunteers are the driving force behind the Salvation Army Toy Drive in Tucson, Arizona. Mary Lou has worked on the drive since 2010, and took over as chair in 2012. Each year, when she arrives at Voyager RV Resort on November 1, she starts by checking out the vacant building that the Salvation Army has rented for the event. More than 200 volunteers —

Volunteer Mary Lou Wilton buys toys for the Salvation Army Toy Drive in Tucson, Arizona.





Larry "The Shoe Man" Kowalik organizes shoes that will be given to nearly 1,000 needy children and adults at the Gospel Rescue Mission in Tucson, Arizona.

mostly winter residents of Voyager — work on committees that do things like build the display area and decorate the warehouse; shop for toys, bicycles and books; and package them into bundles by age group and gender. Parents register with the Salvation Army, then come at the appointed time to select gifts for their children up to age 12. In 2014, toys were distributed to 4,175 children in 1,700 families in Tucson. The Voyager community is a generous one. They volunteered 5,546 hours and donated \$14,760 to the toy drive.

**Larry Kowalik:
Shoe Drive Organizer**

▶ Larry "The Shoe Man" Kowalik has a yearly goal of giving shoes to 1,000 needy children and adults at the Gospel Rescue Mission in Tucson. In 2014, he came close when he gave out 962 pairs of shoes and 1,000 pairs of socks at the Mission's Christmas Street banquet and toy giveaway. He said, "My favorite day is when I get to hand out shoes." The generous folks, again at Voyager, donated \$8,000 in cash, and other businesses and individuals brought the total up to \$15,000. Throughout the year, Larry watches for shoe sales. Athletic shoes account for 90 percent of his purchases. He looks for closeouts and big discounts. Fifty "shoe angels" remove price tags and place the shoes on tables according to

size for the Christmas giveaway.



Milt Moore:
Civil Air Patrol Pilot

▶ A pilot in the United States Air Force and for United Airlines, Milt Moore retired in 2003. A friend mentioned that he was volunteering to fly for the local sheriff's department, and Milt thought that sounded like a good way to remain useful and productive. Since he taught in the Air Force and at United, he volunteered to train and teach for the Civil Air Patrol (CAP), an all-volunteer, civilian auxiliary of the Air Force. In addition to training flights, Milt also may be called upon to perform search and rescue for lost people or downed airplanes, perform photo assessments in areas damaged by flood or fire, and to take photos for the Department of Homeland Security, the USDA Forest Service, U.S. Customs and Border Protection, and the Drug Enforce-

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Paula and Nelson DiGennaro: Fundraisers for Animal Welfare

► In 2004, Paula DiGennaro founded a fundraiser to benefit the Society for the Improvement of Conditions for Stray Animals (SICSA), an animal welfare organization in Dayton, Ohio. The SICSA Red Dog RACERS Charity Auction and Cruise-in Event united her two favorite passions: animals and auto racing. With her husband, Nelson's, help, they grew the event to include a huge silent auction, a live-bid auction run by an auctioneer, an autograph session with racecar drivers and a display of racecars. Three years later they retired from their careers and became full-time RVers. Since they sold their home, they no longer had a place to store donations and logistical items throughout the year. After one of their volunteers offered a room in her home for storage, they realized they could take the event on the road with them. Paula and Nelson had the connections with drivers, teams and racing venues that helped make the event a success. Being mobile has allowed them to pick up donations all across the country. Nelson likes to tell fellow RVers that they transported the entire nosepiece of NASCAR's Kasey Kahne's Daytona car in their dinghy vehicle. The DiGennaros spend six weeks in the fall preparing for the event in Dayton, then they hit the road again.




At Albuquerque's International Balloon Fiesta, volunteers Dan and Ruthie Valeri share an ideal location to watch hundreds of balloons drift by overhead.

Dan and Ruthie Valeri: Balloon Fiesta Volunteers

► For four weeks prior to Albuquerque's International Balloon Fiesta, Dan and Ruthie Valeri cleaned the grounds, pulled weeds and marked off 1,800 RV sites. During Balloon Fiesta, they checked in RVers as they arrived, arranged for vendors to fill freshwater tanks and dump holding tanks, and had an ideal location to watch hundreds of balloons drift by overhead. After the close of the nine-day event, they stayed to help clean up. In exchange, they got RV parking and the opportunity to hang out with some fun-loving people. "The volunteers are so happy," Dan said. "It's a great environment to be in." They plan to make the trek out from Massachusetts to do it again.

SECOND ACT

When we think about our "second act" — what we want to devote our lives to after retirement or a career change — we look to activities that give our lives purpose and meaning. Volunteering is a great way to combine our talents and passions and give back to our community. It's never too late. As novelist Richard Bach once said, "Here is the test to find whether your mission on Earth is finished: If you're alive, it isn't." 

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LIFE'S A BEACH

Cape Hatteras and Cape Lookout national seashores make fine places to be marooned for days on end

When we think of the National Park Service (NPS), we generally think of just that: national parks. The fact of the matter, however, is that for the past century, the NPS has been faithfully standing guard over a wide array of America's most valuable treasures, everything from vast nature preserves to historic battlefields. Now, as we celebrate the organization's 100th anniversary, MotorHome is bringing you a yearlong series full of unforgettable experiences — from mild to wild — that are unique to national parks. Places where we sincerely hope you'll Find Your Adventure in the months ahead.

It's a fantasy most of us have indulged at one time or another, usually while fighting rush-hour traffic or beating back the onslaught of text messages, emails and phone calls that never seem to stop coming. Namely, getting away to a deserted island where the biggest decision you have to make is whether to lay back and crack open that new novel you've been looking forward to or do a little beachcombing along miles of deserted sand.

If you sigh and write off this scenario as just another wishful daydream, there's good news. Because this idyllic reality is an everyday occurrence along the 126-mile stretch

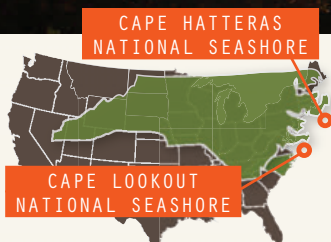
of Atlantic coastline that's been designated the Cape Hatteras and Cape Lookout national seashores.

A Different Kind of Park

Located on the string of low barrier islands known as North Carolina's Outer Banks about three hours east of Raleigh, these two protected seashores are watched over by the National Park Service.

That makes them a welcome respite from the overdevelopment that characterizes so much of America's prime oceanfront property. Aside from a few isolated towns along the way, the entire trip from Beaufort north to Nags Head is largely devoid of the cheap vacation condos and schlocky T-shirt shops such long stretches of unspoiled beach normally attract.

That alone makes this undeveloped seashore a perfect spot to find your adventure. Whether it's blissful relaxation you seek or something to get the blood pumping, you'll find it here.



NC National Seashores

Cape Hatteras National Seashore stretches 70 miles north to south across three barrier islands — Bodie, Hatteras and Ocracoke. The islands are linked by N.C. Highway 12 and the Hatteras Inlet Ferry. Cape Lookout National Seashore consists of 56 miles of undeveloped beach stretched over three to four barrier islands from Ocracoke Inlet on the northeast to Beaufort Inlet on the southeast.

Perhaps the best news, though, is that this part of North Carolina is ideally suited to motorhome travel. Whether you decide to leave the coach at your campsite or employ it as a vessel of exploration that will allow you to set up your castaway-for-a-day basecamp amid the sea oat-studded dunes, you'll find this stretch of coastline to be remarkably RV-friendly.

A Pirate's Life For Me

Of course motorhome travelers aren't the first to discover the appeal of these narrow spits of sand. In fact, one of the island's earliest visitors was so famous he was known by a single name: Blackbeard.

That's right, the man otherwise known as Edward Teach, who became one of the most notorious pirates of the West Indies, called the protected harbor near Ocracoke Inlet home for much of his freebooter career.

To get a glimpse of Blackbeard's life and times, visit the Graveyard of the Atlantic Museum in Hatteras and

the North Carolina Maritime Museum in Beaufort. There you'll find out more about Teach's larcenous enterprise and be able to view artifacts from his ship, the Queen Anne's Revenge, which was scuttled just a mile offshore in 1718 and has only recently been raised from the depths.

To claim your share of modern-day pirate booty, visit Teach's Hole on Ocracoke Island. There you'll find all manner of buccaneer-themed tchotchkes as well as a small Blackbeard Museum, all within walking distance of the bay where Edward Teach was ambushed by members of the Royal Navy and quite literally lost his head.

From below: Climb 207 steps to the top of Cape Lookout Lighthouse for sweeping views. Fishing is an important component of life on Harkers Island, part of Cape Lookout National Seashore.



Photo: Bill Russ-VisitNC.com



Photo: Alan Rider

Cape Hatteras Lighthouse is one of 10 lighthouses on North Carolina's coast and, at 210 feet, is the tallest brick lighthouse in America.

Photos: Don Maitz, VisitNC.com and Bill Russ, VisitNC.com



From above: This painting of Blackbeard was created by Don Maitz, whose most recognized work is the Captain Morgan Spiced Rum character. Borrowing Blackbeard's given name, Teach's Hole in Ocracoke features a pirate exhibit and paraphernalia. The wild horses on Shackleford Banks are descendants of Spanish mustangs that were brought to North Carolina five centuries ago.

The Lost Colony

When it comes to the area's earliest recorded history, however, there's just one place to go: the northern tip of Roanoke Island, the site of the first English colony founded on these shores in 1585.

There, at the waterfront amphitheater at the Fort Raleigh National Historic Site, you'll find the outdoor drama *The Lost Colony*. Staged here on the site of that original outpost for more than 75 years, the play tells the story of the trials and tribulations faced by the 117 early settlers, with elaborate costumes and impressive special effects.

More importantly, it leaves you to ponder the mystery of what happened to those brave souls who vanished without a trace a full 30 years

before the Pilgrims ever set foot on Plymouth Rock.

Light-Up Landmarks

When it comes to getting the lay of the land (and water) on the Outer Banks, nothing beats the two most prominent lighthouses that serve as important landmarks along the Cape Hatteras and Cape Lookout national seashores.

