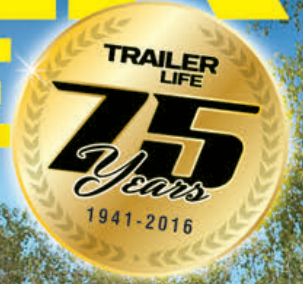


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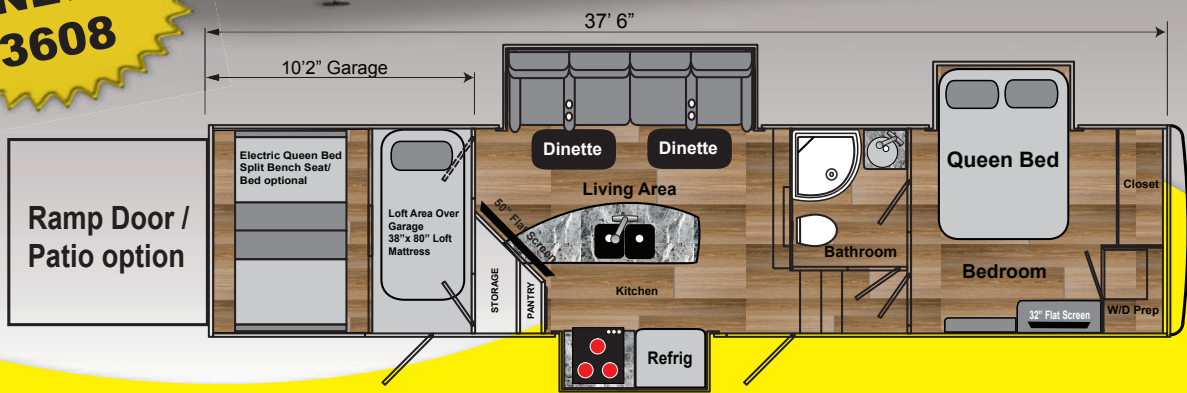


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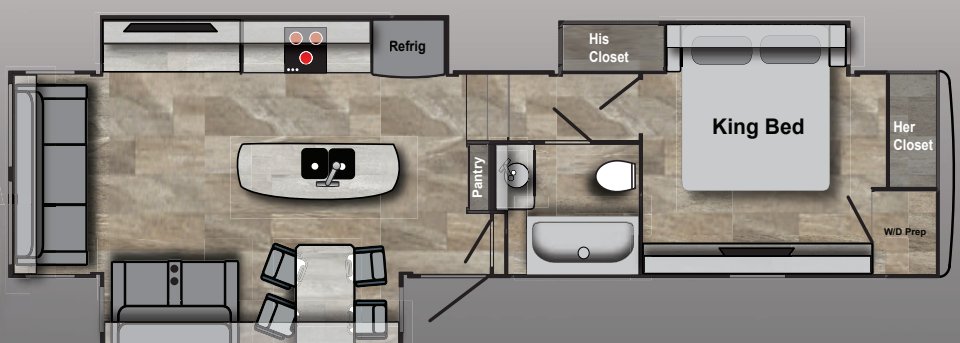
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On the shores of Okanagan Lake, Kelowna, British Columbia, is one of many scenic destinations along north-south-running Route 97. Page 30

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On the cover: Indiana Dunes State Park makes an adventurous backdrop for the Landmark 365 Syracuse. Photo by Shawn Spence Photography

A Delightful Display

The selection of new RVs has never been better, as manufacturers think outside the box for the upcoming selling season



In the wake of a tremendous upsurge in RV sales experienced during the past few years, the movers and shakers in the industry are really on a roll. Never has there been such a display of new and innovative RVs as there were at the two annual RV-industry trade shows, the first in Elkhart, Indiana, last September and the second in Louisville, Kentucky, two months later. As you can see by the RVs featured starting on page 39, the variety is impressive, and the appeal to a wider demographic is more evident than ever.

It's a well-known fact that sales to baby boomers have fueled the RV industry for many years, and that generation will continue to be a driving force for a long while. But the RV lifestyle has captured the attention of Millennials as well, which could be partially attributed to family experiences with their parents. Walk any retail RV show, and it becomes clear that the industry is responding with great finesse. Start with trailers and fifth-wheels that can be hauled by the best selection of tow vehicles ever offered (see page 80) and add in some European styling and space management, and electronic wizardry to keep the family entertained and connected, and you have an outdoor activity that's growing by leaps and bounds.

Two segments of the RV industry are especially intriguing to me: Class B motorhomes and fifth-wheels. The popularity of Class B motorhomes — what used to be considered utilitarian camper vans — is growing due to their evolution into full-featured RVs that can only be described as "mini Class As." Interestingly, higher-end Class Bs appeal heavily to veteran RVers looking to downsize without sacrificing luxury and amenities.

On the fifth-wheel front, design energy has manifested into a lively and versatile segment of the industry. Cookie-cutter floorplans have been displaced by exceptional creativity, sometimes even on the wild side, as exemplified by some of the outside-the-box toy haulers making their way to dealer's lots this spring. And, for the record, there's nothing too shabby about the new crop of travel trailers.

Today, there are RVs for people of all walks of life and so many to choose from that judicious research and shopping must take precedence over emotional buying. While impulse buying can be fun, it's more important than ever to spell out how you're going to use your RV before making a decision. For example, if you like to frequent public campgrounds, length limits and maneuverability must be considered. If you have a big family, concentrate on sleeping capacity, and if you take long respites in commercial RV parks, slideouts and spaciousness may be paramount.

If you're an RV enthusiast, go ahead and pinch yourself; you're not dreaming. 🚐

— Bob Livingston, publisher

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SPRING IS IN THE AIR

In many parts of the country, March (named after Mars, the Roman god of war) symbolizes the end of fighting off the cold and snow, and folks bring their RVs out of storage to prepare for the coming travel season.

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Fiberglass Trailer Feedback

I found January's "Fun with Fiberglass" by Kristopher Bunker about fiberglass travel trailers quite interesting. The fiberglass bodies probably will outlast most other types of construction, but everything else on the trailers will get old just as fast and need replacing.

I owned a 16-foot Casita travel trailer for 16 years. It never towed well, despite using an antisway bar. Everything was tossed around, and even the table pulled itself from its stand. Then I bought a KZ Spree Escape. The Spree, although twice the volume of the Casita, weighs about the same (GVWR of 3,500 pounds). The KZ dealer strongly recommended that I get an Equal-i-zer hitch, which combines weight distribution and sway control. Towing is now a real pleasure. The hitch locks the trailer and car together like they're one piece, and nothing jumps around inside the trailer.

Our new trailer has many things the Casita didn't because it has twice the space. However, it pushes a lot more air, and gas mileage is 30 percent less. If the Casita dealer had recommended this hitch, maybe that trailer would have towed as well as the Spree. I strongly recommend using an Equal-i-zer hitch for all size trailers. I wish I had known sooner.

Paul Wilhelm, Hopewell Junction, New York



I enjoyed January's article about fiberglass trailers. However, one was left out that fits into that class and offers features comparable to the others reviewed. I am referring to the Lil Snoozy, manufactured in St. Matthews, South Carolina.

I purchased my Lil Snoozy last year. It is shaped to offer great aerodynam-

The Way We Were

After reading about *Trailer Life's* 1941 debut in January's "RV Time Capsule," I felt inspired to send this aerial shot of Wollesen's Trailer Village in 1946, focusing on the grassy circle in front where the "overnighters" stayed. The trailer park was owned by my family and located "At the Top of the Hill on Highway 218" in Waterloo, Iowa, until 1956, when we moved to Tucson. The gentleman sitting on the rock in the other photo is my father, I.J. "Pete" Wollesen, and the little girl is my sister, Twila. Dad was in the trailer business from 1935 until 1999.

Trailers were my bread and butter the whole time I lived in my father's home. I've owned two myself, but I still can't back them up to save my life.

Ward Wollesen, Bakersfield, California



ics with what resembles two boat hulls sealed all the way around. The rear entrance offers a much better use of wall space inside. It has a queen-size bed, a jackknife sofa that can sleep one or two small children, a fridge, air conditioning, a sink and a toilet with two options, as well as a shower.

I looked at many trailers and found this little gem to meet my needs. I especially like the fact that it is all-electric and does not have propane cylinders. The company supplies an electric heater and a two-burner hot plate as part of the standard features. You can add a Fan-Tastic Vent and additional windows, if that's your choice. Lil Snoozy has an impressive product, and the company has offered me great support and service.

Mark Heuberger, Bradenton, Florida

Missing the Boat in Mobile Bay

The Mobile Bay Ferry mentioned in "Alabama's Sweet Spot," Bill Graves' America's Outback column in January, is not always accessible to RVs.

Depending on the tides, the slope of the ramp prevents the loading of vehicles over certain lengths. It can be a bit disappointing to wait for the ferry, only to be told that "No RVs will be taken on this trip due to the tides." Still, the Gulf Shores area is a great place to visit.

John Viestenz, Port Henry, New York

Northbound on 97

I have two questions regarding January's "America's Last Frontier," the first part of Peter Lewis' two-part Alaska article. How did Peter get to the British Columbia town of Prince George, and what was he driving?

Jerry Ciccone, Taylor, Michigan

To reach Prince George, Peter Lewis drove his Winnebago Travato up British Columbia's Provincial Highway 97. Last summer Janet and Stuart Wilson towed their trailer up B.C. 97 and its south-of-the-border sidekick, U.S. Route 97. Turn to page 30 to get a taste of their trip. — Editors

Spinning Their Wheels

I don't get it! How did Michelin win gold for RV Tires in January's Readers' Choice Awards when the company does not manufacture trailer tires? I know they make tires for motorhomes, but after all, this is *Trailer Life*.

Miles Johnson, Lebanon, Tennessee

We don't limit voting to trailer tires in the RV Tires category because many readers use Light Truck (LT) tires instead of Special Trailer (ST) tires on their trailers, as confirmed by the following letter. — Editors

After a series of tire failures and flats on our 36-foot Montana Big Sky (which, by the way, is not overweight), we have replaced all of the fifth-wheel's ST tires with Michelin XPS Rib LT tires. Thanks for the articles in the December 2015 issue regarding trailer tires.

Dennis Small, Cameron Park, California

Sometimes, Less Is More

In the January issue, we were so happy to read "Don't Call Us 'Entry-Level,'" Tim and Julaine Botting's letter concerning their 2011 Palomino Puma. We bought a 2010 Puma fifth-wheel because we loved the floorplan. We turned the bunkhouse into a den by removing the bunks and adding two recliners. Last year we upgraded all the lights to LEDs (very reasonably, too) and upgraded the wheels to the ones on the 2015 Puma. Like the Bottings, we love our large dining table — it served five people Thanksgiving dinner at Kentucky's Wolf Creek National Fish Hatchery.

We're not sure what constitutes entry-level; however, we paid cash and love not having any payments due. We have not had nearly the number of problems we've seen other people have with much more expensive rigs. Hopefully, *Trailer Life* will reevaluate using the phrase "entry-level" concerning less-expensive RVs.

**John and Carolyn Longmuir
Box Elder, South Dakota**

Diesel Engine Die-Hards

Now that U.S. automakers are waking up to the advantages of modern

diesel engines for the consumer truck market, it was encouraging to see the "EcoDiesel or Hemi?" letters in the January issue — yet there are still die-hard naysayers like Bill Murphy. Murphy states that diesels have "noisy, smelly mechanical drawbacks," "no acceleration" and get only "slightly better gas mileage."

After towing our 29-foot trailer with a 2015 Toyota Tacoma, with dismal fuel consumption and performance that

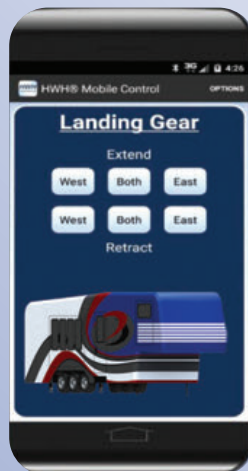
could only be described as gutless, I was lucky to find a slightly used 2014 Jeep Grand Cherokee diesel. The Grand Cherokee flies up long, steep grades at double the speed of the Toyota, and acceleration is strong at a lazy 1,700 to 2,500 RPM. Fuel consumption towing is 18 to 20 MPG, and solo is 26 running errands and 28 to 32 on interstates. The Fiat engine at idle is only slightly noisier than the Toyota but far quieter at normal road speeds. Like all modern

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LETTERS

diesels, the Fiat has DEF injected into the exhaust stream, and the result is no smoke, no fumes, no smell.

Not for one moment am I criticizing Murphy's choice of truck; he has a fine product in the gas-powered Ram 2500.

Roger Slater, Spokane, Washington

After reading Bill Murphy's account of how he decided on which to buy — diesel or gas — I had to take a couple

of weeks to mull over how to reply and be politically correct. First, the "many people (including a few mechanics)" who Murphy talked to obviously know nothing about modern diesel trucks. I own a 2008 Chevrolet 3500HD with the 6.6-liter Duramax diesel engine, and it is neither noisy nor smelly and has no mechanical drawbacks. Yes, it has outrageous towing power and gets more than double the mileage of my

previous gas-powered K3500HD. As far as acceleration goes, I would put it up against his Ram 2500 any day, with or without my fifth-wheel attached. There, I said it!

George Nachtsheim, Littleton, Colorado

Our first tow vehicle was a Ford F-150 with a small V-8 engine. It was severely underpowered for towing even a small travel trailer, so when we decided to move up to a new fifth-wheel, I vowed not to get into that situation again. Instead of going with the crowd and buying a nice new, shiny truck, I did some research and found a 1999 F-350 with a 7.3-liter diesel engine, six-speed manual transmission and 90,000 miles. It came with a basic interior and a dinged-up body, but I paid less than \$9,000 for it.