Topping that list is the Cape Hatteras Light, the tallest in the U.S., located near the town of Buxton. Built in 1870 to warn mariners of the treacherous waters of Diamond Shoals just offshore, the circular walkway atop the 210-foot black-and-white striped lighthouse offers an unparalleled panorama of the Atlantic Ocean, Pamlico Sound and the milewide island itself. While

you're admiring this massive brick structure, take a moment to contemplate the 1999 undertaking that saw the entire lighthouse moved more than a half-mile inland after decades of coastal erosion threatened to undermine its foundation.

Getting to the Cape Lookout Lighthouse requires a little more effort, as there are no roads leading to it. Interisland shuttles will whisk you across the 3-mile bay known as the Back Sound to the light with its distinctive black diamonds on a white background. Once there you can climb the 207 steps to the viewing platform or simply admire it from the ground as you walk through the warm waters lapping on miles of largely unpeopled beach.

Horsin' Around

No one knows for sure where the 100-plus wild horses that call the small island of Shackleford Banks came from, but it's assumed they're descendants of Spanish mustangs that waded ashore

The Roanoke Marshes Lighthouse in Manteo is an exterior re-creation of the original screw-pile lighthouse built in 1877.





centuries ago after shipwrecks.

To view these herds up close, take one of the small skiffs that shuttle people to and from the end-of-the-road spot they call Harkers Island. The boat will drop you and your party off on Shackleford Banks, where you can enjoy watching the wild horses quietly graze on the lush grasses of the island's interior.

The fact that this small 9-mile-long island is rarely visited gives it another appealing quality: a superabundance of seashells. You'll find them lining the beach in numbers that would put a seaside curio shop to shame, especially after storms.

Adventure, Anyone?

For visitors looking for something a tad more exciting, continue north to a little spot with the somewhat ominous moniker Kill Devil Hills.

If that name sounds familiar, it's because these giant sand dunes were the site of the Wright Brothers'

IF YOU GO

Exploring the Cape Hatteras and Cape Lookout national seashores is a relatively straightforward affair. Traveling from the south, pick up U.S. Highway 70 near the port of Beaufort and follow it north to the Cedar Island ferry landing. At the end of the two-hour ferry ride to Ocracoke Island, you'll find yourself on state Route 12, which, after another one-hour ferry ride from Ocracoke to Hatteras, takes you all the way up to the byway's northern terminus at the intersection of U.S. Highway 64 to Manteo. Most turns, including the detour to Harkers Island, are well-marked. Ferry schedules and fare information can be had at www.ncdot.gov/ferry or by calling 800-293-3779.

Because grocery stores and fuel stations can be scarce along much of the route, it's a good idea to stock up and top off in Beaufort or in one of the small towns on Hatteras Island.

first successful glider flight in 1900. Consistent winds off the ocean still make it a prime place to do a little flying of your own.

To get off the ground, you'll want to visit the folks at Kitty Hawk Kites at one of their multiple locations along the Outer Banks. From there you can go on to learn to paraglide or hang glide, or even kite surf on the shallow, waist-deep waters of Pamlico Sound.

For the ultimate in authentic experiences, however, ask them about taking a ride on their detailed replica of one of Orville and Wilbur's first unpowered gliders. Though it's unlikely you'll travel much farther than the brothers did, it's a brush with history that will give you stories to tell for the rest of your days.



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For More Information

Camp Hatteras

252-987-2777, www.camphatteras.com

Cape Hatteras National Seashore

252-473-2111, www.nps.gov/caha

Cape Lookout National Seashore

252-728-2250, www.nps.gov/caloc

Cape Woods Campground

252-995-5850, <http://capewoods.com>

Hatteras Sands Campground

252-986-2422,
www.hatterassandsrvpark.com

Kitty Hawk Kites

252-441-2426, www.kittyhawk.com

The Lost Colony

252-473-2127, <http://thelostcolony.org>

North Carolina Maritime Museums

252-728-7317,
<http://ncmaritimemuseums.com>

Teach's Hole

252-928-1718, <http://teachshole.com>

NPS CAMPGROUNDS

There are four campgrounds on Cape Hatteras National Seashore. Cape Point (located in Buxton) has 202 sites; Frisco has 127 sites; Ocracoke has 136 sites and Oregon Inlet (located in Nags Head) has 120 sites. None of the sites have hookups, but the campgrounds do have modern restrooms, potable water, unheated showers, barbecue grills and tables. Dump stations are located near all campgrounds except Frisco.



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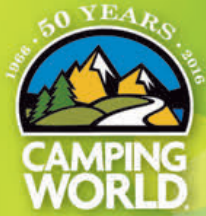
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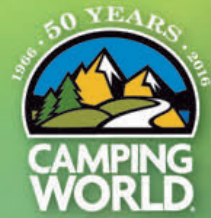
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Gentle Breeze

Tiffin thinks outside the box with its highly maneuverable diesel pusher powered by a new high-tech Cummins V-8 engine **By Bob Livingston**

Diesel pushers are the crown jewels of motorhomes and represent the most luxurious and largest models offered to the RV community. So when someone mentions a 33½-footer, the natural reaction is to assume that a gasser is the subject of the conversation. Tiffin Motorhomes, a longtime builder of motorhomes from entry-level Class A's to ultraluxury pushers, is mixing up the playing field somewhat by introducing its totally redesigned Breeze — a more svelte, fully fledged diesel pusher with a lot to talk about.

The Breeze is not new but has gone through a transformation over the past few years to make it truly a motorhome in a class by itself. Its handsomely detailed compact stature features

“pusheresque” design elements — supported by gorgeous full-body paint — that are clearly intended to appeal to enthusiasts who want to step up from a gas-powered Class A. What’s under the rear hood, though, is what confirms the company’s outside-the-box thinking when it comes to propelling this stately motorhome. After three years of collaboration with Cummins, the result is a diesel engine, the ISV5.0, which defies the odds for motorhome propulsion. For one, the motorhome has a 24,500-pound gross vehicle weight rating but the diesel engine has considerably less horsepower and torque than the Cummins engine powering a Ram pickup. And the motorhome pushes a lot more air than a pickup, so the forces of nature are not in favor of aerodynamics.

Does it work? The short answer is “yes,” but there are a few caveats. It’s not a rocket ship by any stretch of the imagination, but it gets the job done — and with pretty decent fuel economy. We drove the Breeze over a 1,200-mile course from the company’s Red Bay, Alabama, headquarters to our destination at Low Key Hideaway in Cedar Key, Florida, and fuel economy hovered around 10 MPG during the entire trip.

The Cummins V-8 diesel is a state-of-the-art machine that uses the latest technology for durability and emission cleanliness. It employs a VGT turbocharger to spike the ponies and overall, it’s quiet and responsive. We didn’t get a chance to tow a vehicle during the trip, but Tiffin boasts a hitch receiver rated at 4,500 pounds, which may be

ABOVE: Exterior profile might be more compact but classic diesel-pusher lines and full-body paint exude luxury.

BELOW: Galley is well-equipped and solid-surface counter provides enough space to prepare meals freely. Queen bed fits snugly without a slideout, but the room has enough space to move about without feeling claustrophobic.



somewhat optimistic if the motorhome is going to see much hill climbing.

Out of the chute, the Breeze accelerates with respectable power, but the hills slow it down. We were not uncomfortable with the performance as a whole, and accepted the fact that slowing down on the hills was a small compromise in return for consistent double-digit fuel economy, but those with a penchant to crest a grade first might be a little disappointed. Part of that hill-climbing slowdown can be attributed to a lag in downshifting, which is something that should be able to be reprogrammed through the computer.

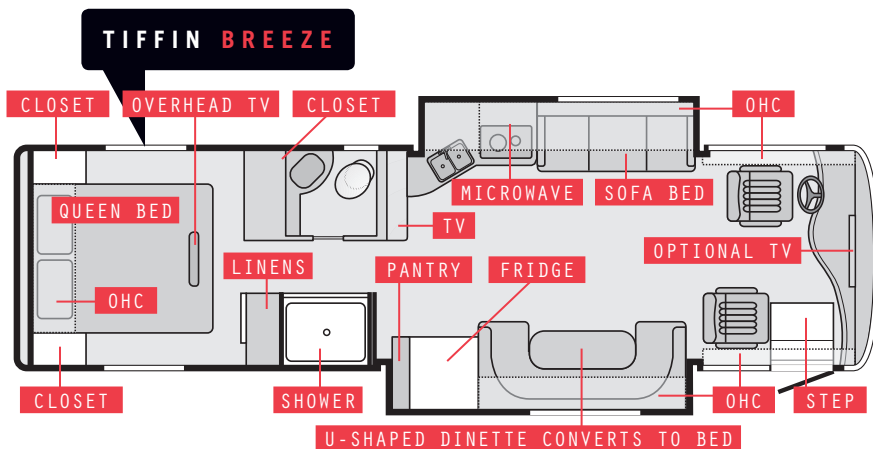
Once you wrap your mind around the benefits of a more nimble motorhome with all the amenities and many of the luxury features reserved for the big boys — and tie it into the comfortable cockpit — you'll settle down into a predictable driving experience as you become acclimated to minor idiosyncrasies exhibited by the chassis and drivetrain. Except for some wind noise emanating from the windshield and less-than-stellar steering accuracy, the ride quality was relatively smooth. A ZF independent front suspension and air system kept the bumps at bay and the proprietary PowerGlide chassis does a good job keeping the motorhome close to the road. We did find too much steering wander in windy conditions and when being passed by big trucks, which caused driver fatigue

after a few hours on the road. We called that issue to the attention of Tiffin's top brass and learned that the test motorhome was an early production model and the engineering staff was still tweaking the chassis. We were also informed that front tire pressure affects steering precision. Based on Tiffin's legendary track record for service, we feel confident our concerns will be addressed and corrected in a timely fashion.

Once you get the motorhome settled into position on a site, a push of a button sets the HWH air leveling system in motion. The system does a good job of stabilizing the body so there's virtually no movement while wandering around inside. Depending on the geography of the site, the front might end up too low to activate the electric step, but it can be turned off when the entry well is at a good height in relation to the ground.

The front entry door is on the short side, so it will take a few knocks on the head to remember to duck, and a lip on the threshold is a trip hazard, which Tiffin recognizes and claims it will modify in subsequent production units.

Having the front entry door, like most diesel pushers, provides necessary floorplan versatility to promote the feeling of openness within a smaller footprint. It's a tried-and-true floorplan, using a common component placement, like the split bath, but Tiffin added enough interesting touches to keep the inside from feeling ordinary. For example, the optional wraparound dinette in the front living room not only looks good, but also can seat at least four adults. The table is easily adjustable, which comes in handy when working on a computer or craft projects, or converting the surface into a bed. The low-profile, visually





appealing seat backs could use some reconfiguration so those sitting on the cushion can have more back support while dining.

With the cockpit seats swiveled toward the rear, the space up front can be transformed into a roomy area for quite a few people to congregate. The opposing slides in the living room do a tremendous job of opening up the front section, but viewing the television sets from the couch and/or dinette — one high up in the cockpit and the other facing the front adjacent to the galley — takes some neck stretching.

Sharing the space in the streetside slideout with the couch, which can be converted into a bed for two, is the compact galley. At first look, we felt the galley would be too small to prepare

faucet. The galley counter is extended when the cover for the two-burner cooktop is down and there are plenty of cabinets to store foodstuffs, which can also be packed into the large cabinets above the adjacent couch; a pullout pantry aids in this department. All the cabinetry throughout the motorhome is crafted of hardwoods with ball-bearing drawer slides, and is mounted to the ceiling for strength. Most of the cooking duties are handled by the microwave convection oven.

Across from the galley is the optional residential refrigerator that was right sized for the motorhome and next door is another pantry that swallowed up a lot of supplies.

The entire front section of the motorhome can be closed off by a

WHAT'S HOT 

Cummins ISV5.0 V-8 diesel engine, fuel economy, compact size, comfortable bedroom, full-body paint, good use of floor space

WHAT'S NOT 

Sensitive steering, late transmission shifting, TV locations (except bedroom), cramped toilet, bathroom cabinet, entry-door trip hazard



tionally roomy. On the other hand, the toilet room was on the cramped side and could use a little more room around the china commode. We reasoned that unless you like to linger in the bathroom, the smallish dimensions should not be a deal breaker. We were happy with the sink size and counter space, but would like to see the extra-large cabinet reconfigured so as not to impede the use of the sink.

As you move into the slide-free rear bedroom, you'll find that the additional room normally afforded by an expanding wall is not really missed. The queen-size bed fits symmetrically against the rear wall and is surrounded by a generous number of cabinets, including one fairly good-size wardrobe and a linen closet on opposing sides of the aisle as you enter the bedroom.

The memory-foam mattress is a pleasure to sleep on and large windows on both sides provide excellent ventilation and ambient lighting. As in the rest of the motorhome, privacy window shades are controlled by cords, and the LED lighting operates via a multiplex switch system. Since wall space is limited, the TV in the bedroom is built into a flip-down cabinet right above the mattress and is easily viewed while lying down.

Décor wise, the Tiffin folks use a combination of dark-color cabinetry (Cordova) that contrasts vividly against the Zest fabric package that includes white/beige leatherette upholstery on the couch and dinette. The tile flooring looks like wood and works well with the



Expansive glass area in cockpit brings in the sunset at the Low Key Hideaway in Cedar Key, Florida. Captain's chairs are comfortable and controls ergonomic.

anything but simple meals, maybe because the lower ceiling height (than typical diesel pushers) created less visual spaciousness, but the opposite was true. First of all, the lower ceiling height turned out to be an asset and one that created a much more intimate living experience. And it's easier to control comfort heating and air conditioning in this type of an interior environment.

Componentry in the kitchen is well-proportioned and centers around a large stainless sink and high-rise

sliding door with a decorative opaque window insert. This door is as classy looking as it is functional. When closed, the split bath and rear bedroom are isolated and private — and turn the rear section into a large master suite. A split bath — shower on one side of the aisle and the toilet room on the other — has been used for years in motorhomes where space is limited. Beyond the space consideration, a split bath makes sense. It allows for placement of a large shower, which in this case was excep-



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Specifications

Chassis

Model	PowerGlide
Engine	Cummins ISV5.0
SAE Hp	275 @ 3,200 rpm
Torque	560 lb-ft @ 1,600 rpm
Transmission	Allison 6-speed auto
Axle Ratio	5.86:1
Front Tires	265/70R19.5
Rear Tires	265/70R19.5
Wheelbase	202"
Brakes	air drum
Suspension	Front ZF independent; air ride
Fuel Cap	70 gal
Fuel Economy	10.1 mpg
Warranty	3 years, 50,000 miles; engine 5 years, 100,000 miles

Coach

Exterior Length	33' 6"
Exterior Width	8'
Exterior Height	11' 2" with A/C
Interior Width	7' 7"
Interior Height	6' 6"
Construction	Laminated walls, tubular aluminum frame, block-foam insulation, fiberglass roof
Freshwater Cap	70 gal
Black-Water Cap	30 gal
Gray-Water Cap	50 gal
Water-Heater Cap	6 gal
LP-Gas Cap	20 gal
Air Conditioner (2)	13,500 Btu
Furnace (2)	20,000 Btu; 30,000 Btu
Refrigerator	10.7 cu-ft residential
Inverter/Charger	1,250 watts/55 amps
Battery (2)	12-volt chassis, (4) 12-volt coach
AC Generator	6 kW
MSRP	\$236,785
MSRP as Tested	\$240,809
Warranty	10 years construction, 5 years delamination; 1 year comprehensive

Wet Weight

(Water & Heater, Fuel, LP-Gas Tanks Full;
No Supplies or Passengers)

Front Axle	8,500 lbs
Rear Axle	12,680 lbs
Total	21,180 lbs

Chassis Ratings

GAWR, F/R	9,500/15,000 lbs
GVWR/GCWR	24,500/29,000 lbs
ROCCC	3,320 lbs (Deduct Weight of Passengers for Net Cargo Carrying 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)



Above: U-shape dinette with adjustable table provides generous seating for at least four people. Sliding door with opaque window closes off the front and rear sections of the motorhome.

overall look inside this motorhome. The décor might be a little dark for some people, but it's certainly rich looking and modern. Solid-surface countertops, large windows and a light-colored padded ceiling all contribute nicely to the interior aesthetics.

As a family business, the Tiffins have long prided themselves in build quality and customer service and the Breeze is another example of such tight workmanship. A sound network of tubular aluminum is used to build the walls, floor and roof, and the motorhome feels solid. The roof is capped with one-piece fiberglass and the laminated side walls are fitted with gelcoat fiberglass on the exterior, which is beautifully painted. Flush-mounted slideouts really dress up the exterior appearance, as do the polished-aluminum wheels. Concealed behind a flip-up door in the patio slideout is the fourth LED TV.

Most of the exterior accessories are placed judiciously so that the exterior lines are not interrupted, but we did find the sideview mirror on the passenger side a little low. Visually, it provided a safe view for negotiating traffic, but we crashed our heads into the arm while walking around the front of the motorhome more times than we care to admit.

Clearly, the Breeze has been

crafted to offer a high level of luxury and exceptional maneuverability for those who also like to venture outside commercial RV parks. It lives, looks and feels like one of the "big boys" but offers all the attributes of a more compact motorhome. All the systems are in place to make the motorhome highly livable and there are plenty of high-tech features to keep any owner happy. Storage is not plentiful, but the swing-out compartment doors lead to a surprising amount of space for packing essentials, although the pass-through component is more limited. The utility center is well-marked and easy to use.

Not everyone wants to tool around in a big motorhome, but diesel-pusher enthusiasts are not likely to sideline luxury just to gain maneuverability, which is where the Breeze excels. The Breeze offers an option that is not commonly found in the marketplace and it comes from a company that values its customers.

I can still remember Tiffin's sales representatives demonstrating the integrity of the build by doing chin-ups on the overhead cabinets. The Breeze, while not for everyone, is just another example of Tiffin's commitment to innovation. **M**

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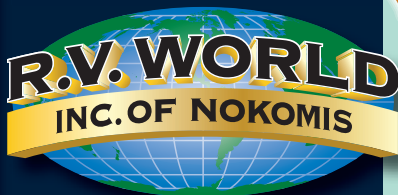
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Bugging Out



We put 14 specialty insect-remover products to the test

Unless you travel with your own personal detailing crew, cleaning the bugs off the front of your coach is likely a task that falls on you. Different times of the year and different parts of the country produce different types of bugs, but cleaning them off is always a challenge. A modern motorhome is a big target and the bugs seem to always find a way to donate their organs to the science of bug removal. The longer they stay on the front of your motorhome, the harder they are to remove, so if you want to get a jump start on bugging out, it's best to start as soon as possible.

There are many ways to remove bugs and many products that claim to be the best at this arduous task. Our goal in this article is to find some good cleaning products and, just as importantly, find some good tools and

methods to help you restore your paint to its original condition.

The bug removers we tested fall into three basic categories. The first, and most common, type is the traditional thin liquid cleaner that is

sprayed on the surface then rinsed off after washing. The second type is a thin liquid that is sprayed on then wiped clean and dry on the surface without the use of rinse water. Finally, there is a third type of cleaner that sprays on as a thick spray with the viscosity of a typical hand lotion. It is also wiped off the surface with a microfiber towel and polished dry with another clean cloth. Each of these methods have their strengths and weaknesses. Let's take a look at each one.