I got a great interior from a salvage yard and put in a new clutch, a performance chip and airbags. This truck pulls my 13,000-pound fifth-wheel with ease, gets around 12 MPG doing it, and I can usually put the cruise control on in sixth gear (overdrive) and rarely need to downshift, not even uphill. The best parts are, I use the truck only for towing, so there are a lot of miles left on the engine, and it's paid for!

A manual transmission may not be for everyone, but I can't imagine towing without it. I could not be happier as I am passing the other trucks on the road! Do not skimp on power; it is better to have more than you think you will need than not enough. Believe me, I have been there.

Tom McFadden, Kelso, Washington

Correction

The January issue's Products page incorrectly stated that the King Portable Antenna Mount could be used on a ladder. The mounting system is designed for use only on windows or the side of an RV. We regret this error. — Editors

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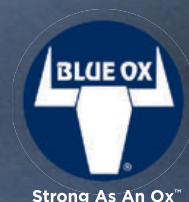
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Tennessee Shake-Up

A series of earthquakes created the Volunteer State's largest natural lake. Now it's home to cypress trees, bald eagles and a couple of state park campgrounds

article and photos by **James Richardson**

Legend has it that Tennessee's Reelfoot Lake was formed because a Chickasaw chief named Reelfoot took a maiden for his bride from a neighboring Choctaw tribe. The angry father prayed that his loss would be avenged. During the chief and maiden's wedding ceremony, a great rumbling of the earth caused the ground to swallow Reelfoot's entire tribe. The result was the formation of Reelfoot Lake. Legend or not, the lake was formed in the winter of 1811 and 1812 by a tremendous earthquake — or rather, a series of earthquakes.

Today, the beauty of Reelfoot Lake, with its bald cypress trees and aquatic plants, is made even more appealing by the fact that it is the largest natural lake in Tennessee.

Each year the lake draws many visitors to enjoy its scenery and surrounding wildlife, as well as hiking, boating, fishing, hunting and other forms of outdoor recreation.

Located in the northwest corner of the state, Reelfoot Lake encompasses 15,000 acres, with 250,000 acres around the lake set aside as a state park. Other than its recreational possibilities, perhaps the lake's next most notable attraction is its year-round population of bald eagles, which increases from December to March with migrating birds. During these winter months, eagle watchers visit Reelfoot in large numbers.

The park's visitor center on the

south side of the lake offers programs on the natural and cultural history of Reelfoot. A boardwalk extending into the shallow lake permits a closer look at the cypress trees and native plants, and a rehabilitation area for eagles and hawks lets visitors observe these birds of prey up close.

Park events include eagle tours in January and February, swamp canoe tours in March and April, pontoon-boat tours from May through September, and lily-pad canoe tours in July. The annual eagle festival is held in early February, and a pelican festival takes place in late October.

The park's two campgrounds provide RV sites with 30-amp electric service, water, picnic tables and barbecue grills. The south campground has 86 paved sites and is busy during April and May. Reservations are suggested.

Reelfoot Lake State Park

731-253-9652, www.tnstateparks.com/parks/about/reelfoot-lake

(Above) Sunsets seem more beautiful when viewed from among Reelfoot Lake's cypress trees. **(Right)** Two public campgrounds offer the lake as a backdrop. **(Far right)** Anglers and recreational boaters enjoy the usually calm and relatively shallow lake.



Limited-Edition Pendleton Airstream

Two iconic American brands, Airstream and Pendleton, have partnered to create a limited-edition Airstream travel trailer to commemorate the National Park Service's 100th anniversary this year. For each of the 100 trailers sold at retail, Airstream will donate \$1,000 to the National Park Foundation, which will use the funds to support preservation projects at Grand Canyon and Glacier national parks.

"Airstream founder Wally Byam was an innovator and a lover of the outdoors who believed in an enduring promise of adventure, new experiences and faraway lands," said Airstream CEO Bob Wheeler. "That same spirit is a cornerstone

of the Pendleton brand, and together we are celebrating our national parks."

The 28-foot Airstream has roomy living spaces and a rear sport hatch for easy loading and unloading of equipment such as bikes and kayaks. The trailer can sleep up to six people, and the queen-size bed comes with bedding from Pendleton Woolen Mills. Pendleton has also expanded the number of products in its National Park Collection, several of which are featured in the Airstream.

The 2016 Pendleton National Park Foundation Airstream has an MSRP of \$114,600 and is available at Airstream dealers.

Airstream, 877-596-6111, www.airstream.com



NEWSWIRE

FOREVER STAMPS



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First-Class Pickup Trucks

This year the U.S. Postal Service celebrates pickup trucks — the vehicles Americans have driven for almost a century — by issuing Forever Stamps that picture four iconic models. The stamps portray the elegant 1938 International Harvester D-2 that mirrored the look of luxury automobiles, the classic 1953 Chevrolet pickup with its large windshield and curvy grille that bulged in the middle, the 1948 Ford F-1 with its roomy cab and sharp horizontal five-bar grille, and the 1965 Ford F-100 with a grille that featured 18 small rectangular openings and Twin-I-Beam front suspension that greatly improved the quality of the ride. Illustrated by Chris Lyons, the four first-class stamps will be issued in booklets of 20 and are scheduled to be released later this year.

FLASHBACK



Aliner Builds Retro-Look RV

Aliner, the original manufacturer of A-frame pop-up camping trailers, is building 84 vintage-looking Limited Edition units to commemorate the company's founding in 1984. Said Brett Randall, the company's president and CEO, "We like to stay on top of what our customers are looking for in a camping trailer and we believe we have done so with the Aliner Limited Edition, as it has a retro graphics package, new exterior porch light, tires with chrome moon hubs, tire cover and a certificate of authenticity." The 15-foot-long Aliner has a GVWR of 3,000 pounds and a maximum carrying capacity of 1,365 pounds. Standard are a furnace, a 5,000-Btu wall air conditioner, a 3-cubic-foot refrigerator and a microwave. **Aliner, 724-237-5227, www.aliner.com**

ECONOMY



The Lowdown on Fuel Prices

According to the CNNMoney website, the American Automobile Association (AAA) is predicting that gas prices will stay lower in 2016. AAA estimates that the average price of a gallon of regular unleaded gasoline will be between \$2.25 and \$2.45 a gallon; the average price per gallon in 2015 was \$2.40. Even though fuel prices can vary by region and season, AAA said it didn't think the average would rise above \$3 a gallon this year. The current worldwide surplus of crude oil, which is used to produce gas and diesel fuel, has led to dramatic drops in price — to approximately \$34 (at press time) per barrel. In 2015, crude oil prices dropped 35 percent. AAA did allow that political events or changes in the oil markets could lead to a price increase.

Golden Anniversaries for Camping World and Good Sam

Camping World, America's largest retailer of RVs, RV accessories and RV service, and the Good Sam Club, the world's largest RV owners' organization, both mark their 50th birthdays this year. In recognition of the twin 50th milestones, Camping World is inviting RVers to join in the celebration.

Visit any of Camping World's more than 115 locations now through September 11, 2016, and receive a Golden Giveaway scratch-off ticket with any purchase for a chance to instantly win one of five new Coleman travel trailers or a portion of \$5 million in free camping at Good Sam Parks. Even if you're not an instant winner, you'll still have a chance to win the grand prize of a new Thor Windsport Class A motorhome valued at \$140,000 in the Golden Giveaway sweepstakes.

In July, don't miss Camping World's 50th Birthday Party that will feature extra savings on product specials, gifts to the first 50 customers, free birthday cake and more.

"As we celebrate this milestone, I want to thank you, our valued club members and customers, for the honor of providing you and your family with the benefits, products and services that have helped you make priceless

memories," said Marcus Lemonis, CEO and chairman.

Camping World and the Good Sam Club began in 1966 when the first small Camping World store opened its doors in Beech Bend Park in Kentucky, and a small California RV magazine called *Trail-R-News*

founded the Good Sam Club, whose original members promised to help fellow travelers on America's highways. The companies eventually joined forces to serve every aspect of the RV experience.

Camping World/Good Sam Club Golden Giveaway
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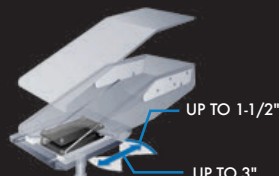


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Home on the Range

Are you curious about what it takes to be a cowboy or cowgirl, roping a steer from the seat of a horse or gazing up at a star-filled sky from thousands of acres of wide-open space? From May through October this year, Colorado Cattle Company and Guest Ranch offers Cowboy Adventure Weeks where participants take part in the working activities of an authentic ranch with 800 head of cattle and 70 quarter horses.

Professional wranglers promise that "any rider will be roping a live steer from horseback in just one week." Guests

(adults only) at the New Raymer, Colorado, ranch average 50 hours of horseback riding and activities ranging from mending fences to branding, feeding and driving cattle.

Included are hearty meals and happy hour on the porch, and lodging in the renovated 1897 bunkhouse and newly constructed log cabins. All-inclusive rates start at \$2,199 per person for a six-night package. The ranch can also accommodate RVs, with sewer dumps and water but no electric hookups.

Colorado Cattle Company, 970-437-5345, www.coloradocattlecompany.com

Natural Instinct

Winnebago's Towables division recently introduced a new luxury travel trailer, the Instinct. Upscale amenities include Driftwood Glazed cabinetry contrasted by dark Glazed Java panels, residential-style decor lighting, a barrel ceiling, solid-surface countertops and an optional fireplace with a rock surround. The Instinct's aerodynamic front cap conceals the LP-gas cylinders and batteries behind a fiberglass cover with flush-mounted latches. Three floorplans include the 30-foot 7-inch-long two-slide 28RBDS, 36-foot 11-inch three-slide 31RLSS and 37-foot 6-inch three-slide 33BHSL. Base MSRP starts at \$41,285.

Winnebago Industries Towables, 574-825-5250, www.winnebagoind.com



MAXXIS® TIRES





Remembering the Vietnam War

Members of Florida's Vietnam and All Veterans of Brevard have created the Vietnam Traveling Memorial Wall with more than 58,000 names of U.S. servicemen and women who lost their lives as a result of the Vietnam War. Standing 6 feet tall and extending almost 300 feet, the wall is a 2/5-scale replica of Washington, D.C.'s Vietnam Veterans Memorial. The purpose of the traveling wall is to heal and rekindle friendships and stand as a reminder of the sacrifices made during the war.

Here is a list of when and where the wall will be on display in 2016:

April 17 to 24

Wickham Park, Melbourne, Florida

May 18 to 24

Harley-Davidson of Jackson
Jackson, Mississippi

May 26 to 31

Fitz Tunica Casino, Robinsville, Mississippi

June 8 to 12

Reiter Park, Longwood, Florida

June 30 to July 5

Robbins Island Park, Willmar, Minnesota

July 13 to 18

War Memorial Building, Powhatan, Virginia

August 11 to 14

Lane Place, Crawfordsville, Indiana

August 18 to 22

Clay City Park, Clay City, Kentucky

August 31 to September 4

West Feliciana Parish Sports Park
St. Francisville, Louisiana

September 8 to 11

Fulton-Montgomery Community College
Johnstown, New York

September 14 to 19

Corning Preserve, Albany, New York

November 10 to 14

Flagler County Government Center
Bunnell, Florida

Vietnam Traveling Memorial Wall
www.travelingwall.us

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ST RADIAL M8008 TRAILER TIRE

Tire Sizes - Ply Rating

ST175 / 80R13 - 6PR

ST185 / 80R13 - 6PR

ST205 / 75R14 - 4PR

ST205 / 75R14 - 6PR

ST215 / 75R14 - 6PR

ST205 / 75R15 - 6PR

ST205 / 75R15 - 8PR

ST225 / 75R15 - 8PR

ST225 / 75R15 - 10PR

ST235 / 80R16 - 10PR*

*3 ply sidewall construction

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75 YEARS OF TRAILER LIFE

Happy Days

America boomed in the 1950s, and so did *Trailer Life*

For the first eight of its 75 years, this magazine went by the name *Western Trailer Life*. During that period of wartime austerity and postwar boom, the publication extended its reach from a small regional monthly covering the Southern California trailer scene to become “the nation’s leading consumer magazine in the trailer coach field,” according to the March 1949 issue when “Western” was dropped from the masthead.

Then came the 1950s, a time of soaring birth rates, automobile ownership and leisure travel. By the end of the decade, Americans owned more cars than the rest of the world combined, including a stylish few with the era’s signature tail fins. Paving the way for a more mobile culture, the Eisenhower administration launched a national network of interstate highways in 1956, and *Trailer Life* came along for the ride. For many readers,

keeping up with the Joneses meant buying not only a house in the suburbs and a shiny new car or two, but also a travel trailer — some sporting aerodynamic fins of their own.

Trailer Life thrived in the age of Ike and interstates, with pages more than doubling and the dime newsstand price inflating to a quarter. Like *Popular Science*, a leading magazine in the '50s that reported on the latest inventions — *transistor radios!* — and

told readers how to build them, *Trailer Life* covered forward-looking technology — *solar-energy converters!* — and provided do-it-yourself projects.

For every advance in RV technology, *Trailer Life* was there to cover it, from the new weight-distributing hitches built by Reese and Eaz-Lift to roof-mounted Duo-Therm air conditioners and two-way Dometic refrigerators, cooled by electricity or butane and available in aqua, pink or gold. Destination features took readers to the decade’s trendiest camping spots, from the Alaska Highway, opened to the public in 1948, to Los Alamos, New Mexico, birthplace of the atomic bomb.

Taking the publication from the era of poodle skirts to miniskirts, advertising executive and RV enthusiast Arthur J. “Art” Rouse bought *Trailer Life* at the end of the '50s and introduced the objective vehicle tests and nuts-and-bolts editorial that became staples of the magazine in the decades to come. 🗨️

Flashback to the '50s

(Top left) An October 1957 *Trailer Life* cartoon lampoons the decade’s iconic tail fins. (Left) Magazine covers from 1950, 1954 and 1955 reflect readers’ twin passions for travel trailers and outdoor adventure. (Below) A 1958 Aljo ad illustrates the now-classic two-tone “canned ham” design.





PUMP IT UP AT PILOT FLYING J

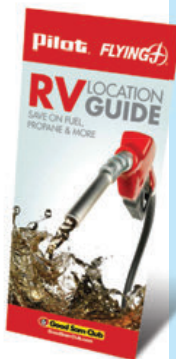
Instant fuel and LP-gas discounts for Good Sam members

Declining fuel prices have prompted RVers to take advantage of the cheapest gas and diesel in years to pump up their travel plans. Good Sam members can boost their bottom line even further when filling up at the network of more than 650 RV-friendly Pilot and Flying J travel centers and swiping their membership card or paying with the RV Plus charge card.

Members who are unfamiliar with the club's Pilot Flying J perks should know that they can save 3 cents per gallon on gas and diesel (1 cent per liter in Canada), 5 cents per gallon on LP-gas and \$2.50 on dump-station fees when swiping their membership card before paying at most Pilot and Flying J locations. When using Pilot Flying J's RV Plus charge card, members can save from 4 to 7 cents per gallon on gas and 6 to 9 cents per gallon on diesel (1 to 2 cents per liter on gas and diesel in Canada), depending on their membership level. Savings on LP-gas are 10 cents per gallon when paying with the RV Plus card, and dump-station fees are discounted by \$5.

Pilot Flying J is North America's largest chain of travel centers, and the majority of Flying J locations and about 40 Pilot locations provide dedicated RV fuel lanes. Most travel centers also offer quick-service restaurants, showers, laundry facilities and free overnight parking. Note that Good Sam's Pilot Flying J benefits are not available in Wisconsin and at some "dealer" locations.

For more information and to view the *Pilot Flying J RV Location Guide* and apply for the RV Plus card, go to www.goodsamclub.com/pfj.



Ramping Up for the RV Season

Spring savings at Camping World and Good Sam RV shows

RV GEAR: Good Sam members can stock up for the coming travel season and save during Good Sam Days, April 14 through 17, at Camping World's more than 115 U.S. locations. Throughout the four-day sales event, Good Sam shoppers enjoy members-only savings on a wide assortment of popular RV and outdoor accessories, as well as RV service and installation specials. www.campingworld.com

RV FUEL: Year-round, members save 25 percent on up to 40 gallons of LP-gas every Tuesday and Wednesday at Camping World. The discount is taken off the regular retail price at locations where LP-gas is available. www.campingworld.com/stores

RV SHOWS: At Good Sam-sponsored RV shows — including upcoming March events in Rhode Island, Georgia and Virginia — members save 50 percent on admission tickets for up to two adults. www.goodsamclub.com/rvshows

Phoenix Fling

Pedal-to-the-metal in Arizona's Valley of the Sun

On March 13, Phoenix International Raceway revs up its 2016 season with the Good Sam 500 NASCAR Sprint Cup Series race, the auto-racing association's first short-track event of the year. "We take pride in hosting thousands of campers at every race," says the racetrack's president, Bryan R. Sperber, "and partnering with the world's largest RV owners' association makes perfect sense."

For legions of stock-car racing fans, RV camping is an essential part of the experience, and the warm spring weather in Arizona's Valley of the Sun raises the stakes. Phoenix is a particularly attractive destination for RVing families this March because the Good Sam 500 takes place when many students are on spring break and spring training for 15 Major League Baseball teams is in full swing at local ballparks.

Tickets to the Good Sam 500 are available by calling 866-408-7223 or visiting www.phoenixraceway.com.

Find more Good Sam Club events at www.goodsamclub.com/events.



GOOD SAM TURNS 50 In 1966, 23-year-old Pat Brantley saw a coupon in *Trail-R-News* for the just-launched Good Sam Club. He promptly joined and received a card with membership number 376. Half a century later, the Texas member is wondering if anyone still in the club has a lower number than his. Let us know at 50years@goodsamclub.com.





No Bikes on Board

When a couple of *Trailer Life* subscribers in New Jersey had trouble getting a crack fixed on their fifth-wheel, they enlisted the aid of RV Resolutions:

► My husband, Don, noticed a hairline crack in the exterior wall near the front bedroom slide of our 2013 Keystone Avalanche when we stopped at a rest area on our way to South Carolina. We took the fifth-wheel to Camping World of Myrtle Beach, but they didn't have body-shop openings during the 10 days we were there, so we put caulk on the crack to keep water from getting inside.

When we returned home, we called Keystone. Although the one-year warranty had expired, they asked us to take the Avalanche to a Keystone dealer, and we made an appointment at Tom Schaeffer's RV Super Store in Shoemakerstown, Pennsylvania. At Schaeffer's we spoke with Aaron Bashore, who was very helpful. Aaron took photos of the crack and got in touch with Keystone.

After reviewing the photos, Keystone told us they could not help, as we had "modified" the RV by putting a hitch on the back. My husband and I cannot understand how a hitch that has never held anything other than a bicycle rack and

one bike could cause a crack in the side wall some 25 feet away.

Nicki Ott, Long Valley, New Jersey

After hearing from Nicki Ott, RV Resolutions corresponded with Keystone RV Company on her and her husband's behalf. Ott followed up with us later:

► We told Tom Schaeffer's RV to go ahead and complete the repairs at our expense, so we could have the Avalanche ready for the upcoming season. When the mechanics took the fifth-wheel apart, they found that a weld had broken loose in the trailer and was scratching the side wall, causing it to crack. At that point, Schaeffer's got in touch with Keystone again, reported the problem, and we are happy to say that Keystone did make all the repairs, despite the expired warranty.

Thank you, RV Resolutions, for contacting Keystone on our behalf. In the end we are very happy that Keystone did stand behind their product. We are also grateful to Tom Schaeffer's, and especially Aaron Bashore, for dealing with Keystone.

N.O.

Editor's note: Before mounting a bike rack on your RV, make sure the manufacturer has approved doing so for your model. Many RVs, particularly lightweight trailers, are not designed to handle the additional weight and stress of transporting bicycles. Trailer Life has received a number of letters from readers who have installed bike racks, only to find out later that the owner's manual forbids it and the manufacturer may not honor the terms of the warranty because of it.

Spinning His Wheels

Experiencing issues with the tires and axles on his trailer, an Ohio reader turned to RV Resolutions for help:

► In March 2014, we purchased a new Venture SportTrek ST250VRK travel trailer, manufactured by K-Z, along with a seven-year extended warranty. After about 2,000 miles, the brakes went out, and we had to have brake bearings on both axles replaced at a Venture dealer in Indianapolis.

When we stopped at a rest area on the way home, we noticed that the trailer had a flat tire on the back axle. Inspecting the tire, I almost cut myself on the steel coming out of the inside tread. I noticed the axle's other tire was wearing the same way. I called K-Z and was told to buy two new tires and save the old ones for possible reimbursement.

Back home in Ohio, K-Z shipped a new axle and recommended a mobile service to come to our home where they replaced the bent axle and took the two damaged tires.

Later, when we returned from a trip to Maine, 1,500 miles each way, I noticed that the cap from the rear wheel was missing and the wheel looked crooked. The front bearing was completely gone after only 3,000 miles of the new axle being put on.

A friend was kind enough to help me get the wheel bearing and hub off and, fortunately, the axle looks OK.

We replaced the wheel assembly. I will soon be replacing the second set of tires because of the wear that was made before we got a new axle.

Thomas Kinkade, Madison, Ohio

After reaching out to K-Z RV on Thomas Kinkade's behalf, we received the following note from him:

► The matter has been settled. K-Z mailed me a check for reimbursement of my expenses and goodwill. I appreciate your efforts.

T.K. 📧

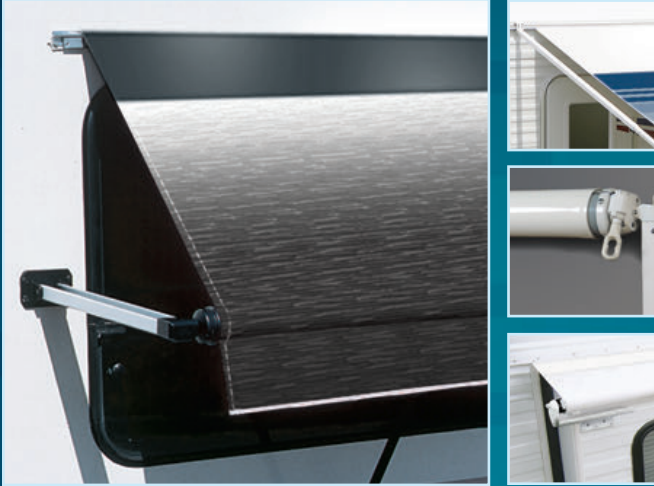
NEED HELP? ► RV Resolutions is a forum for the settlement of conflicts between consumers and RV dealers and manufacturers, accessory suppliers and service providers. After exhausting all other resources without success, please send a typed letter to *Trailer Life* RV Resolutions, 2750 Park View Court, Suite 240, Oxnard, California 93036. Include copies of appropriate bills and correspondence as well as a self-addressed, stamped envelope.

Carefree new products:

Beauty & Quality Reimagined

FLXguard®

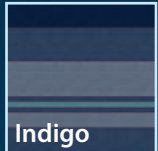
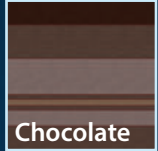
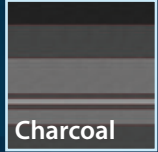
NEW FLXguard protects any type of awning!



FLXguard is a new, proprietary polymer developed by Carefree that rolls up with your awning to protect it from the elements. FLXguard is flexible, light-weight, robust and gives your fabric the same protection as more expensive, heavier metal wraps — at a fraction of the cost.

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Beauty, durability, and value! 10 year warranty!



These heavier vinyl fabrics are durable, abrasion resistant, and are double stitched and double hemmed with long lasting Gore® Tenara® thread. Embedded antimicrobial protection eliminates contamination. Also available in proportional window awning sizes to perfectly match your patio awning.

LED lights

Light bright enough to read by!



These fun, water resistant, energy saving LEDs are great for parties or just enjoying the evening outdoors. The 3M adhesive-backed, LEDs can be trimmed to fit and attached to your awning, the side of your coach or just about anywhere you want them. Choose from White or RGB Color. White LEDs have adjustable brightness.

The Color LEDs allow you to choose between white or 15 colors with an easy to use remote control. They also feature flash, fade and strobe functions! Easy to install.



Universal White LED Replacement Strips

Provide clean white light!



Available in two intensities; 30 or 60 lights per meter. They come in 16' rolls with a 26" lead for easy installation. Trim the strip to size, press them down, plug them in, and you can use them nearly anywhere on your coach! Works with competitive brands.

Quality • Value



Performance • Style



On the Mark

Get set for luxury living in Heartland's redesigned flagship Landmark 365 Syracuse fifth-wheel

We've all heard the expression "Bad news travels fast." It's grounded in the belief that people tend to talk more willingly about failure than fortitude, scandal than success. But when Heartland Recreational Vehicles decided to place new focus on its flagship Landmark fifth-wheel lineup in 2014 and relaunch it the following year with a new team and new designs, the good news spread quickly throughout the RVing community. That's likely because, while there is a wide variety of fifth-wheel trailers to choose from, not many are truly designed for full-time living, and due to the recent recession, fewer still are backed by a company with more than a decade of experience under its belt.

The Landmark brand has been around for nearly 15 years, so the new line definitely had to hit the ... uh, mark. Dubbed the Landmark 365 for its year-round livability, the fifth-wheel is available in eight floorplans, most of which are 40 feet or longer. Getting everything you want in a trailer this size

isn't terribly difficult, but it can come at the cost of some maneuverability and an added weight penalty, not to mention reducing the number of RV parks and campgrounds that can accommodate you. So, we were intrigued by the idea of full-time livability in the smallest of the Landmark offerings, the 35-foot 6-inch

Syracuse, and arranged to test it near its birthplace of Elkhart, Indiana.

Even at less than 40 feet, the Syracuse is physically imposing. Unlike many other fifth-wheels that have a tapered roof, it has a straight roof from front to rear, which not only yields more headroom inside but also contributes to the overall impression of grandeur when viewed from outside. In the case of the test unit, which came to us finished in Dark Silver full-body paint with tinted, frameless windows and aluminum wheels, the effect was intensified.

Perhaps not as noticeable but equally important to full-timers are functional features like a Level Up automatic hydraulic leveling system, slam-latch baggage doors, a universal docking station, a power awning with LED lighting, an outdoor entertainment center and Goodyear load range G tires. Suffice it to say, the fifth-wheel got more than its fair share of attention from fellow RVers who stopped by to admire the new trailer and ask questions about it.



The Syracuse features a traditional fifth-wheel floorplan but offers an elegantly appointed kitchen with a large island.