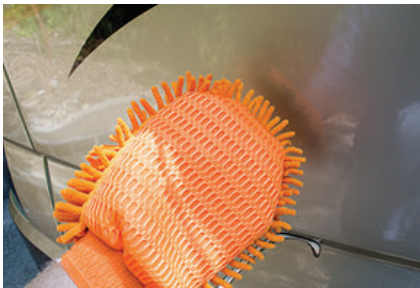
Spray On, Rinse Off

The first type of cleaner requires a water rinse after cleaning, which is the more traditional method of washing off bugs. The water rinse is necessary to help neutralize and dilute the cleaners and prevent them from damaging or staining the paint. The problem is that most RV resorts prohibit you from using a water hose to rinse the coach. This means you either have to wait until you move the motorhome to another location or find another method for bug removal. While this method may be great at home, or at a dedicated RV wash station, it may not be ideal for the



Photos: E. Don Smith

During our tests we divided up the front of the coach with painter's tape and then used each product in a specific section so we could evaluate each one properly. Products like the Meguiar's and Turtle Wax spray on a thick material that can be used without water. As you can see, the cleaner is very thick and it quickly loads up on a microfiber towel when wiping it off. Griot's has one of the best mitts that we could find. One side is made for normal washing and the side shown here is designed specifically for bug removal. That honeycomb structure aids in mechanical removal of the bugs. Aero Cosmetics has its own Aero Scrubber that really speeds up the process when used with its Wash Wax ALL product, which requires no water. This is an ideal cleaner and bug remover for most owners because of its ease of use.



typical motorhome owner who wants to clean up the front cap upon arrival at their next destination.

Spray On, Wipe Off

Fortunately, there are several products made specifically for bug removal that do not require a water rinse. Therefore, when you find yourself in a situation where water is not available, you will no longer be forced to suffer with a dirty coach.

These products can be sprayed on and then allowed to dwell on the bugs for

a specified time before being wiped off with a clean microfiber towel. These are very convenient and one of them (Wash Wax ALL) even leaves behind a slick, static-free surface that feels as if it was just waxed. This category of cleaners is our favorite because it can be used on the road, at home or in a water-restricted RV park. In the chart on pages 48-49, we list products that require water and those that don't so

you can easily find the one you need.

Thicker Spray-On Application, Wipe Off

The third type of bug cleaner uses a thick, lotionlike viscosity material that is sprayed on the surface and allowed to soak in before polishing off with a clean, dry microfiber towel. Though these products do not require water, they are very different from



							
COMPANY	1Z Einszett	Aero Cosmetics	CarPro	Chemical Guys	Detailer's Pro	Duragloss	Griot's Garage
PRODUCT NAME	Blitz	Wash Wax ALL	Tar X	Bug + Tar Wash	Road Kill	Bug Remover 471	Bug & Smudge Remover
WEBSITE	1z-usa.com	washwax.com	cquartz.com	chemicalguys.com	autogeek.net	duragloss.com	griotsgarage.com
SIZE	33.8 ounces	16 ounces	16.9 ounces	16 ounces	32 ounces	22 ounces	22 ounces
PRICE	\$18	\$9.95	\$15.99	\$11.99	\$19.99	\$7.59	\$14.99
PRODUCT FORM	Concentrated blue liquid	Blue liquid	Slightly oily clear liquid	Concentrated bright-orange liquid	Clear liquid	Light-green liquid	Clear liquid
DISPENSER TYPE	Requires separate spray bottle, not included	Adjustable spray	Adjustable spray	Concentrated wash used as a traditional soap	Adjustable spray bottle	Adjustable spray bottle	Adjustable spray bottle
REMOVES WAX	Not specified	No	Yes	No	Not if diluted 1:1	No	Yes
RINSING REQUIRED?	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	No
DIRECTIONS FOR USE	After diluting 5:1, apply on cool, dry surface then rinse with water after scrubbing.	Apply to cool surface, agitate with a cloth, then wipe dry with a clean microfiber towel.	Apply to cool, dry surface and allow 1-2 minutes to work, then agitate with a sponge or pad and rinse with water.	Mix with water in a bucket and wash as normal, then rinse.	Apply to cool, dry surface and allow product to sit 30 seconds, then wipe dry or rinse off.	Spray on cool, dry surface and allow 1-2 minutes to sit, then scrub as needed before rinsing with water.	Spray on cool, dry surface then allow product to sit for 30 seconds before scrubbing or wiping dry.
EASE OF USE (5 IS HIGHEST)	5	5	4	4	5	5	5
SCORE	4	5	3	4	5	5	5
NOTES	Since this is a concentrated all-purpose cleaner, it can be used on wheels, tires, the engine bay and even glass. The 1-liter bottle goes a long way, making it a very low-cost-per-use product. It's biodegradable.	Great for use when a water hose is not available. Also leaves super-smooth, static-free, waxed surface behind. If you want one detailing product in the coach, this is it. It's biodegradable.	This was by far the best product for use on tar or adhesive, but not our favorite on bugs. It is flammable.	Designed to be a heavy-duty paint shampoo, but can be mixed at higher concentrations and sprayed on for a more effective bug remover.	Very effective product and does not require a water rinse. When used 1:1 ratio with water it will not remove wax. Smells great too.	One of our favorites for products that require a water rinse. Safe on all painted surfaces and glass.	Very effective on all types of bugs and can be used with or without water to rinse off.



Meguiar's	Optimum	Poorboy's World	Sea Foam	SONAX	Thetford	Turtle Wax
Gold Class Bug and Tar Remover	Power Clean	Bug Squash	Bugs-B-Gone	Insect Remover	Bug Bust	Bug & Tar Remover
meguiars.com	optimumcarcare.com	poorboysworld.com	seafoamsales.com	sonaxusa.com	campingworld.com	turtlewax.com
16 ounces	17 ounces	16 ounces	16 ounces	16.9 ounces	32 ounces	16 ounces
\$8.99	\$11.99	\$10.95	\$7.49	\$12.99	\$9.89	\$5.99
Thick, lotionlike cream	Concentrated pale-orange liquid	Concentrated blue liquid	Clear liquid	Clear liquid	Clear liquid	Thick, lotionlike cream
Adjustable spray bottle	Adjustable spray bottle	Requires separate spray bottle, not included	Adjustable spray bottle	Adjustable spray bottle	Adjustable spray bottle	Adjustable spray bottle
Yes	Not specified	No	Not specified	Yes	Not specified	Not specified
No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Spray on cool, dry surface and allow to sit for 30 seconds. Then remove residue and polish dry with a microfiber towel.	Dilute 3:1 then spray on cool surface and wipe dry after scrubbing.	Apply on cool, dry surface then allow to stand 30 seconds. Scrub if needed before rinsing with water. If used 3:1 with water, no rinsing required, just wipe dry.	Apply on cool, dry surface, wait 1 minute then scrub with a wet bug scrubber and rinse with water.	Apply to cool, dry surface and allow 3-5 minutes to sit, then scrub, if needed, before rinsing.	Apply on cool, dry surface, then rinse with water after scrubbing.	Spray directly on surface and allow 1 minute to soak in, then polish off with a clean, dry microfiber towel.
3	5	5	4	5	5	3
3	5	5	3	5	5	3
Apply dry and wipe off with a microfiber towel. Great for small spots, but if you clean the entire front of the coach, the cleaning towel loads up with product.	Can be used as an all-purpose cleaner on many other surfaces such as tires, wheels, showers and even interior surfaces.	Very effective on all types of bugs at 100 percent strength, but not as effective when diluted.	Can be used on many other surfaces, including showers, carpet, etc. It's biodegradable.	Very effective product and it contains no solvents or other harsh chemicals, but it is one of the more expensive products we tested.	Very effective bug remover. Nontoxic, nonflammable and biodegradable.	Apply dry and wipe off with a microfiber towel. Great for small spots, but if you clean the entire front of the coach, the towel loads up with product.

the thin liquid cleaners mentioned above. The only two cleaners of this type in our test were the Turtle Wax and Meguiar's products. Although they were both able to remove most bugs, the cleaner is so thick that it easily loads up in the cleaning towels when you try to clean a large area. You are then forced to use several microfiber towels due to the buildup of the thick cleaner on the towels. Neither of these scored very high in our tests due to this reason.

Cleaning Tips

One tip that applies to all methods of bug removal is that you should always try to perform the work when the surface temperature of the coach is cool (or at least not hot) and while the coach is in the shade. If you attempt to spray these cleaners on a hot surface, or in direct sunlight, they will dry too quickly and could damage the paint.

The way these products work is they are applied to the surface, then

allowed to dwell for the time specified on the label. This dwell time allows the product to penetrate into the dried bugs and dissolve their remains. Once the bug has soaked the cleaner up, the enzymes are diluted and then the bond between the bug and your coach is greatly reduced, which allows you to scrub or wipe it away.

Another important tip is the use of a bug scrubber made just for this task. These scrubbers will help mechanically remove the bug along with the cleaner, which is a chemical process. Several of the companies that make bug cleaners also sell their own bug-scrubber pad or mitt. These scrubbers along with a good microfiber towel are about the only tools we used for most of our tests. Some owners have reported that they prefer wetting the surface with water first, then allowing the bugs to become saturated before they spray on the bug cleaner. However, most products that we tested suggested to spray the product

on a dry surface.

As you review the chart of the various cleaners we tested, make sure you note which ones are concentrates, as they are intended to be diluted with water. This greatly changes the value proposition of these products. Some of them, however, do not include a spray bottle so you may want to factor that into your decision as well.

Some of these cleaners will remove the wax from your paint, so if you don't want to wax every time you remove bugs, then choose a cleaner that is labeled as wax-safe. Since everyone has a different situation, it is difficult to pick a single best bug remover, but if you look at our chart you should be able to pick one that fits your cleaning routine. If you prefer a wet-wash process, choose one of our top-scoring products (a score of 5 is the highest) that are labeled for use with water. If you prefer a spray-on and wipe-off product, we have several of those that scored very well also. **M**

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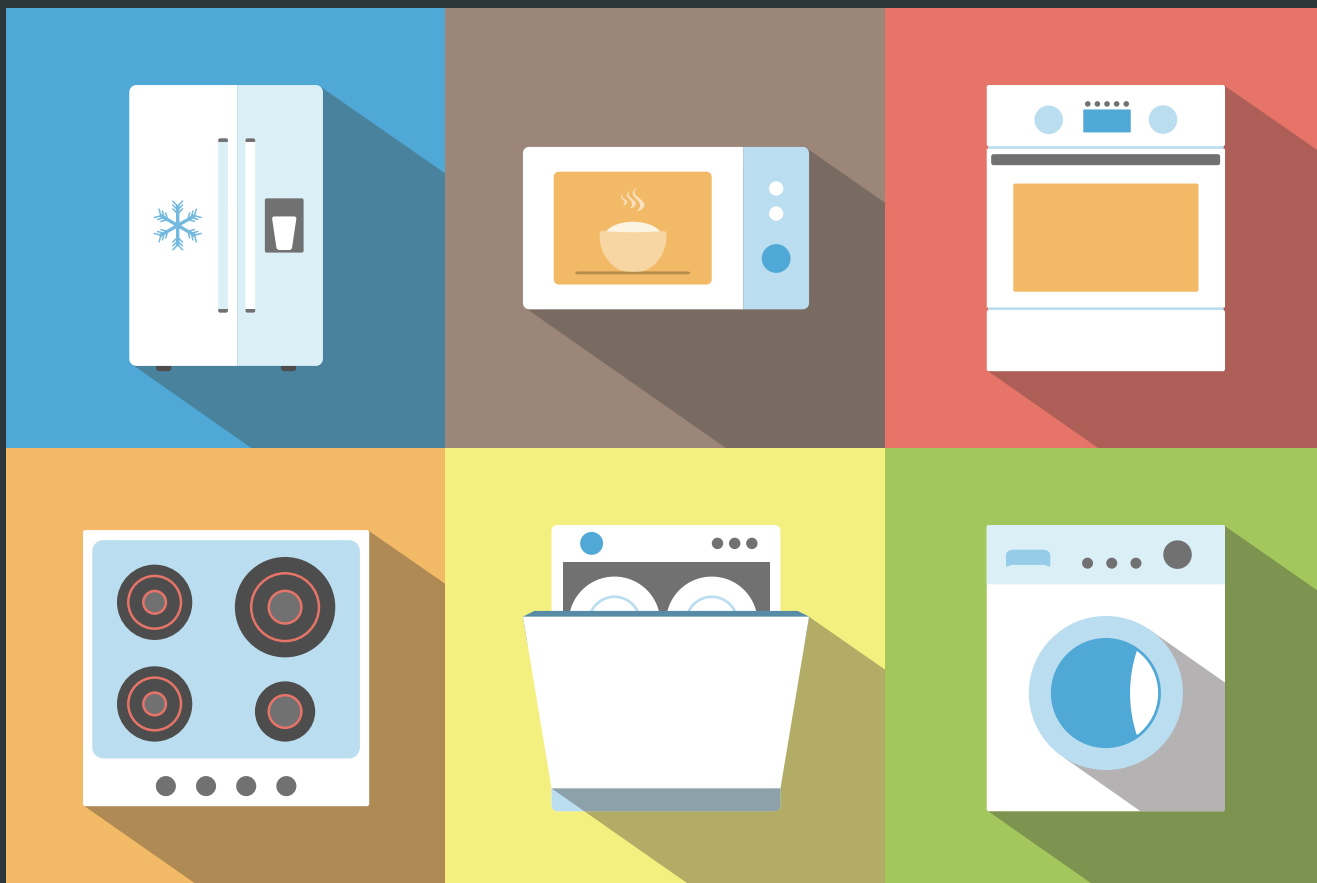
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Appliance Upgrade

Upping the convenience factor in your motorhome is easy by replacing some outdated features

For many of us, the main draw of RVing is convenience. Naturally, it all begins with a love of the outdoors sprinkled with a healthy dose of wanderlust, but it's the lure of a residential experience at the campground or RV park that sends us to the RV dealership rather than loading up the truck with tenting equipment.

And motorhomes, for the most part, deliver that convenience in spades, offering owners a warm bed, their own personal bathroom facilities, multiple means by which to store and prepare food, and even entertainment options. But what if you want more?

Chances are your motorhome is already equipped with a bevy of appliances that make life on the road easy to live. And, chances are, those same appliances were installed by

the manufacturer, who may or may not have selected them due to their cost and availability. You probably don't settle for entry-level appliances in your stick home, so why should you do so in your motorhome?

You don't have to. Much like with a residential home, upgrading your outdated appliances can be quite easy, considering you have the resources. But, unlike your residential home, you have to be very careful to not exceed your vehicle's gross vehicle weight rating (GVWR) when adding larger, heavier appliances.

All things considered, there are few more effective methods of instant gratification than adding a new refrigerator, microwave, range, washer/dryer and even dishwasher to your motorhome's list of features, all in the name of adding to the convenience — and comfort — of your RVing lifestyle.

Refrigerators

One of the first places to look is the old refrigerator in your galley. More than likely, your current unit is a smaller RV-style model that utilizes absorption technology and can be powered either by LP-gas or shorepower (known as a two-way refrigerator). These units have served RVers well for many years. Combine that with the fact that this type of fridge is designed to handle the rigors of the road, and it's easy to see why they continue to be the most popular refrigerator type, and technology — and capacity



• Norcold

— continues to evolve for even more effective cooling measures. This segment is dominated by Dometic and Norcold (Thetford) because the two manufacturers truly understand their products



• Dometic

well and deliver in terms of quality and features.

If your motorhome has the space, you may wish to consider swapping out your current refrigerator for a residential model. There are a number of lightweight models available that are great candidates for an RV galley. This is where a tape measure and a realistic eye come in; pay special attention to counter depth as well as overall width. A

residential-type model often offers a larger capacity when compared to a comparably priced RV-type, and the fact that they rely on a compressor rather than absorption means they can stay cooler, even when the temperatures inside and outside of the motorhome heat up, and they can reach that optimum temperature faster. This also means they use more power, which will likely necessitate the addition of an inverter, additional batteries and some electrical know-how as well as the new fridge; plan accordingly. Also, these units may not be as tolerable to the bumps and rolls on the road, nor to the uneven surfaces we sometimes encounter.

It's really up to you to decide which type of refrigerator to consider, but the trend of outfitting an RV galley with a residential-type fridge continues to gain traction; the fact that you can easily add more features (such as an in-door icemaker/water dispenser) for less overall money only works to bolster that fact. Popular manufacturers include Amana, Frigidaire, Kenmore, KitchenAid, LG, Samsung and Whirlpool.

Microwaves

Microwaves are a much more straightforward swap. Your motorhome is most likely already equipped with a microwave of some type. If you're looking for more versatility, there is a variety of options available that require just a small amount of research. Again, taking size and power consumption under consideration here is a must. A popular option is to replace a standard unit with a convection-type microwave, which offers aspiring RV chefs more cooking options. A convection microwave combines the convenience of cooking in a microwave with the benefits of a convection-type oven, allowing for a



• Whirlpool

quicker, more evenly cooked final product that can even be browned or crisped rather than zap-fried. Keep in mind that convection microwaves often take up a bit more room than conventional microwaves due to the larger cooking area inside. You should also pay close attention to the power consumption on these models, as they tend to be a bit more power-hungry and may trip a breaker or two before you get the hang of things. Many electronics manufacturers make microwaves, and Dometic, Furrion and Whirlpool are good choices for the RV sect.



Furrion's new RV Chef Collection of stainless-steel appliances includes a convection microwave oven.

Ranges

The RV range (combination cooktop/oven) has been largely unchanged for more than a decade. You have your standard two to four burners (in varying degrees of intensity) that can be topped with an accordion-style cover for travel, all above an oven that can sometimes be difficult to regulate due to its proximity to the burners above. And, let's not forget the "joys" of bending down to light a stubborn pilot in order to get breakfast going. There have been some improvements, however, from more even cooking temperatures to safety features and especially to the pi-



lot-lighting process. Whether it's for an upgrade or to simply replace a unit that has seen better days, you have plenty of options for making the swap. Keep in mind that many stock RV ranges are between 17 and 22 inches wide, so use that as a starting point and break out the tape measure. These types of ranges are usually LP-gas powered; the popular "piezo-lighting" features don't require any power, as they work much like the igniter on a gas barbecue.

Companies like Atwood (Wedgewood), Dometic, Suburban and Thetford offer solid models that vary in features (such as sealed burners, stainless exterior, enhanced temperature control, etc.). If you're looking to up the ante, or to perhaps even bake a cake in the galley, higher-end models come with appropriate performance levels and price tags; Dometic's imported SMEV range is one of the best we've tested (*Trailer Life*, March 2015 issue).



Whether standalone or as part of a range unit, RV cooktops often feature an integrated cover and at least one high-intensity burner for improved cooking/boiling times.

An induction cooktop heats the vessel on the surface, which cooks the food faster than more traditional methods.

Induction Cooktops

An alternative to replacing the entire range unit is to purchase a separate induction cooktop. Induction cooking is achieved via a copper coil being "charged" with AC current beneath the surface of the cooktop, which is generally glass or ceramic. The result is a magnetic reaction that ultimately heats the vessel on the cooktop as opposed to the cooktop itself, which works faster than more traditional methods (as long as the cooking vessel is ferromagnetic or has a ferromagnetic coating). Plus, since it uses the vessel to complete the magnetic "circuit" necessary for the heating process, once the pot or pan is removed, the surface cools almost immediately. This type of cooktop is quite trendy and expensive, and is not compatible with your existing range. It would therefore necessitate a complete overhaul of your galley's countertops; as a result, many opt for a portable-type induction cooktop, such as from True Induction, Nesco or Fagor's uCook. Integrated induction cooktops are available from some manufacturers at the OEM level; perhaps most notably, True Induction cooktops are available options in select Winnebago models.



Dishwashers

What, a dishwasher in a motorhome? Why not? Again, we're talking about maximizing convenience here, not living off the grid on a 5-gallon jug of water. That said, something like a dishwasher (or washer and dryer) is best used only when hooked up to campground water, power and sewer, lest you'd like your freshwater supply depleted and your holding tanks filled in a hurry.