Inside, the Syracuse is a pretty traditional floorplan but a well-executed one. The Autumn Harvest interior color scheme is warm and inviting with maple-toned cabinetry complemented by earth tones in the living area carpet, and kitchen and dining area tile and countertops. Dark brown faux leather on the sofa and recliners adds a modern touch, while country-themed upholstery on the valances, dinette chairs and throw pillows pays homage to tradition. The living area belies the trailer's relatively short length with its 8-foot 5-inch ceilings, large opposing slideouts and a center island that makes the kitchen part of the entertaining space.

At the rear of the fifth-wheel is

a large sofa that converts into a full pullout bed with sconce lights on either side for a cozy, homelike appearance. You can place your drink or a TV remote on handy ledges on either side of the couch. The test unit was equipped with an optional high-rise table/desk that looks like a standard coffee table but has a top that lifts up and toward you, making it easier to eat in front of the TV or work with a laptop. It's a useful addition, for sure, and we actually have one like it in our home. You just have to remember to orient the table lengthwise before bringing in the slides, or it will prevent the slides from closing.

In the curbside slideout are a pair of standard power-reclining theater seats that drew high marks for their

comfort and functionality. Just press a button, and the leg extension deploys as the seat reclines. The seats are a bit on the narrow side, and we would like a center section with cup holders, but at least they fit the space properly and worked as designed, which are big pluses. Directly across from the chairs is a huge 65-inch LG LED flat-screen TV with a sound bar and a Blu-ray player, and an optional electric fireplace below. We conducted our test in the summer, so we didn't have occasion to use the fireplace, but the TV and sound system worked perfectly and were welcome features that we enjoyed at the end of each day. The MCD solar/blackout shades kept the area dark and cool, and we appreciated abundant storage for movies,

Magic Mirror

At first, the mirror at the foot of the bed appears to be just that. But turn the television on with the remote, and the picture magically appears from behind the glass. Pretty cool — and a clever use of space.



The entertainment center features a 65-inch flat-screen TV, an electric fireplace and cabinets galore. A king-size bed in the master suite is comfortable, and the creative use of lighting keeps the area bright and cheerful.

blankets and pillows in the entertainment center and surrounding areas.

The available Home Package nets a thoroughly modern kitchen featuring LG solid-surface countertops, a two-burner True Induction cooktop, a residential Frigidaire stainless-steel refrigerator with double doors and an icemaker, and a residential-size stainless-steel High Pointe convection/microwave. By now, you've probably surmised that this is a mostly electric RV designed to be plugged into 50-amp service wherever your travels take you. Heartland does offer a generator option for those occasions where you might find yourself in a campground without hookups.

The small but elegant kitchen also features a real tile backsplash, and there's enough room on the side of the



cooktop to place prepped items. The center island is where you'll do most of your slicing and dicing anyway, as it offers plenty of working room along with a huge single-bowl sink, a residential faucet with a pullout sprayer, and dual sink covers hiding an interesting feature: plastic food-grade cutting boards on the opposite side. With proper chef knives, hard sink covers can damage a knife's

cutting edge, so this is a feature we'd like to see more often.

The lack of a traditional oven means the kitchen has tons of storage space. One small and two large drawers with full-extension ball-bearing drawer glides live directly underneath the cooktop, and a cabinet below the counter offers two larger drawers, one of which features a peg-and-hole arrangement



Operational Front Window



Custom Diamond Plate Bumper



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Orthopedic support, lifts mattress allowing free-flow of central heat.
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Eco-friendly, high-class, modern residential cabinetry system.
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Robust, 4-season windows with interior day/night shades.

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Because the whole idea was NOT to rough it.

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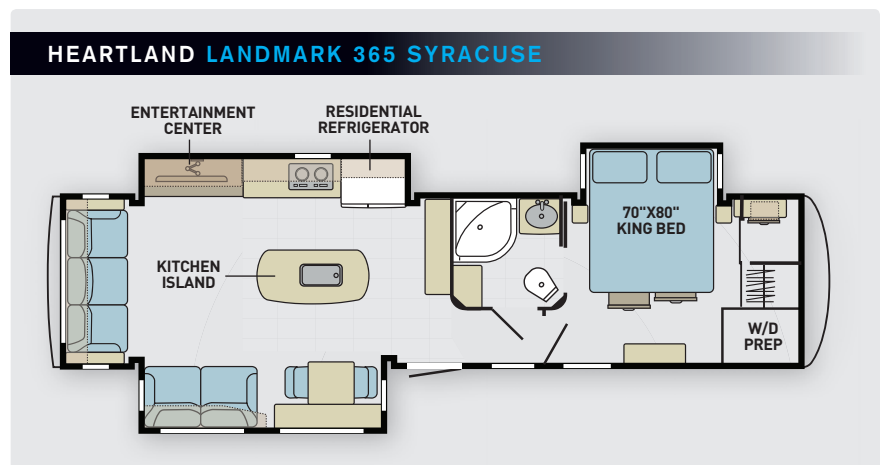
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Onan Corporation, Circle 101 on Reader Service Card

inside that secures small items during travel. It's a thoughtful touch, and the genuine wood drawers inside seem very well made, as do the cabinets in general. We also liked the spice rack on the same counter as the cooktop.

The island boasts a lot of storage as well. At either end on the kitchen side are large cabinet doors; the one nearest the living area offers dedicated trash-can storage (another plus), and the other houses three more of those nice-quality pullout drawers on roller ball-bearing glides. The top-middle drawer is a tilt-out for items like sponges, scrub brushes and the like, and in the middle is a large, open storage cabinet.

On the living area side, another cabinet at the rear has 120-volt AC-power outlets at each end. A large cabinet array at the front of the kitchen features a unique sliding pantry shelf inside and another one mounted inside the right cabinet door. The tank monitor, power control system, slideout, awning and light switches are within easy reach



in an adjacent cabinet.

Up the stairs and to the left is the bathroom, which may be a little on the small side for some couples and families. The shower features a radius-glass sliding door and a nice-quality fiberglass enclosure with a residential-style showerhead, but the space will be tight for larger individuals. The shower also has a built-in ledge that is really bet-

ter suited for placing your foot while bathing rather than sitting on, because the shower faucet handle would be at your back. The rest of the space is shared with a Dometic porcelain toilet, a single sink with a cabinet and open storage underneath, and a mirror with integrated vanity lights above. In lieu of a medicine cabinet, the large closet can hold towels and sundry items.

Quality is in our Nature...
...Let it be in yours.

Northwood Mfg., Circle 131 on Reader Service Card



Arctic Fox & Wolf Creek Campers





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Progressive is America's #1 specialty RV insurance provider.
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Progressive Insurance, Circle 137 on Reader Service Card

Progressive Casualty Ins. Co. & affiliates. Insurance prices and products are different when purchased directly from Progressive or through independent agents/brokers.
No. 1 in specialty RV insurance from 2013 Millward Brown national survey data.



(Above, from left) The bath area may be a little on the small side for some but offers good storage and a nice quality radius shower with sliding glass doors and a residential shower-head. The outdoor entertainment center came in handy on balmy Midwestern evenings.

Like the rest of this fifth-wheel, the master bedroom is a well-conceived and usable space, incorporating a comfortable king-size bed in a slideout room large enough to accommodate it. That means there are small nightstands on either side with enough room to place a glass of water and a book, which is really all that is necessary. There are no overhead cabinets, but Heartland did include reading lights at the top of the slide, and the large window just behind the headboard admits plenty of light, as well as a welcome breeze in warm weather.

At the foot of the bed is a truly interesting feature: a two-way mirror with a 32-inch television behind it. When the TV is off, it just looks like a mirror in a frame; switch it on, and the picture shows through. Below the TV/mirror is

a chest of drawers, and two more large, deep drawers deploy from the foot of the bed.

The forward closet makes it easy to organize personal items with a cedar-lined shelf for shoes and space for hanging clothes, plus another chest of drawers on the street side for more folded items. On the curb side is a large cabinet that is prepped for a stacked washer/dryer and can provide additional space, if needed.

The Heartland Landmark 365 offers an impressive, well-equipped fifth-wheel lineup in general, and the smaller Syracuse, in particular, fits an important niche in the fifth-wheel market. If you've been on the hunt for a more maneuverable luxury fifth-wheel that you can live comfortably in every day, this trailer is good news, indeed. 🚐

SPECIFICATIONS

HEARTLAND LANDMARK 365 SYRACUSE

Exterior Length	35' 6"
Exterior Width	8'
Exterior Height	13' 3"
Interior Width	7' 8"
Interior Height	8' 5"
Construction	Aluminum framing, fiberglass skin, rubber roof
Freshwater Cap.	96 gal.
Gray-Water Cap.	84 gal.
Black-Water Cap.	84 gal.
LP-Gas Cap.	20 gal.
Water-Heater Cap.	12 gal.
Refrigerator	22 cu.-ft.
Furnace	42,000 Btu
Air Conditioner	(2) 15,000 Btu (third 15,000 Btu optional)
Converter	80 amps
Battery	(2) Group 27
Tires	LT215/75R17.5 LRH
Suspension	E-Z Flex with four shock absorbers
Weight (water and propane full, no supplies)	15,382 lbs.
Hitch Weight	3,230 lbs.
Axle Weight	12,152 lbs.
GVWR	18,000 lbs.
GAWR (2)	8,000 lbs.
Cargo Carrying Cap.	2,618 lbs.
MSRP, base	\$93,279
MSRP, as tested	\$114,510
Basic Warranty	2 years

Heartland Recreational Vehicles

877-262-8032, www.heartlandrvs.com

Circle 160 on Reader Service Card





When nobody knew who we were, you took a chance on us.
And many of you told your neighbors, your friends.
Together we showed the world that
American Manufacturing isn't dead, that quality still matters.
From a tiny manufacturer, to silver, and this year: to gold.

THANK YOU.



WALK-THROUGH: STARCRAFT LAUNCH ULTRA-LITE 24RLS

Ready for Takeoff

Starcraft's lightweight Launch travel trailer propels families into the RV stratosphere



The Launch's ample kitchen counter reaches from the three-burner range and double-bowl sink to the back of the trailer.

Sometimes, selecting a new travel trailer is as simple as taking note of what's in your driveway. Purchasing a new tow vehicle can play havoc with your budget, so it makes sense to determine the tow rating of your regular ride and start your search with that. If you're the proud owner of a suitably rated full-size SUV, van or midsize pickup, Starcraft offers the Launch Ultra-Light series of trailers in eight floorplans, five of which weigh in at less than 6,000 pounds, dry.

Aimed at families that enjoy weekend and extended-weekend trips, the Launch Ultra-Lite 24RLS featured here is listed at a svelte 4,880 pounds unloaded and packs in many of the features any family moving up from tents or a folding camper might

expect to find in heavier hard-side trailers. The lower weight is achieved via vacuum-bonded aluminum-frame construction and the one-piece Magnum Roof System, which Starcraft claims is 50 percent stronger than the competition. Crowned-truss roof rafters, a poly-flex one-piece underbelly covering and 5/8-inch main-floor decking round out the build specs.

Outside, the stately gray-brown exterior has simple graphics. A pass-through compartment up front is a near-necessity for RVing families — for tables, toys and adventure gear — and the Launch has been outfitted with a large one. Although the compartment looks big enough to bring along the kitchen sink, owners need to heed the cargo carrying capacity (ccc) to prevent overloading. For

example, the manufacturer lists the ccc at 1,370 pounds, but this is based on the manufacturer's dry weight (sans freshwater, LP-gas and factory/dealer-installed options). The 24RLS we inspected came with dealer decals listing the wet weight at 5,324 pounds, leaving 926 pounds for cargo, which is still a decent amount.

Inside, the 24RLS offers an open floorplan that can accommodate a good-size tribe and guests by day and provides up to six sleeping positions by night. The living area gives occupants plenty of seating options, with a dinette for four and a rear jackknife sofa. The entertainment center is



If you own a full-size SUV, van or midsize pickup, you may already have what it takes to tow the Launch Ultra-Lite 24RLS.

PHOTOS COURTESY OF THE MANUFACTURER

centrally located across from the galley, and though an LED TV is a standalone option, the mandatory Customer Convenience Package includes a 12-volt DC stereo with CD/DVD and USB input. The television's position may strain the necks of those on the right side of the dinette, as the seats face away from the screen, but overall, TV watchers should find the experience satisfactory.

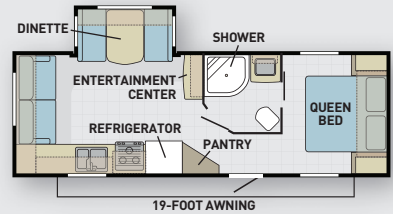
The primary feature of the living area and galley is the countertop, which extends from the three-burner range clear back to the rear of the trailer. This makes for easy meal prep, an important but often overlooked feature in a family-oriented trailer. The dual-basin acrylic sink with a cutout was underwhelming but is a necessary concession to a lightweight trailer in this price range. A microwave, a flush-mounted refrigerator and a pantry with four shelves and two cabinets also occupy the galley and should more than handle extended-weekend duties.

The amidships bathroom functions as intended, with the toilet set at an

angle to maximize seating space, a welcome detail. The curved shower enclosure utilizes two framed curtain "doors" that slide to meet in the middle. The rear master bedroom consists of an RV queen bed flanked by dual wardrobes with hanging rods. The decent-size open shelf above is perfect for duffles, bedding and the like. Of note are two nightstand-type surfaces on each side of the mattress, ideal spots for tablets, books, eyeglasses or even a bottle of water.