If you're replacing an existing dishwasher (lucky you!), the new unit needs to maximize the use of a small amount of water (generally in the 2- to 5-gallon range) in addition to being compact enough to fit in the existing space left after removing the old model. Both Fisher & Paykel and Vesta offer built-in models; Fisher & Paykel's DishDrawer uses as little as 2 gallons of water per cycle, while the Vesta checks in at between 2.4 and 4.2 gallons of water per use. Furrion also has a new RV Chef Collection of appliances, which includes two stainless-steel dishwashers, one of which is a compact model. Keep in mind that a smaller dishwasher will only handle smaller loads; the Vesta can handle up to six, four-piece place settings. That's a large capacity for RV purposes, but a far cry from the seemingly bottomless load capabilities of a standard residential unit. Adding a built-in dishwasher where

there was none before will again take some creative thinking. Remember that a dishwasher runs off 120-volt AC power and also needs to be plumbed into the sink drain — in addition to cutting some of the cabinetry in the galley. This is a job best left to the pros, unless you are extra-comfortable with plumbing, carpentry and electrician work.

Another, less invasive dishwashing option is a countertop model. Vesta makes a unit that nearly mirrors the capabilities of the built-in, and doesn't require any cabinet modifications; you simply hook up to the kitchen faucet, hit the button and away it goes. The downside is, you now have a countertop appliance to store, and the noise can certainly be a factor. But, my, how those plates shine!

Furrion



Vesta's RV dishwasher is a countertop model that uses less than 5 gallons of water per load, and can accommodate up to six four-piece place settings.



Washers and Dryers

RV washers and dryers have been around for quite some time. The convenience afforded by not having to lug your dirty underwear down to the laundromat — not to mention the constant scavenging for quarters — makes this investment well worth it for many RVers. I should point out that we're discussing swapping out old units for new ones (or finally adding those to a motorhome that has already been plumbed). While it is possible to retrofit your coach for a washer and dryer (where there's a will, there's a way), it's

difficult without the preplumbing option. Splendide is a wildly popular manufacturer of laundry units, as is Dometic, and Camping World includes offerings from companies

Equator



Stackable washer/dryer units like this one from Splendide save space and, when compared to all-in-one models, take less time to clean up to 12 pounds of laundry.

like Equator and Ariston.

Washers and dryers come in three configurations: stackable, all-in-one and portable, though we'll only concentrate on the stackable and all-in-ones for brevity's sake. And, if given the choice, you should opt for a vented model, even though that will necessitate using a vent to the outside (cut into the side wall; again, if your rig is plumbed for it, you're ahead of the game). Nonvented models certainly do the trick, but they can sometimes take longer to dry clothes, and can really add to the condensation inside your motorhome.

A popular configuration for motorhomes is the washer/dryer combo. A single unit washes, rinses and then dries your laundry, eliminating the need to switch loads between cycles. This convenience comes at a price; the capacity is small, they draw a ton of power, and a single load can take up to three hours to complete. That still beats a night on the town

with the local laundry's finest!

Perhaps the most desired for RV applications (that have the space) is the stackable variety; a separate dryer is stacked (securely, with brackets) on top of a washer. The units can generally handle about 12 pounds of laundry, though loading them up to capacity will increase energy usage, water usage and, most importantly, wash time.

Upgrading your motorhome's

appliances is easy. Do your homework, be aware of dimensions, weights and power consumption, and let your imagination run wild. The right unit for your motorhome's new look is out there, often in your choice of colors and finishes. There's no better way to improve the convenience and "wow factor" of a motorhome's interior than by upgrading its unsightly or out-of-date appliances. **M**

Sources

Atwood

800-546-8759, www.atwoodmobile.com

Camping World (Ariston washer/dryer, Equator washer/dryer, Nesco and Fagor cooktops, Whirlpool microwave)
888-626-7576, www.campingworld.com

Dometic

800-544-4881, www.dometic.com

Fisher & Paykel

888-936-7872, www.fisherpaykel.com

Furrion

888-354-5792, www.furrion.com

Splendide

800-356-0766, www.splendide.com

Suburban

423-775-2131,
www.suburbanmanufacturing.com

Theftord

800-543-1219, www.thetford.com

True Induction Cooktops

877-862-7049, www.trueinduction.com

Vesta

800-356-0766,
www.westlandsales.com/vesta.htm

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A Brighter Idea

I've replaced all the incandescent bulbs in our motorhome with LED bulbs or new LED fixtures. In general, I found that the LED bulbs and fixtures did not emit as much light as the incandescent bulbs. In some applications, the lesser LED lumens didn't make a significant difference, but in some applications — like the under-cabinet light fixture over the dinette or over the kitchen sink — the double LED fixture did not emit enough light. Arguably, even the old incandescent fixture and bulbs didn't emit enough light.

I found single LED light fixtures online that emit almost as much light as the double fixtures. I mounted two single LED fixtures back to back to provide more light than a



single LED fixture would provide. In one of the fixtures, I popped out the on/off switch and rotated it 180 degrees, so the on/off direction of both switches is the same. The cost of both single LED fixtures was less than many of the higher-lumen double fixtures. As an added bonus, either one or both of the lights can be on depending on how much light is required and which dinette occupant needs light.

Dennis Jauch | Tampa, Florida



Handy Temperature Control

Our Class A gasser has the heat/air-conditioning control located above the entry door. The thermostat controller is LCD and mounted too high for me to see clearly. I have to perch over the steps leading down and light the display with a flashlight with one hand in order to try to set temperatures and modes with the other hand. Changing zones this way requires two hands. I fixed the problem by removing the thermostat from the wall and installing a 3-foot coiled phone cord. Now I can just grab the thermostat and pull it down to eye level and into the light. It was only a \$6 fix and it works great.

Ted Schaefer | Globe, Arizona



The Key to Easier Unlocking

It's often difficult to determine the correct way to insert the key into the locks on my motorhome's storage compartments, especially in low-light conditions or when a slide is deployed. My locks are oriented in four different directions, some at 12 o'clock, some at 6 o'clock, some at 9 o'clock and yup, some at 3 o'clock. I made things easier by applying a drop of paint at the "top" of each key slot. This has proven very useful in preventing me from forcing the key in incorrectly. I don't use a corresponding dot on the key itself. To me, the dot indicates the "top" of the key slot, which corresponds to the "top" or the side opposite the "cuts" on the shaft of the key.

David Bouchey | Encinitas, California



Whisk Away the Broom

Ever notice how the front steps just inside the door of your motorhome get dirty with little pebbles and whatnot? Mine aren't anymore. I attached a small whiskbroom to a retracting dog leash that's attached under a chair located inside the entrance door. This setup works great because the broom is always right there whenever I need to sweep dirt out the door. Once I'm done, the whiskbroom gets pulled right up underneath the chair. It's out of sight and secure, never to be misplaced. Now my entry stairs are always clean.

Mitch Hagee | Kildeer, Illinois



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Fixing Fin Frosting

Excessive ice buildup on the refrigerator's cooling fins can be traced to a defective thermistor

By Bill and Jenn Gehr

APPLIANCES

Cost: \$30-\$40

Time: 30-60 minutes

Difficulty: 2/10

Have you ever noticed that a section, or even the entire surface, of the cooling fins inside your refrigerator has frosted over? Excessively cold temperatures are often linked to a buildup of ice, which leads to food freezing. Chances are the thermistor (temperature sensor) is either in the wrong position or is defective. Fortunately, diagnosing and replacing a faulty thermistor is an easy project.

The thermistor is a narrow, clip-on device that sends real-time temperatures inside the box to the control board, and is always attached to one of the cooling fins. The position of the thermistor can be critical when sensing the interior temperature of the refrigerator, so it's good to familiarize yourself with the necessary location, according to the owner's manual.

Excess frost or ice on the cooling fins will affect the temperature readings; 36 degrees Fahrenheit is the ideal temperature inside the box (not the freezer). The correct way to measure the interior refrigerator temperature is to put a thermometer into a glass of water and place on the top shelf for 24 hours before reading the number.

If the temperature is too low and you've positioned the thermistor properly (on models with this feature), it's time to test the thermistor. Always unplug the refrigerator from 120-volt AC and turn off the refrigerator to defrost the fins before starting the test procedure.

Remove the thermistor from its position on the fin and drop it into a glass of ice water along with a thermometer and leave it for five minutes. The ice water needs to be approximately 32 degrees Fahrenheit before a resistance measurement can be taken. Next, remove the cover from the control board and unplug the thermistor. Using a quality multimeter (ohm scale), check resistance across the two wires. An Ideal reading for a Dometic refrigerator is between 7K and 10K (thousand) ohms; the reading should be 30K to 32K for a Norcold model.

If the thermistor fails the test, it can be easily replaced. On a Dometic refrigerator, a thermistor tip replacement assembly is available. First unplug the thermistor from the control board. Cut the tip of the thermistor just below the sensor end and strip back the outer covering from the two wires approximately 1.5 inches. Next, strip each sensor wire approximately .5 inches. Follow the directions that came with the kit for attaching the new sensor tip.

Norcold thermistors vary from model to model. Most models have a thermistor that's integrated with the refrigerator's interior-light wiring harness. Remove the light lens and separate the four-way plug that connects the thermistor and the light. The new thermistor will come with the four-way plug for a plug-and-play installation. Make sure that you remember the exact location of the thermistor sensor on the cooling fins.

The Dometic thermistor kit, part number 3307872.006, is available for most models. Norcold thermistors are model number-specific and will have to be ordered accordingly.

For Dometic models with fixed-temperature or automatic controls, there is an aftermarket adjustable thermostat (Variable Thermistor Adjuster) that plugs in between the thermistor and control board. This aftermarket component makes it easier to regulate box temperature; it's available from Dinosaur Electronics and costs around \$40. This part does not replace the thermistor.

If you find that the thermistor is good, look for a defective door gasket and/or a large air leak as the cause of excessive fin icing. **M**

[A] In the Dometic refrigerator, the thermistor clips on a cooling fin and can be adjusted to regulate temperature in relation to adjacent label. **[B]** Thermistor is placed in a jar of almost freezing water before measuring resistance at the control board. **[C]** The plug with the two wires from the thermistor is removed from the control board after the 120-volt AC power is disconnected and refrigerator turned off. **[D]** Resistance is measured across the two wires from the thermistor using the ohm scale on a multimeter.





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Extended-Warranty Woe



Frustrated by having to pay for repairs to his air conditioner even though he had an extended warranty, a reader asked Hot Line to intervene. He wrote:

“When I bought a new Dometic air conditioner, I also purchased Dometic’s 3-year extended warranty. The air-conditioning unit worked fine until I went on a camping trip and it quit. When I returned home, I took the unit back to the dealer, Tour America RV’s, where it was purchased. Tour America worked on it and got the air conditioner running again. When I went to pick up the rig, I was told that I would be responsible for the amount not covered by the extended warranty. I purchased the extended warranty so I wouldn’t have to pay for repairs. I would like to be reimbursed for my out-of-pocket charges.

Darl Henderson | Miami, Florida

We contacted Dometic on Henderson’s behalf. Soon after, we heard from Henderson, who filled us in on the outcome. He wrote:

“Thanks for Hot Line’s help with resolving my problem with Dometic. The company contacted me and we have resolved the problem. Dometic was very nice to work with and settled the matter in my favor.

DH

Camera-Cable Confusion

Having run out of patience trying to get a refund on an aftermarket product for his motorhome, a reader contacted Hot Line for assistance. He wrote:

“Last January, at the Florida RV SuperShow, I bought a replacement backup monitor for my motorhome from Eddie Tadi of TadiBrothers. I told Eddie I wanted to use the existing cabling and he asked me to provide him with photos of the cabling. I provided him with pictures on my cellphone of my Weldex six-pin cable.

He didn’t have the correct adapters with him, and only the display model of the camera and monitor, but said everything would be shipped the following Monday.

I called TadiBrothers in early February, as I hadn’t yet received the system. I was told the product hadn’t shipped yet, but would soon. It didn’t ship until a month and a half later. The cabling I received was a six-pin adapter but it had a seventh pin in the center, and it wasn’t the same diameter. I called TadiBrothers and spoke to Scott. He asked for photos and said if he didn’t have the correct adapters he’d have them made. I took more photos and sent them to him. I didn’t hear back so I called again and this time spoke with Eddie. He said I had to return the incorrect cables before he could send replacement cables. The cables were

returned on March 20, 2015.

I then requested a four-pin adapter to see if that would work. The adapters arrived but the barrels were of the same diameter — they couldn’t slide together — and the pins were smaller than the original. I called and spoke to Chris, who referred me to Weldex, indicating that Weldex had the adapters. Weldex couldn’t help me and suggested I try RV Cams. That company had Weldex adapters, but not ones that would match the TadiBrothers’ cable ends.

In April I contacted TadiBrothers again and was told the correct adapters would be sent right away. Two weeks later I was told the adapters were on back order. It had been more than six months and I was tired of waiting so I asked that a return authorization be emailed to me so I could send the unit back for a full refund of \$219.97. I waited a week and didn’t hear back. Because we were leaving for a three-month trip in our motorhome, I went ahead and returned the unit to TadiBrothers with a letter requesting a refund.

Now it is 3½ months later and I have no refund, nor have I heard from TadiBrothers. I would appreciate Hot Line’s help in resolving this matter.

Gary Rankin | Miami, Florida

Rankin’s case was sent to TadiBrothers for its consideration. Soon afterward, we received the following update from Rankin:

“Thank you for your help in resolving the above matter. Eddie promptly responded with a refund of my purchase price. I am satisfied.

GR M

Take Action Contact Hot Line for Help

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



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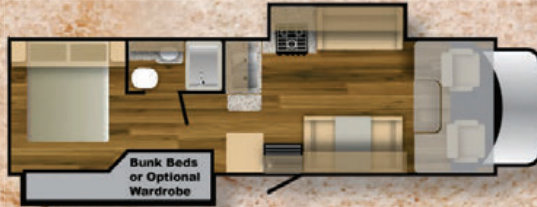
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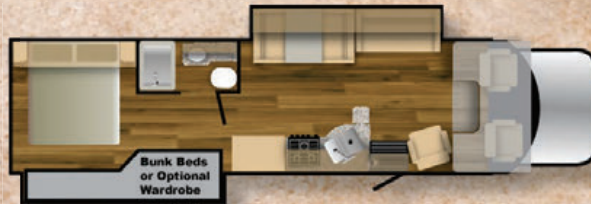
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By Ken Freund

Water Running Out

Q I have a 2015 Coachmen Mirada. My problem is when I fill the freshwater tank and drive down the road, the water level will drop to a half tank. It runs out the overflow line. What can be done to stop it? I have filled it to the point of it not overflowing, but it still loses water in travel. There aren't any cracks or holes in the tank.

George Phillips | Wilmington, North Carolina

A What is likely happening if it loses half a tank is the system is creating a siphon. Lesser amounts may slosh out, but if you lose a half tank, it has to be



siphoning out (or you drive a very twisty road!). The most important thing is to have the vent as high as possible, with no low-hanging parts of the hose. See if the overflow/vent tube has come loose and sagged or dropped down too low. If possible, reposition the vent so it's higher.

Ongoing Electrical Drain

Q This may be an impossible question to answer, but I hope you can give me some direction. Our 2007 diesel pusher has always had a small electrical drain. The unit has electrical disconnect switches, but they don't work completely. We installed a master off switch at the coach batteries, but still have a drain. Recently, we installed four new coach batteries and two new engine-starting batteries. What can I do to find the problem and prevent battery drain and damage?

Steve Lance | Lodi, Ohio

A Some coaches have shut-off switches that still leave a few items connected, including power for the relays in the shut-off units. That's why I prefer fully mechanical disconnect switches. I suggest you try the old-fashioned way of finding the problem: Shut everything off. Disconnect a terminal from the battery pack that carries all that pack's power to the coach. Connect a digital ammeter across the gap. If everything is off, a 10-amp meter should be sufficient. If you see current flowing, and you probably

will, remove one fuse at a time, noting the result. A helper and notepad are useful for this. Once you find what circuits have current draws when off, you'll have to determine what part of that circuit is drawing power. Usually you can do this by unplugging individual items from the wiring harness.

Do this individually for both battery banks, engine-starting and coach. Typically, keep-alive memories in certain electronic devices draw a significant amount of power when combined over time. Generally, a draw in the ballpark of 0.050 amps (50 milliamps) or so is considered acceptable and won't discharge the batteries too quickly. However, if in storage, the batteries should be fully disconnected.

Another possibility is that you have one or more defective batteries. I assume that if you have four coach batteries, they are 6-volt units wired in pairs in series and then those pairs are in parallel. It's likely your engine batteries are two 12-volt units wired in parallel. When batteries are wired in parallel, one bad cell in one battery can draw the whole bank down. Each bank should have its own battery maintenance charger. If the motorhome is stored away from power, either

solar charging should be used, or the batteries should be removed and stored in a garage with power.

Effect of Indoor Storage on Tire Aging

Q Like many readers, I pay close attention to your reviews of maintenance. However, I do question one rule concerning tire replacement due to age. The blanket rule that all tires should be replaced at a given age, I feel ignores a major factor: how the vehicle is stored. Surely a vehicle stored indoors out of the sun in a climate-controlled building would have some effect on tire deterioration. I would appreciate your thoughts on this.

Bill Lawellin | Boise, Idaho

A Although only a very small percentage of motorhomes are stored indoors in a climate-controlled building, I'm sure that would have an effect on how long the tires last and likely extend tire life somewhat. However, high ozone concentrations in storage areas will increase the rate of deterioration. So, the problem always is, how do you decide whether the tires are safe or not? There are



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no laws that I know of that limit how old a tire can be used on public roads. So ultimately it's up to the owner and driver to decide. In my article, "Time to Re-Tire?" [December 2015], I tried to provide information on what tire manufacturers and other experts use to assess tire life. Generally tires time out in seven years, which can be extended to 10 years, if stored inside a building, depending on the brand of tire.

Solar Battery Maintenance

Q I have a motorhome with three batteries, one for the engine starting and two for the coach. After a week or two, I must charge the battery to start the gas engine. I had the batteries checked and they are OK. Is there a solar power system that would keep the batteries charged? I called my dealer service department and they said there's nothing they can recommend.

Paul Pfundtner | Waupaca, Wisconsin

A First, to answer your question, yes, there are numerous solar charging systems that will work for your needs. An Internet search will likely turn up a local company that specializes in such installations, or you can try AM Solar in Springfield, Oregon, for information or advice.

Modern motorhomes have small parasitic draws, which discharge the batteries even when everything seems

to be shut off. Solar-powered battery maintainers are a good idea, especially if you park the coach away from your home, where no 120-volt AC power is available to run a maintenance charger. Since the two banks of batteries are separated electrically, you need a way to charge both. You can buy two solar chargers, or connect the batteries together with a temporary jumper wire from positive to positive (remove when taking out of storage) or install a device such as Trikl-Start (www.lslproducts.net/TLSPage.html), which transfers power from one battery bank to the other during charging.

City Water/Freshwater Tank Problem — Tip

This is in response to the "City Water/Freshwater Tank Problem" letter from Doug Sordi in February, regarding a problem of overfilling the water tank due to a faulty check valve. This may help Sordi avoid a trip to the dealer. Do the following: Shut off city water. Without turning on the water pump, open a faucet to reduce water pressure. Turn on the water pump and run water for 30 seconds. Shut off the faucet and when the pump stops running, turn it off. Turn on the city water. Hopefully this will re-seat/clean the check valve. I like to use a water filter attached to the city-water hose to reduce sediment and debris from

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getting into the plumbing system.