Overall, it seems that Starcraft understands its customers and delivers on that front with the lightweight Launch, an impressive step up from smaller hybrid trailers. The 24RLS opens up nicely for entertaining during the day and offers a variety of comfortable sleeping options once the night closes in. All of the trappings may not be top-notch, but this is more than offset by a fully featured travel trailer with a modest sticker price that probably won't require you to purchase a new tow vehicle. That's reason enough for RVing families to keep the Launch Ultra-Lite on their radar. 📄

QUICK INFO



Exterior Length	29' 5"
Exterior Width	8'
Interior Height	6' 6"
Exterior Height	10' 7¾"
Freshwater Cap.	42 gal.
Black-/Gray-Water Cap.	30.8 gal./30.8 gal.
LP-Gas Cap.	14 gal.
UVW	4,880 lbs.
Hitch Weight	540 lbs.
GVWR	6,250 lbs.
MSRP, base	\$13,850

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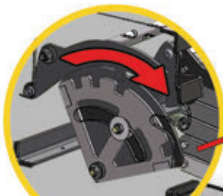
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Landing gear quickly levels on uneven terrain (included)	✓	✗
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HIGH-DESERT HIGHWAY

Route 97 is a highway to heaven for RVers cruising from Northern California to British Columbia along the east side of the Cascade Range



The Alaska Highway in California? That's what an old flyer at California's Weed Historic Lumber Town Museum claimed. "It marks the beginning of the Alaska Highway," read the leaflet, with "it" being the otherwise humble town of Weed.

Weed sits on Interstate 5 at the start of U.S. Route 97, a north-south thoroughfare that crosses Northern California, Oregon and Washington on its 663-mile journey to Canada. From there, British Columbia Highway 97 takes over and continues north for another 1,293 miles, the last 600 miles

of which are indeed part of the Alaska Highway. B.C. 97 terminates at the Yukon border in Watson Lake, and the Alaska Highway carries on with a series of other route numbers.

We pulled our travel trailer 750 miles exploring Route 97 from its origin in Weed to Kelowna, British Columbia. Another 100 miles in our tow vehicle took us to Kamloops, but that's as far north as we got. Along the way we found a region of austere high-desert beauty not too far removed from its pioneer roots and met people who relish an intimate connection with nature.



Route 97 starts in Weed, California, and stretches north to the Yukon border. Along the way in Summerland, British Columbia, a banjo player entertains riders boarding the Kettle Valley Steam Railway (top).

(Right) Near the California–Oregon border, the illuminated Mushpot Cave at Lava Beds National Monument introduces visitors to lava tubes. (Below) Mount Shasta dominates the scenery at the beginning of Route 97.

CALIFORNIA

From Weed, Route 97 follows the Volcanic Legacy Scenic Byway to Klamath Falls, Oregon. A spur of the byway branches east on California Route 161, leading 40 miles to Lava Beds National Monument. We couldn't resist the chance to explore lava tubes and view ancient rock art, so we did, while camped in nearby Tionesta.

We also investigated World War II Valor in the Pacific National Monument's Tule Lake Unit. It includes a former relocation center where Japanese Americans were incarcerated during WWII. Much of what's left is behind wire-topped fences and locked gates. We missed the weekly guided tour, but the ranger at the visitor center shared stories, and we stopped to see the small exhibit at the Tulelake–Butte Valley Fairgrounds and Museum. We recommend doing this; it provides a sobering but important history lesson.

OREGON

In Klamath Falls, the Volcanic Legacy Scenic Byway departs from Route 97 and branches north-northwest on Oregon Route 140 toward Crater Lake. Although we skipped Crater Lake on this trip, if you haven't been there, by all means, go. Instead, we headed for the central Oregon metropolis of Bend, 140 miles north, stopping along the way at Chiloquin's Collier Memorial State Park and Logging Museum to tour the historic equipment, structures and fascinating photos.

Bend is a city we never tire of visiting. Browsing one-of-a-kind shops and strolling the banks of the Deschutes River rewards our time spent in this lively downtown. We are repeat



customers at the Deschutes Brewery for burgers and craft beer, and Zydeco Kitchen for fresh Cajun-inspired Northwest cuisine. Our new favorite indulgence is downtown's Bontà Natural Artisan Gelato.

To compensate for indulging, we did some hiking at Smith Rock State Park, 27 miles northeast of Bend. Here we ogled rock climbers who, from a distance, resembled insects scaling the sheer cliff face.

Bend's High Desert Museum, a large history, natural history and art museum south of town, beautifully showcases the region. Nine miles further south,



GET YOUR KICKS ON ROUTE 97

Beyond tracing a long stretch of the Volcanic Legacy Scenic Byway in California and Oregon, Route 97 links to four other National Scenic Byways: Oregon's Outback and Cascade Lakes and Washington's Coulee Corridor and Stevens Pass Greenway. www.fhwa.dot.gov/byways



Lava Lands Visitor Center, the hub of Newberry National Volcanic Monument, directs sightseers to nearby Lava River Cave, as well as Paulina Falls, and Paulina and East lakes in the caldera beneath Paulina Peak.

For a picturesque day trip, the Cascade Lakes Scenic Byway heads west from Bend toward Mount Bachelor before turning south near the crest of the Cascades. The nearby town of Sisters bustled with people enjoying a popular bluegrass music festival and street fair when we visited.

Although last summer's wildfire smoke marred our views upon arrival, a shift in the weather allowed us to do some stargazing. One evening we drove 30-odd miles southeast from Bend to the University of Oregon's Pine Mountain Observatory. In summer it opens for public viewing on Friday and Saturday evenings. We were thrilled to see Saturn and its rings through the 32-inch reflecting telescope.



(Above, left to right): At Oregon's Smith Rock State Park, just outside Terrebonne, the authors hiked a riverside trail and photographed rock climbers as they scaled the sheer rock cliffs. Near Bend, central Oregon's largest city, an Airstream trailer rolls down Route 97. West of Bend, on the Cascades Lakes Scenic Byway, Mount Bachelor woos a kayaker on Davis Lake.

WASHINGTON

Just over the Columbia River in Goldendale, 150 miles north of Bend on Route 97, Washington State Parks operates the Goldendale Observatory on a year-round schedule that's more flexible than Pine Mountain's.

Our trailer's next stop was 100 miles further north in Ellensburg, home to Central Washington University and a handsome late-19th-century brick downtown. We browsed art galleries and the local history museum with a surprising collection of early motor vehicles, including one of the first station wagons.

About 3 miles east of downtown Ellensburg, Olmstead Place Historical State Park preserves a working pioneer farm and offers guided tours on summer weekends. The well-tended garden and the old farmhouse convey a lived-in feeling. Personal items and furnishings suggest the occupants will be home soon to serve guests slices of pie with fresh cream.

We looked forward to visiting the Yakima Valley for its local wines but learned the valley also produces 70 percent of all U.S.-grown hops. A few miles east of Yakima, near Moxee, Bale Breaker Brewing Company has a popular taproom where our favorites were the Topcutter IPA and Raging Ditch Dry-Hopped Blonde.

At the American Hop Museum on Route 97 in Toppenish, we learned about hop production and viewed old-time equipment used in cultivation and processing. Across the street we found the Northern Pacific Railway Museum. Located in a beautifully restored depot, this museum is worth a visit. An extensive collection of Northern Pacific Railroad memorabilia includes reconstructed Pullman berths. Caboose and other railcars occupy the adjacent rail yard.

Newberry National Volcanic Monument: A 12-mile drive south of Bend leads to the Lava Lands Visitor Center and Lava Butte, where a short trail takes hikers to an active fire lookout and 360-degree views.

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HIGH-DESERT HIGHWAY

Back in Yakima, the large, modern Yakima Valley Museum houses a well-presented historical collection; we especially liked the neon signs. We couldn't leave the region without stopping at several wineries including Bonair Winery near Zillah and Naches Heights Vineyard off U.S. Route 12, north of Yakima. Both are small, casual, friendly places that craft good wine and where you're likely to meet the owner/winemaker in the tasting room.

From Ellensburg north to Chelan, Route 97 runs closer to the Cascades' eastern flank, climbing over 4,124-foot Blewett Pass before descending into the Wenatchee Valley. The Wenatchee-Cashmere-Leavenworth area is definitely worth visiting, if you have time. But we continued heading north to stay at one of our favorite campgrounds, the City of Chelan's Lakeshore RV Park, and visit remote Stehekin.

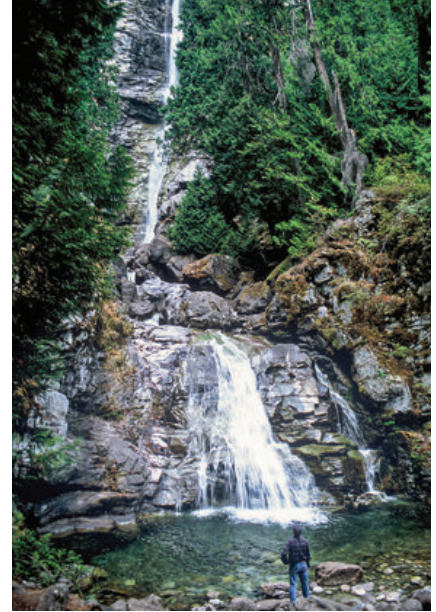
The isolated settlement of Stehekin, home to fewer than 100 year-round residents, is scattered around the upper

end of 55-mile-long Lake Chelan. Inaccessible by road, Stehekin welcomes all comers by ferry, private boat, barge, seaplane or on foot. Scenic beauty, outdoor recreation and isolation draw visitors. So, too, does the Stehekin Pastry Company.

After a 20-minute flight in a de Havilland Beaver, operated by Chelan Seaplanes, we arrived at Stehekin Landing and promptly hiked to the pastry shop. Refueled, we continued to Rainbow Falls and the historic Buckner Orchard where we boarded the shuttle bus to the end of the line at High Bridge.

During a brief layover, the view from the bridge captivated us, as did five passengers we met upon reboarding. All were nearly done hiking the Pacific Crest Trail, completing 2,575 miles from the Mexican border in roughly five months. They were here to pick up mail and supplies before finishing the final 90 miles.

We returned to Chelan aboard the *Lady of the Lake II*.



From remote Stehekin, Washington, visitors can take a 3½-mile hike to Rainbow Falls or hop the shuttle from the boat landing for a narrated ride to the 312-foot cascade.

BRITISH COLUMBIA

From Chelan, Route 97 follows the Columbia River for 30 miles before heading into the region spelled Okanogan south of the U.S.-Canadian border and Okanagan north of it.



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(Left) The *Lady of the Lake II* departs from Stehekin on 55-mile-long Lake Chelan. (Far left) True to its name, Lakeshore RV Park sidles up to the lake with 165 full-hookup campsites.

Our border crossing was quick and uneventful with passport ID cards. We then traveled 15 miles to Oliver, a small town that promotes itself as Canada's Wine Capital.

Duty-bound to investigate the source of the town's fame, we visited Tinhorn Creek Vineyards, Black Hills Estate Winery and Stoneboat Vineyards, all within a few miles. The first two wineries are large and modern with spacious tasting rooms, terraces and vineyard views. Tinhorn Creek includes a full-service restaurant, while Black

Hills Estate features a short but tempting menu and tasting under the tutelage of a "wine evangelist." Family-owned and operated Stoneboat has a cozy tasting room. All three offered excellent wine at fair prices.

Oliver averages 13 inches of precipitation a year, making the southern Okanagan Valley area Canada's only desert — a fact that delights locals and visitors alike. We traveled in this semiarid climate most of our Route 97 journey, and in southern British Columbia we reached its northern

limits. Coupled with abundant water from lakes and mountain runoff, this climate fosters agricultural abundance, especially orchards and vineyards.

In the 1870s when English immigrant Barrington Price arrived in the adjacent Similkameen Valley as an agent for the Hudson's Bay Company, he must have perceived the region's agricultural potential. By 1877 he had built and began operating a gristmill near what is now the town of Keremeos. Crafted by hand from local materials, this 138-year-old mill has



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(Above, from left) In 1877, Barrington Price opened this water-powered gristmill near Keremos, British Columbia. West Kelowna's Mission Hill Winery offers wine tasting and tours of its cellar.

been restored to operating condition and is designated a British Columbia Heritage Site. We marveled at the water-driven pulley-and-belt system that turns millstones. Charming gardens include a heritage orchard.

Kelowna proved to be a modern, bustling city of 180,000 people, making it the largest community not only in the Okanagan Valley but anywhere along the 1,956-mile route. Bend, the next largest city, has just over 80,000 residents, although its metropolitan population approaches 165,000.

In Kelowna we visited the farmers market, savored lunch on a lake cruise, toured the Okanagan Mission, strolled the waterfront and stood in line for some yummy ice cream on a warm afternoon. We toured the surrounding area, including heading 100 miles up B.C. 97 to Kamloops, requiring yet another ice-cream stop and investigating the Kettle Valley Steam Railway.

Completed 100 years ago, the 325-mile-long railroad served inland southern British Columbia across

mountainous terrain. This railway engineering feat was dubbed McCulloch's Wonder after its chief engineer. Southeast of Kelowna, we drove up a washboard gravel road to Myra Canyon where a 7.5-mile stretch of the railroad snaked around the canyon on 18 trestles and through two tunnels. It's now part of a long-distance hiking and biking trail.

In Summerland the last operating section of the Kettle Valley Railroad offers excursions over the remaining 10 miles of track. The beautifully restored 1913 steam locomotive pulls four cars on a scenic 90-minute trip with views of farms, vineyards, mountains and Okanagan Lake.

We navigated a very narrow, winding road and hiked a short, steep trail to the top of Giants Head Park in Summerland. Then we enjoyed a relaxing lunch on the patio of Dirty Laundry, a nearby winery we had spotted from the train. It seemed a fitting conclusion to a fulfilling journey.