Ed Cronin | Henderson, Colorado

Thanks for the tip, Ed. Some places have hard water with a lot of mineral deposits that build up, and this may help jar the deposits loose.

Voyager Monitor Problem

Q I have a 1999 National Tradewinds motorhome. It has a Voyager Observation System AOS-33 with camera and AOM-70 monitor. The monitor does not turn on at first, but will after about five to 10 minutes and stays on for the entire trip, sometimes as long as six hours. Do you know where I can buy a new AOM-70 monitor or a new replacement that will connect to the AOC-75 camera that has no problem?

Bill Lee | Via email

A With electronics, 17 years is a long time, and it may be difficult to get exactly what you want. However, I did find several units on eBay.com and also ASA Electronics (877-305-0445, www.jensenrvdirect.com). A Google search may bring you more leads.

Brake Controller Issue

Q I just purchased a 2016 Fleetwood Excursion motorhome. Even though it came with a seven-pin connector and hitch receiver, I am being told that to install a brake controller, the motorhome will have to be rewired to the seven-pin connector, at a cost of \$690 plus parts. Is this true?

Phil Ireland | Via email

A That sounds like a lot of money, especially if the coach came from the factory already wired. A significant part of the cost should be the controller, but without seeing the estimate it's difficult to second-guess this. Sometimes the connectors at the rear are fully wired, other times not. Look behind it and see how many wires are connected and follow them forward. Sometimes the receptacle is only wired with the four wires used for running, brake and turn signal. **(continued on page 69)**

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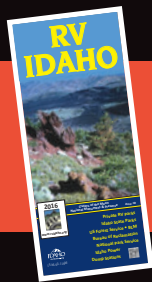


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While every effort is made to maintain accuracy and completeness, last-minute changes may occasionally result in omissions or errors.

COACH & POWERTRAIN

(continued from page 67)

lights, which means there are open slots in the receptacle. I suggest you get another estimate from a different RV shop or trailer-hitch specialist.

Safe-T-Plus Question

Q I am going to install a Safe-T-Plus steering stabilizer on my Workhorse chassis coach. I know the Safe-T-Plus works by mechanical (spring) and hydraulic pressure to help keep the steering centered. Is the added pressure hard on the power-steering pump?

Dale Trinklein | Birch Run, Michigan

A The force required to turn the front wheels when you are stationary is much more than what's needed from the Safe-T-Plus while on the road. These units have been on the market for years and I've never heard of a problem in this regard.

Alternative Transportation

Q In reference to Michael Theis' request for a scooter lift on the back of a motorhome (January), I suggest he try what I do. I carry a motorized bicycle on an ordinary bike rack on the back of my motorhome. My current bike is a mountain-style bike with front and rear suspension with a Golden Eagle bike engine (50 pounds total). It is easy to ride and can go 25 MPH, but I usually ride at 15-18 MPH, and it is great fun. Also, you don't have to license it or need a motorcycle operator's license. I use a Wal-Mart Mongoose mountain bike with an engine from Golden Eagle Bike Engines (www.bikeengines.com).

Blaine Hunsaker | Brigham City, Utah

A That's a good idea and a lot less expensive than some alternatives and motorcycle lifts. Just be sure to wear a helmet and bright clothing and watch out for traffic!

Engine Shutdown on E-450 Chassis — Tip

This is regarding John Lowe's letter

"Engine Shutdown" (continued on page 72)

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COACH & POWERTRAIN

(continued from page 69)

on E-450 Chassis" in February. Years ago I encountered a similar problem that lasted more than a year until the motorhome finally quit along the road. I found that the ignition solenoid relay made intermittent contact. I made temporary use of the chassis battery solenoid relay and stopped at a parts store to get a replacement.

Earl McClelland | Crossville, Tennessee

Thanks for sharing your experience, Earl. I haven't heard back from Lowe, so I don't know if he found a solution yet. It's helpful when readers send in their solutions on items discussed in this column.

Cold-Water Showers

In regard to the October 2015 letter "Cold Showers Build Character," there is a solution. The problem is caused because the cold-water pressure is slightly higher than the hot-water pressure at the showerhead. When the water is stopped at the showerhead, because the cold-water pressure is higher, it backflows cold water into the hot-water side. A simple solution is to install a check valve in the hot-water line ahead of the shower-mixing valve. Check valves are available at homebuilder and plumbing-supply stores. You would have to gain access to the water lines at the shower-mixing valve to install the valve. The pressure differential is caused by the additional plumbing required for the water heating system; although the pressure is slight, it is enough to cause the backflow at the showerhead. The addition of this valve corrected the problem for me.

Pete Garrett | Huntsville, Alabama

I'm sure many readers will enjoy warmer showers thanks to you.

Parts Source

Q I'm looking for information about buying a few replacement dash air vents for my motorhome. It's a 2000 Rexhall Vision on a Ford F53 chassis with a V-10 engine. I tried a Ford dealer

and got the wrong part. So far I haven't had any success, even using the Internet. I would appreciate any leads.

Rick Bauer | Eagan, Minnesota

A The dash parts should be available through Ford, so I would try another Ford dealer parts department. If that doesn't work, or the items are discontinued and unavailable, here's a URL for a list of used parts sources: www.rverscorner.com/RV_Salvage_&_RV_Surplus_Outlets_-_used_RV_parts_listed_by_state.html.

Low Voltage to LP-Gas Detector

Q I bought a used Class C and found the LP-gas detector didn't work. I replaced it with a new detector, but that didn't work either. I checked the voltage going to it and found it only read 2 to 3 volts DC. The manufacturer states that it must get at least 8 volts to operate. What should I look for, and can I just get power from another nearby circuit?

Casey O'Connor | Boston, Massachusetts

A There's a good chance the wire insulation has been rubbed partly through somewhere along its run, or a connection is corroded or otherwise not allowing sufficient power to get through. This applies to the positive side as well as the negative (ground) side. Try tracing the positive side back toward the fuse panel and the negative side to the ground to find the problem. If you can't do that and choose to use an alternate power source, make sure it is always on when the coach is in use, and doesn't have a switch in its circuit, which could result in it being unintentionally shut off. Since it is a safety device, I recommend having an RV electrician fix it. **M**

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

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12 O'clock High

A visit with the folks of the Commemorative Air Force offers a new perspective on just how easy it is for dreams to take flight

By Alan Rider

Sitting here in the turbulent wake of another passing birthday, buffeted by the annoying aches and ailments that come with growing older, I freely admit that I'm having some difficulty coming to terms with the aging process.

And judging by the number of anti-wrinkle creams and other youth-restoring potions I see advertised, I think it's safe to say that I'm not alone. In fact, I just read that us Baby Boomers — a group marketers have euphemistically dubbed the "Forever Young" generation — will spend more than \$100 billion on anti-aging products this year alone. Wow.

Of course, no one likes a complainer, so I smile and tell myself that there may actually be something to that counterintuitive notion about how things get better with age.

For proof of that adage, I look to the 10,000 or so folks who make up the Commemorative Air Force (CAF). Their self-appointed mission is to restore and preserve historic World War II aircraft, from fighter planes like the P-51 Mustang to massive bombers like the B-29 Superfortress.

Being a fan of these planes for as long as I can remember, I was thrilled the first time I got to tour the inside of a Commemorative Air Force (480-924-1940, www.azcaf.org) B-25 bomber named Maid In The Shade parked at a local airshow. When one of the CAF crewmembers told me they also offered flights in many of their planes, I was positively agog with the possibilities.

Though it took a little doing, I managed to coordinate schedules with my friend and fellow airplane

fanatic, Todd, to make a quick run from Southern California to the CAF's Airbase Arizona in Mesa. It was there that I first laid eyes on the B-17G Flying Fortress nicknamed Sentimental Journey, with its sleek silver skin glinting in the morning sun.

It was only later that I would realize how appropriate that name would turn out to be.

You see, when I was a kid, Saturday afternoons meant just one thing: watching the old black-and-white television series 12 O'clock High. That TV show about World War II B-17 pilots and crews set the hook. It wasn't until

“ I smile and tell myself that there may actually be something to that counterintuitive notion that things actually get better with age.”

years later, however, when I learned more about the Flying Fortress' remarkable reputation for bringing its crews back alive — even with large chunks shot out of wing and tail sections — that I really came to feel affection for these ungainly machines.

But, I digress. After signing the requisite sheaf of "I promise not to sue you" paperwork, Todd and I walked out to the flight line where Sentimental Journey was waiting. Though I know it sounds odd coming from a grown man, I was excited just to be this close to her.

After climbing up the ladder into the forward hatch, the two of us made our way to our seats in the glass nose of the plane. As the CAF pilots started the four 1,000-horsepower super-charged Wright Cyclone engines one by one, the reverberating roar built to a point where the sound was felt as much as heard.

To describe the feeling of sitting in the bombardier's seat, staring down at the passing Arizona countryside during the 25-minute flight is hard to express. Then again, childhood daydreams come true so rarely in this life that it's no wonder words fail me.

There is one thing I can say for certain, however: that it's my fondest hope that all your dreams will take flight somewhere out there along The Road Ahead. **M**

Taking Flight ☞

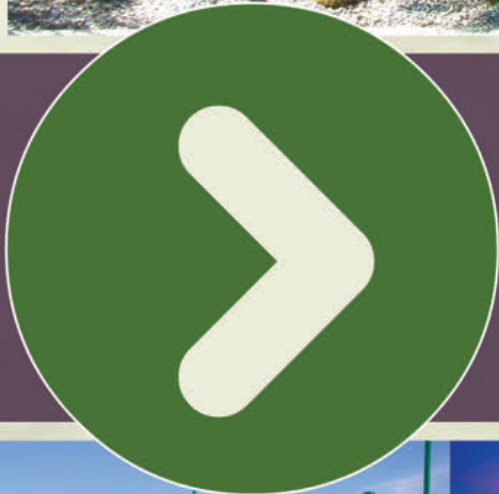
From right: The Commemorative Air Force's B-17 Sentimental Journey glints in the Arizona sun. The author enjoying the once-in-a-lifetime view from the bombardier's seat.



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