We'll save the road north, to Alaska, for another trip. 🚗

Okanagan Lake shapes the western boundary of Kelowna, by far the biggest city along the route.

WHERE TO STAY ALONG THE WAY

RVers traveling on the east side of the Cascade Range discover unmatched scenery and outdoor recreation, along with a wide range of RV parks and campgrounds. Here are some of the places we camped on our Route 97 trip.

BRITISH COLUMBIA

Desert Gem RV Resort, Oliver

Clean and modern park with a convenient in-town location. 888-925-9966, www.desertgemrv.com

CALIFORNIA

Friendly RV Park, Weed

Good Sam Park just beyond town with a view of Mount Shasta. 530-938-2805, www.friendlyrvpark.com

Hawk's Nest, Tionesta

Good Sam Park 15 minutes from Lava Beds National Monument. 530-664-3187 www.hawksnestrvcabins.com

OREGON

Crown Villa RV Resort, Bend

Top-rated RV resort on the edge of central Oregon's biggest city. 866-500-5300 www.crownvillarvresort.com

Scandia RV Park, Bend

Popular Good Sam Park; make summer reservations far in advance. 541-382-6206, www.scandiarv.com

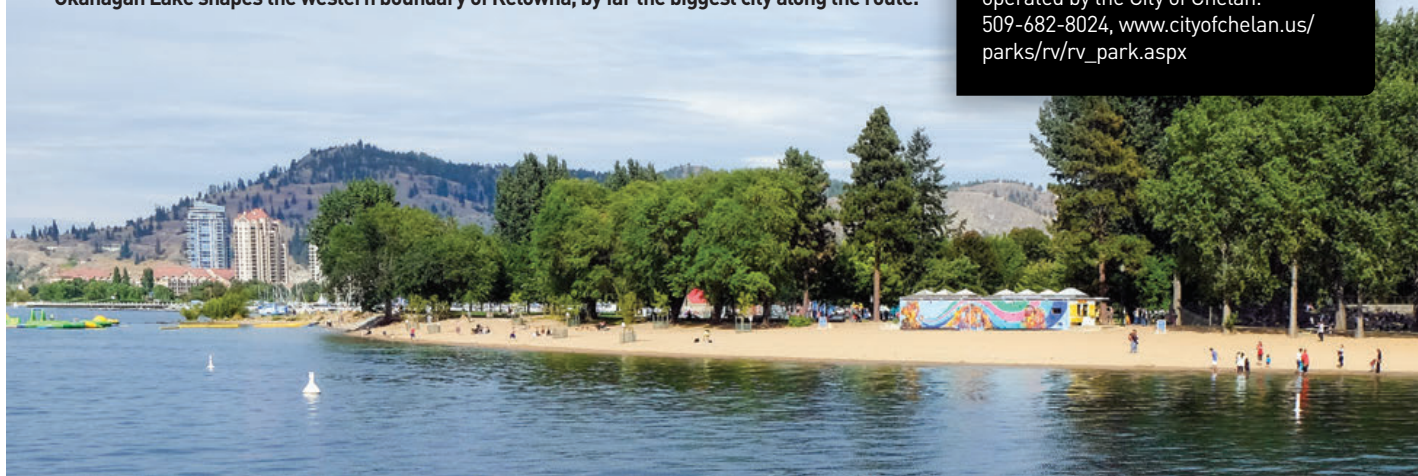
WASHINGTON

Ellensburg KOA, Ellensburg

KOA park on the Yakima River with lots of pull-through sites. 509-925-9319, www.koa.com/campgrounds/ellensburg

Lakeshore RV Park, Chelan

Beautiful lakefront campground operated by the City of Chelan. 509-682-8024, www.cityofchelan.us/parks/rv/rv_park.aspx



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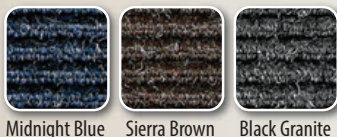
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PUSHING THE DESIGN ENVELOPE

Fifth-wheel manufacturers continue to pioneer new floorplans, but RV buyers can find great new concepts in any type of towable

article by Bruce Hampson photos by Shawn Spence Photography



New for 2016 (above, from left): KZ's Venom V4020DQ can hold up to five Harleys in its 13-foot garage. Breaking with tradition, Keystone's Montana 3820FK moves the kitchen and wraparound-booth dinette up front in space usually reserved for the bedroom.

In any industry, great ideas have a way of trickling down. They generally start at higher-priced products, then, as economies of scale kick in and manufacturing processes evolve, find their way onto an array of less-costly units.

In the RV industry, the fifth-wheel segment in general — and its toy-hauler side in particular — is where you'll usually find rigs charting new ground. Among the 2016 models that truly hammer home this assessment are Keystone's Montana 3820FK, KZ's Venom V4020DQ and Grand Design's Momentum 376TH.

Of the three, the Montana 3820FK is a "traditional" fifth-wheel, with a floorplan that is anything but. A marquee brand for Keystone for more than 15 years — nearly all of them spent as the top-selling luxury-class fifth-wheel in America — Montana last year offered a unique rear-den model. For the 2016 model year, the Montana design and engineering crew went in yet another direction, literally, by moving the traditional midway galley into the front cabin with the 3820FK model.

"We took our bedroom/bathroom combination that's done really well for us in our front-living-room floorplans and put it in the back end," Mark Krol, Montana's High Country product manager, told the trade journal *RVBusiness*. "The front kitchen offers two big benefits — the cabinets are low and easy to reach, and there's less shaking up there in transit. By moving the kitchen up front to the most stable part of a fifth-wheel, your kitchen — and all the dishes, glasses and appliances — are fine."

Front kitchens in fifth-wheels aren't a revolutionary concept. The former Fleetwood Enterprises offered one years back, as did Dutchmen Manufacturing in its now-discontinued Infinity line. Keystone, however, appears to have gotten it right, with the entire floorplan flowing easily. By moving the galley forward in the 42-foot, 4-inch Montana and designing an 8-foot wraparound-booth dinette, buffet cabinets in a curbside slideout and a unique automotive-style windshield (with electric shade) set into the front cap, Keystone gave

the main cabin completely over to an airy living room with theater seating and a sofa bed in opposing slides. The bathroom follows, with its unique pivot-hinge door for easy maneuvering through the side hall, and the master bedroom is in the back.

Keystone also straightened the profile of the 3820FK and its front-lounge sister ships, the new 3710FL and 3711FL, to maintain a 6-foot, 8-inch ceiling height up front. MSRP is \$85,000, and in case you were wondering, weight distribution on the front-kitchen model with its 16,800-pound GVWR isn't a problem. "We're still under 2,800 pounds hitch weight," Krol pointed out.

Meanwhile, the folks at Grand Design and KZ are pushing the envelope in fifth-wheel toy-hauler design with the smallest and, on the flip side, the largest garages yet seen. "We heard from a lot of customers who go back and forth between the traditional high-end fifth-wheel and a toy hauler," said Nate Goldenberg, Momentum's product manager. "No one had yet come up with a true front-lounge fifth-wheel with enough rear storage for a motorcycle." That's what the Momentum 376TH offers.

Accessed by a lower ramp angle than found on traditional toy haulers, the 42-foot Momentum's garage is just 9 feet by 5 feet, 6 inches — enough space for a motorcycle or golf



Grand Design's Momentum 376TH: Lounge up front, motorcycle in back.



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cart, with added storage built into the walls — and is completely segregated from the living quarters; its only entry is through the rear. Inside, the floorplan features a mid-cabin galley melded to the same front lounge found in Grand Design's Solitude fiver; both it and the rear bedroom are elevated above the main quarters. There's also an outdoor kitchen, three TVs, three air-conditioning units, and an onboard AC generator and fuel station. MSRP is \$96,000.

The folks at KZ have high hopes for their Venom, as well. After all, being able to accommodate side-by-side ATVs for transport is de rigueur with today's big-ramped fifth-wheels, but how many can tote them in rows? The linchpin to the unique V4020DQ design is a pivoting rear-bedroom wall. With the wall down, the Venom nonetheless boasts a 13-foot garage, among the biggest in the industry. With the wall safely tucked up at the ceiling, the 43-foot, 5-inch fifth-wheel features a garage nearly half its length — 20 feet — that is deep enough to accommodate two side-by-side ATVs front to back or four or five Harley-Davidson motorcycles.

"We're patenting the idea for the wall," KZ President Aram Koltookian told *RVBusiness* when describing the floorplan. "The rear bedroom has a queen bed that comes down from the ceiling, and the whole rear wall comes down to close off the master suite with a tight seal." The first front-living-room toy hauler, the Venom has a 19,000-pound GWR and an MSRP from \$85,000 to \$90,000.

Granted, these are exceptional units, but not everyone is in the market for a higher-end fifth-wheel. You can step down a little to, say, Gulf Stream Coach's cute 19- to 23-foot Vintage Cruiser, a 1950s-influenced fiberglass travel trailer with an \$18,000 MSRP. Or you can step down a lot with Travel Lite's Rayzr truck camper with a \$5,495 MSRP.

The big fivers may be steeped in innovation, but they aren't the only place you'll find it, as seen with these two models and the rest of the new-for-2016 towables on the following pages.



Gulf Stream Vintage Cruiser

When Shasta RV introduced its retro-flavored Airflyte last year, the Forest River subsidiary demonstrated just how popular the vintage look continues to be. Last fall, Gulf Stream Coach released its Vintage Cruiser, a “cute” new line of aerodynamic, ultralight fiberglass travel trailers that, in the company’s own words, “recaptures the style and fun of camping in the 1950s while using the latest technology, materials and conveniences.”

“The allure of this nostalgic new line, with its modified teardrop shape and blue/teal-accented exterior, has as much to do with the Vintage Cruiser’s style as it does with its construction and amenities,” said Tim Dennig, national sales manager for Gulf Stream’s Ultralight division. Modern amenities include seamless Azdel-composite-backed, vacuum-bonded fiberglass skin and one-piece front, roof and back walls. Also drawing attention are the trailer’s 6-foot, 4-inch headroom and full galley with a two-door, 6-cubic-foot refrigerator. The Vintage Cruiser is available in 19- and 23-foot floorplans with weights between 3,000 and 4,000 pounds and retail pricing in the \$18,000 range for a 19-footer.



Travel Lite Rayzr

What’s unique about Travel Lite’s new hard-side Rayzr is it does not have the customary sleeping area overhanging the cab. Instead, the Rayzr angles

from front to rear. Travel-Lite President Dustin Johns likens the truck camper to sleeping units found on semitrucks.

With MSRPs starting at \$5,495, the Rayzr is available in three floorplans: the FB (front bed), FK (front kitchen) and SS (super sleeper). Weights come in between 885 pounds (for the SS) and 1,075 pounds (for the FK). All feature 6 feet, 2 inches of interior height, a one-piece fiberglass-wrapped roof, a 45-amp converter/charger and a 5-gallon LP-gas cylinder. The FB and FK also offer a 12,000-Btu furnace, a two-burner cooktop and a Shurflo water pump.



Cruiser RV Boss 4290

Anyone who’s been around muscle cars from the 1960s and early ’70s can’t help but be attracted to Cruiser RV’s first fifth-wheel toy hauler and its aggressive rally-stripped exterior. The Boss 4290 (an allusion to the ultimate muscle car, the Mustang Boss 429) definitely has testosterone appeal — and it only gets better inside, where the setup is less family trailer and more man cave.

“We tried to do something that’s a bit outside the box,” said Jeff Fought, vice president of the Thor Industries subsidiary. “We’ve got a buffet area, an elevated area with chairs, and TVs all over the place.” The Boss 4290 has, in fact, *five* TVs: one in the garage, another in the bedroom and three in the main galley, including two 40-inch units mounted side by side for watching two games at once. With a \$94,000 MSRP, the 40-foot triple-axle fifth-wheel also has a 12-foot garage with a half-bath, a side patio and a 20,000-pound GVWR.

What’s next? The Boss 3510, which, Fought said, will feature a larger garage and “massive” recliner area in the main cabin with oversize windows.



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Skyline RV Layton Trident

According to EverGreen RV President Don Emahiser, the new Layton Trident “doesn’t look like any fifth-wheels out there.” Built by EverGreen subsidiary Skyline RV, the Trident features a rustic interior that can be described as reclaimed barn wood used in a high-end setting. “We were looking for something out of the box, something different,” said Mike Scheetz, Skyline’s general manager, “and the country kind of rustic look is popular now.”

With MSRPs in the mid-\$40,000 range, the Trident is currently available in two floorplans, with more in the works. The 395RL has a GVWR of 12,000 pounds and a length just shy of 36 feet,

while the bunkhouse 399BH has the same GVWR and a length of nearly 40 feet.



Prime Time Fury

Forest River’s Prime Time division jumped into the entry-level toy-hauler market with the introduction of the Fury, featuring two floorplans, the 2910 and 2614X. The 2910, with an MSRP of \$36,000, has a 7,000-pound dry weight and a length of 34½ feet. The \$34,300 2614X is lighter at 6,200 pounds dry weight and shorter at 31½ feet.

“There are a lot of people out there who don’t want to spend \$60,000, \$70,000, \$90,000 on a toy hauler and have to go out and buy a bigger

truck,” said Andrew Eakle, Prime Time sales representative. “The Fury line is towable by properly equipped half-ton pickups and more than a dozen SUVs, and that opens it up to a new customers,” Eakle added.



CrossRoads Z-1 Lite

According to Statistical Survey Inc., which tracks such things, 23 percent of all travel-trailer retail sales in 2014 were 24 feet or shorter. Knowing this, CrossRoads RV has introduced the Z-1 Lite line. Its three floorplans — one a rear bunk, one a rear bath and the third a sofa-slide model — range from 22 to 23 feet long with dry weights from 3,400 to

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3,600 pounds. MSRPs start at \$15,000.

"It's towable by SUVs that families are really gravitating toward now — your Ford Explorers, Jeep Grand Cherokees, Honda Pilots," said Sales Manager Troy Nusbaum, adding that the 8-foot exterior width and 6-foot, 6-inch interior height are two of the line's competitive advantages. "We've also done some unique features in this niche — 4,400-pound axles are standard on everything we build, along with 15-inch tires, roof-mounted air conditioner, power awning," he added.



Jayco Designer

Last seen in production for the 2009

model year, the Designer has been reincarnated as Jayco's top-of-the-line fifth-wheel for 2016. During its development, Jayco polled full-time RVers to find out which amenities they think are most important in a fifth-wheel aimed at the high-end full-time market. The result was a lot of standard features that are typically options with other manufacturers, said Benjamin Johnson, senior product director of luxury fifth-wheels for Jayco.

Exterior features include 17½-inch H-rated tires, 8,000-pound axles, a 12-inch Magnum frame, cut-and-buff full-body paint, 3-inch double-layered laminate side walls and Carefree of Colorado awnings. On the inside, standard offerings include arched ceilings made possible by 6-inch non-tapered continuous rafters, a residential-ducted Helix cooling system, 8-foot slide rooms, a 7-foot ceiling in the upper-deck bedroom (or living room) and a full multiplex wiring system controlled by a LinkPad tablet system

from Lippert Components that also surfs the Web and shows preloaded RV-tips-and-tricks videos.

Available in four wide-body floorplans from 38 feet, 8 inches to 41 feet, 1 inch, and with up to five slideouts, the Designer carries MSRPs ranging from \$110,000 to \$130,000. Other upscale touches include a farmhouse sink, a hidden bedroom TV, a 23-cubic-foot residential refrigerator and a 1,000-watt power inverter.



Vanleigh RV Vilano

Launched in January 2015 in Burnsville, Mississippi, Vanleigh RV is co-owned by three generations of the founding family

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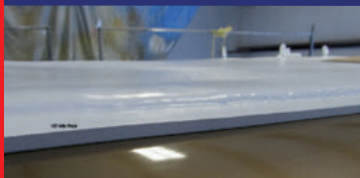
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of Tiffin Motor Homes, including Bob Tiffin, his son, Van, and grandson, Leigh. "We want to offer people a great quality product at a competitive price and give them that same Tiffin customer service that they have come to know in the motorized segment," said Leigh Tiffin.

"The thing that most people are struck with when they walk into one of our units is the millwork. Hardwood cabinetry, hardwood valances, hardwood fascia — that's where we want to be different in the fifth-wheel segment," said Tiffin. Other touches include USB-integrated nightstands and 8-foot-tall slide rooms, which Tiffin noted not only open up the space but also provide additional storage opportunities.

Currently, the Vilano comes in two floorplans in the low- to mid-\$80,000 range. Both the 38-foot, 11-inch 365RL and the 34-foot, 7-inch 325RL are three-slide units with a 16,000-pound GVWR and have a forward bedroom and a rear living area with a center-island kitchen.

a huge wardrobe slide, a residential sunken tub in the dual-access master bathroom, all new woodgrain interior and a huge 58-inch flat-screen TV, one of the biggest in the RV industry, according to the manufacturer. The fifth-wheel has a 20,000-pound GVWR.



Lance Camper 650

While Lance has made a number of changes to its truck-camper and travel-trailer lines, the Lance 650 truck camper is a new model specifically designed for half-ton pickups with a 5½-foot or 6½-foot box.

"You've probably seen companies coming out with lightweight products for the aluminum Ford F-150," said Lance owner Jack Cole. "That truck weighs about 800 pounds less than its predecessor, and all of that weight [savings] went into carrying capacity. So that helped us out a lot, designing a product that would fit well on it, insofar as the GVWR is concerned. There won't be anything in the market that comes close to its weight and standard equipment," Cole added.



Heartland Road Warrior 427

Heartland RV has dramatically upped the ante with many of its fifth-wheel brands, not the least of which is its 44-foot, 1-inch Road Warrior 427. "The kitchen has been relocated all the way forward, toward the main bath in the upper-deck living area, and you literally walk in between the kitchen and living room," said A.J. Jones, general manager of Heartland's toy-hauler brands. "In most toy-hauler floorplans, the kitchen and living room are combined. Here, they are completely separated."

Like many Heartland toy haulers, the Road Warrior 427 features the company's popular side patio. Other amenities include a king-size bed,



Forest River Vengeance

There are plenty of side-patio toy haulers on the market with nice features, but Forest River's Vengeance 40D12 manages to stand out in the crowd. "What makes this nice is you have a 12-foot side patio," said Craig Wilkinson, Vengeance sales rep.

Not only does the larger patio have access to the kitchen, it offers a separate door to the half-bath in the rear of the fifth-wheel. "You've got easy access to the bathroom, an entertainment system, a fireplace and a TV that you don't have to bring in and out," added Wilkinson. In addition, the free-floating patio railing is easy to collapse and stow, and the garage has an inch-thick floor and 5,000-pound tie-downs.

The 40D12, which is just shorter than 43 feet in length and expected to retail for about \$100,000, boasts four televisions, LED lighting, hardwood fascia on the cabinets and residential crown molding, as well as three air-conditioning units. The interior carries over the Mediterranean kitchen styling from the Vengeance Touring Edition.



CrossRoads/Bison Coach Toy Hauler

Bison Coach worked with its sister Thor Industries division, CrossRoads RV, to adapt what had been a horse trailer to a toy hauler with a full garage. "CrossRoads said, 'We could make a heck of a toy hauler out of that thing,'" said Rick Tribble, a Bison regional sales manager, "and they did." One reason the unit adapted well is its 19-foot living quarters with a walk-around bed above the gooseneck, which is unusual in the equine-trailer industry.

"Our construction for a horse trailer is a lot more stout than a typical RV," said Ron Lung, Bison's general manager. "I'm not saying an RV isn't built well, but we build [a horse trailer] totally different. It's lower to the ground and has phenomenal capacity. Plus, it has to carry up to 1,500 pounds per horse. This was originally a four-horse trailer, so that gives you 6,000 pounds — the weight of a vehicle," he added. 🚚

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Solar systems that harness the sun's rays and turn its energy into electrical power have been around for a long time, and RVers who appreciate the seclusion and economics of primitive campgrounds have embraced this silent power for many years. New, and continuing, technology has leapfrogged solar power to new levels, and RVers can now build systems that make living off the grid more practical than ever. We assembled and installed a robust system using the latest equipment available at the time (this technology changes rapidly) with the help of the experts from AM Solar in Springfield, Oregon, that transformed the fifth-wheel trailer into a mini power station.

While the attributes of a solar system, including electrical independence, are well-established, a primary benefit is to properly condition batteries. Solar power, through a suitably designed system (which includes a good charge controller) offsets continual deep discharges because the batteries are constantly being conditioned in response to actual usage. In the end, lead-acid batteries, for example, can last twice as long. At today's prices for batteries, that's a big savings.

Preplanning is crucial to building a good solar system; you

just can't slap a bunch of components together and expect positive results. The first step is to figure out your needs based on how you use the RV. In our case we determined that we wanted enough power to run the microwave, induction cooktop, hair dryer, fireplace flame (for visual ambience), entertainment systems and all the other 12-volt DC accessories in the rig and, of course, condition the batteries properly.

Our goal was to build a system big enough to allow complete independence from the grid, unless we wanted to run the air conditioning. It's not practical to set up a solar system to continuously power the air conditioner(s), and in our case we rely on LP-gas to run the refrigerator. Systems can be designed to handle a residential refrigerator, but the battery bank and number of panels must be increased.

Our original calculations had us settling on three 160-watt solar panels, two AGM batteries (300 amp-hours), a 2,000-watt inverter/charger and a controller with a boost feature. After discussing our needs with AM Solar owner Greg Holder, we made a number of changes and upgrades. It kind of reminded me of remodeling a stationary home; changes are inevitable.

In the end we upgraded to four 160-watt panels after learning that the extra wattage eliminated the need to tilt the panels to follow the sun. That was a big selling point, since we would rather not spend too much time on the roof. The biggest upgrade was to lithium batteries, which upped the price tag considerably. Then to condition the lithium batteries properly, we upgraded to a Magnum Energy MagnaSine Hybrid inverter/charger.



The four 160-watt solar panels fit nicely on the front section of the fifth-wheel, and wiring is mostly concealed.

ELECTRICAL INDEPENDENCE

When all was said and done, we had assembled a very powerful system with all the bells and whistles, banking on optimum performance and long-term reliability. It also satisfied our secret desire to have the ultimate system for our needs.

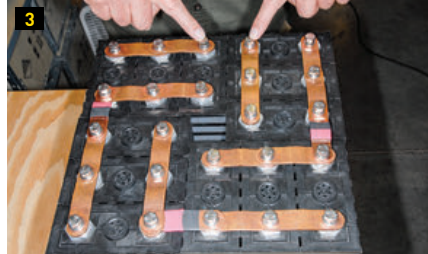
Batteries

Lithium batteries are no longer science fiction; use in electric cars has made lithium batteries very popular, and for good reason. They last a really long time and can handle many more discharging/charging cycles than their lead-acid/AGM counterparts. These batteries maintain rated performance when taken down to the maximum depth of discharge, which is an amazing 80 percent. Lead-acid and AGM batteries should not be discharged beyond the 50 percent threshold.

To put the performance numbers in perspective, the lithium batteries used in the test system will provide 240 amp-hours before recharging versus 150 for lead-acid or AGM batteries. An even bigger consideration is voltage. As the charge level in lead-acid and AGM batteries decreases, so does voltage, which impacts appliances and accessories. Lithium batteries maintain full voltage until fully discharged, and then voltage drops precipitously.

Because the performance characteristics of lithium batteries are so much different, a battery management system (BMS) is critical to prevent damage from over-discharging or excessive voltage. Mini BMS circuit boards are wired between cells, and these boards are tied into a master BMS control box. Red lights on each BMS cell-level board flash when everything is OK. Four mini BMS boards were used on the battery bank built for this system.

When the BMS recognizes that the



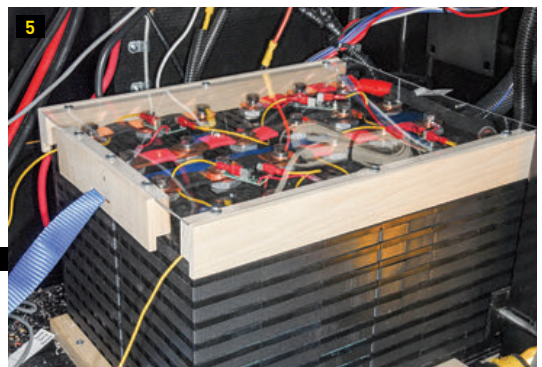
1) Remote panels for the MagnaSine Hybrid inverter (left) and the Blue Sky Energy IPN-ProRemote charge controller (center) were mounted in a cabinet that was clearly visible. Both panels provide detailed programming to fine-tune the system for optimum performance. Users have incredible control over functions, but programming must initially be set by the installer — and users should resist making changes that could damage the lithium batteries. To prevent damage, the ring around the reset button (arrow) illuminates red when batteries are outside the threshold voltage. **2)** The battery bank is built from individual 3.2-volt cells that are banded together in parallel to make a super cell. **3)** Four super cells are connected in series using copper straps for the 12.8-volt, 300-amp-hour capacity required for this system. Batteries can be configured in a number of footprints.

high- or low-voltage threshold has been breached, it automatically shuts down the battery bank, well before any damage can occur. When that happens, the light around the reset button mounted inside the RV illuminates to inform the user there's an issue with voltage. If any of the mini boards discovers a change in the threshold voltage — high or low — in any cell, the entire bank is shut down.

Building a battery bank from lithium cells is not designed for the do-it-yourselfer. There's a lot of science behind assembling the bank, and that should be left to the professionals. The batteries are assembled using individual

super cells that are rated at 3.2 volts and 100 amp-hours. These super cells can be configured to offer greater flexibility when looking for space to house the battery bank, unlike conventional deep-cycle batteries that have established dimensions.

For our system we paralleled three



4) Mini battery management system (BMS) circuit boards are wired between cells. These boards send voltage information to the master control box. Low or high voltage will shut down the system. **5)** When complete, yellow sense wires are used to connect the mini BMS boards to each cell in the battery bank. Red lights on the boards flash when the system is working properly. Clear Plexiglas in a wood frame protects the top of the battery bank and allows for visibility of the flashing red lights on the mini BMS boards.

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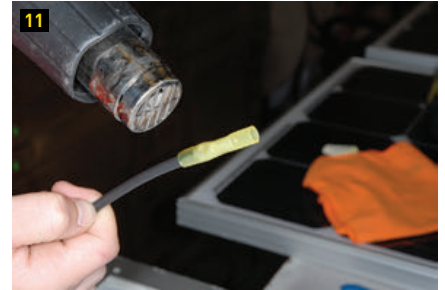
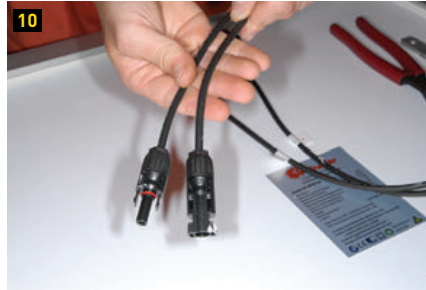
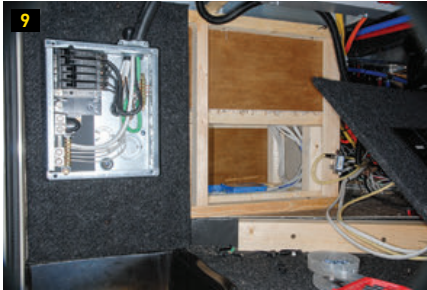
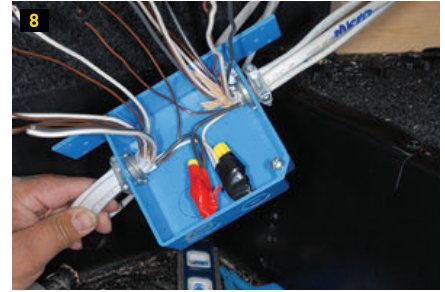
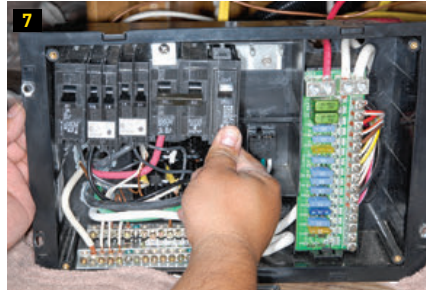
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ELECTRICAL INDEPENDENCE



6) A test light is used to identify 120-volt AC circuits that will be powered by the inverter and how they relate to the breakers in the power-distribution center. **7)** Never rely on the breaker labels, which can be mislabeled, as they were here. **8)** Electrical J-boxes were used to make the 120-volt AC connections necessary to isolate the accessories that were targeted for power by the inverter. **9)** A secondary power-distribution box with circuit breakers was installed in the system. This provides circuit breakers for the appliances and outlets that are wired into the new solar system. **10)** Existing terminals that come with the prewired solar panels are cut off and the wire leads lengthened using butt connectors. **11)** Ends of the butt connectors are heat-shrunk around wire, providing a weather-tight seal.

smaller cells into a super cell and then put four super cells into series using copper plates to make a 12.8-volt, 300-amp-hour battery bank. Once the batteries were configured and banded, they were initially electrically balanced so the voltage is consistent and at a full charge. This step requires the use of a sophisticated charger that can be controlled accurately.

Normally, lithium batteries are rated for around 2,000 charge/discharge cycles, which in itself is much better than the 500 to 1,000 cycles expected of a lead-acid or AGM battery. AM Solar tunes its proprietary BMS so that it operates in a narrower window than the maximum and minimum voltages established by the battery manufacturer, which increases the expected charge/discharge cycles to 3,000 to 5,000. If the user discharges the lithium batteries 80 percent 365 days a year (which almost no one will do), the batteries should last eight to 13 years. Given a more

practical use of the batteries in normal living circumstances, the batteries should last at least 15 years, which makes the \$2,599 price tag a lot easier to amortize.

Lithium batteries will not discharge much when in storage, and after testing for five months with no external charging support, the voltage barely changed. Another welcome feature is that lithium batteries do not have to be

12) In typical AM Solar fashion, all wire leads on the solar panels are secured with cable tie-mounts that have been fitted with 3M VHB adhesive tape. **13)** Mounting brackets are bolted to the frame of each solar panel. They provide enough clearance off the roof to allow for good air circulation. They can also be fitted with hardware for tilting. **14)** Cardboard used to pack the solar panels in shipping boxes is used to configure mounting positions on the roof. This provides a great visual of how the installation will look and keeps clear of any roof obstructions. **15)** The backing on the VHB tape is removed from each bracket foot, which can be adjusted by the knurled knob. **16)** Once the contact area is cleaned with alcohol, the VHB tape provides a strong enough bond to hold the panels on a fiberglass roof. **17)** The brackets are screwed into the substrate on a rubber membrane.



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fully charged each time. That means you can charge them to a certain point (if there's little sun or electrical power is not available) without negatively affecting conditioning. Lithium batteries can be charged very quickly.

When compared to batteries of equal capacity, the lithium counterparts are smaller and lighter. Each cell weighs only 7 pounds, which means the entire battery bank for this system weighed only 84 pounds, less than the weight of one 6-volt AGM battery.

Undoubtedly, bad press that surfaced a while back created some discomfort when considering mounting

18, 19) Self-leveling sealant is used around the brackets and must cover the screw heads to ensure watertightness. **20)** The 4-gauge cables were previously routed near this roof vent and connected to the proper terminals in the connection box before it was screwed to the roof. A generous helping of sealant was applied to the roof, under the box, to make sure the hole needed to route the large cables is watertight. The wire leads from each panel are then connected to the terminals in the connection box.

these batteries inside an RV storage compartment. Fires, created by battery overheating, were once a problem. The batteries under scrutiny were lithium cobalt oxide formulations and were subject to thermal runaway hazards that led to fires. The newer crop of batteries is lithium iron phosphate, which is basically noncombustible. Combine the latest-generation lithium

batteries with a solid BMS, and the system becomes very safe.

Panels and Charge Controller

Solar-panel technology has moved very fast in the past few years. AM Solar specializes in the most up-to-date products and for this installation used its SF160, 36-cell mono-crystalline panels. All the panels are custom-built for AM

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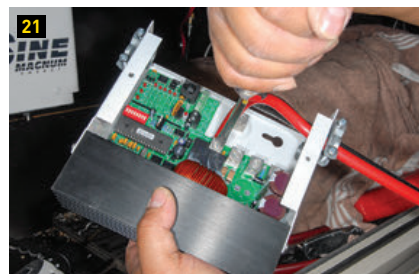


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21) All the cables from the solar panels and breaker boxes are routed to the designated compartment that holds the components of the system. Here, the Blue Sky Energy charge controller is being wired before mounting on the wall. **22)** The MagnaSine Hybrid inverter/charger is very heavy and requires precise mounting to keep it from moving when the RV is on the road. There must be 6 inches of clearance around the inverter to allow for proper ventilation, which relates to optimum performance and safety. A 3/16-inch aluminum plate was cut to size, painted and bolted to a metal frame inside the storage compartment to which the inverter was bolted.



Solar, and Greg Holder specifies at least 36 cells, so they are large enough to capture the most energy. The panels operate at 18 volts and are rated to have an 8.8-amp output. They measure 26³/₄ by 58¹/₄ by 1³/₈ inches, which is very compact, considering the output.

Higher voltage boosts the charging amperage, especially when routed through a Blue Sky Energy Solar Boost 3024iL controller, which is designed to lift the charging amperage to the highest possible level. The controller is a critical component in any solar system. Its main function is to regulate the charging current and prevent overcharging the batteries. The unit used here is rated at 40 amps, so there's a

little room for expansion on the system, which will likely not be needed.

This is a very sophisticated controller, and it features a relatively new feature called maximum power point tracking (MPPT). This gives the controller the ability to boost the charging current (amperage) by converting some of the excess voltage coming from the panels — thus, the reason for panels that operate at a higher voltage. The biggest boost can be realized when the panels are cold and the battery voltage is low.

The controller was tied into a Blue Sky Energy IPN-ProRemote panel that has a tremendous programming capability. Five levels of information,



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deciphered by the various algorithms in the controller, can be read on the remote screen. The information is extensive, including the ability to equalize the batteries, which is not needed for the lithium batteries. It's important to allow the installers to set the controller and provide users with the do's and don'ts to keep from getting in trouble with lithium batteries.

Beyond voltage, the information shows how long since the batteries were fully charged, amperage from the solar array, usage in amp-hours and much more. If you're a power watcher, you'll be in heaven here.

Power Inverter/Charger

An integral part of any complete solar system is the power inverter/charger. This component provides the power from the batteries to run the targeted 120-volt AC appliances and accessories, and charge the batteries when hooked up to RV park power. We chose the aforementioned MagnaSine for its established reliability in the industry to provide pure sine-wave power for all of our sensitive electronics and, most importantly, its compatibility for use with lithium batteries.

Model MSH3012 is the only inverter in the Magnum Energy line that has the hybrid feature, which provides a

25) The master BMS control box is wired into the system and attached to the wall. The BMS is necessary to make the lithium batteries function properly and safely. 26) When complete, all components are neatly in place for accessibility and service. A separate fuse and cutoff switch is used between the inverter and the batteries. 27) A solar meter is used to determine sun strength. By pointing the sensor at the sun at the same angle as the solar panels, the meter will read out the percentage of sunshine reaching the cells in the panels. Here, it was early morning, and the panels were getting 38 percent of the sun's potential. 28) The panels are neatly arranged on the roof with most of the wiring concealed. The only maintenance is to keep the panels clean. These solar panels are very durable and are expected to last 35 years. They are rated to withstand wind loading up to 125 MPH, hail up to 1 inch at terminal velocity (52 MPH) and more heat than can be found on Earth.



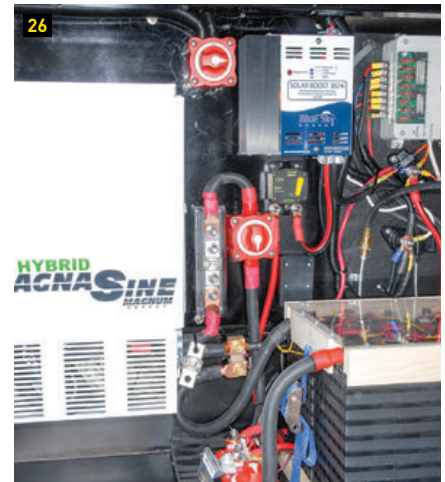
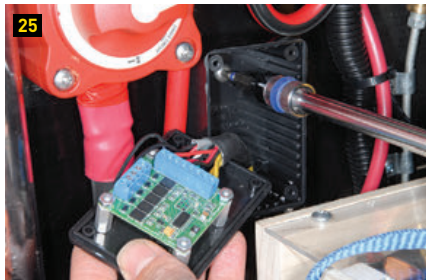
23) A weatherproof 50-amp breaker is used between the solar-panel connector box and the charge controller. 24) A master cutoff switch is used between the battery bank and the inverter and charge controller. Next to the switch is a solenoid that is triggered by the master BMS control. If any one cell falls below or exceeds the voltage threshold, it cuts off power from the battery bank.



relatively new twist on inverting power by working in concert with 120-volt AC power when connected to some type of shorepower. Without getting too deep into the electronic wizardry, the MagnaSine inverter provides load support when there's not enough current to operate the desired systems. For example, if you find yourself visiting relatives and can plug into only 15- or 20-amp household power, it's not possible to run the microwave and hair dryer at the same time (depending on the demand from other appliances).

The hybrid feature will provide the extra called-for current to operate the other appliances, up to the rating of the inverter, which in this case is 3,000 watts. This will prevent breaker tripping and an abrupt loss of power.

Normally, other inverters operate on only one source of power to run the appliances and accessories, and use a transfer switch, which isolates the inverter when plugged into an external source of 120-volt AC power. The hybrid inverter uses energy from the battery bank and an external 120-volt AC

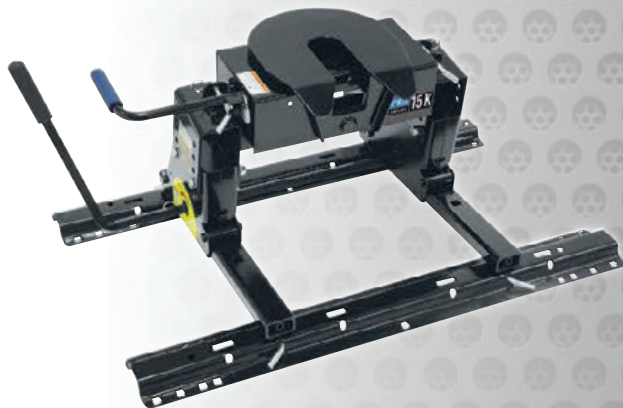


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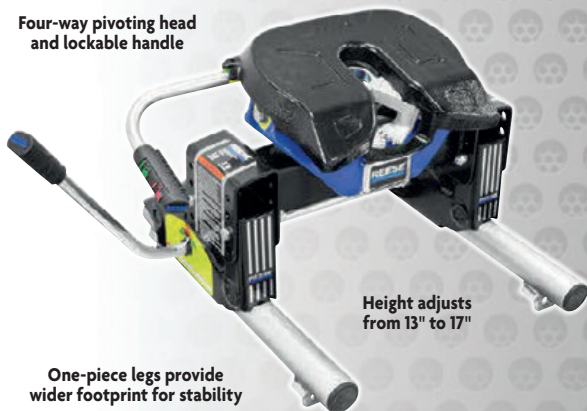
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source to power the loads; any surplus power can be used to charge the batteries or handle higher loads than the AC input alone can provide.

Controlling the inverter is done through a remote with an LED display that we installed next to the IPN-ProRemote for the solar panels. The panel is loaded with features, and again, takes some initiation and practice to run through the steps. It really allows the user to fine-tune the system to take full advantage of the lithium batteries and other power sources like a portable generator while boondocking.

The output of the generator can be dialed in using the remote panel, which adds greater flexibility when charging batteries and running appliances. Since the MSH3012 inverter can add up to 25 amps to the output of the portable generator for a period of time, it's possible to run the air conditioner while using a 2,000-watt generator long enough to cool down the interior and remove excess humidity. Once the

heavy load is eliminated, the generator will recharge the batteries through the inverter.

Installation

Installing a system of this caliber is not for the faint of heart. I highly recommend leaving it to the experts, like AM Solar, because of the many intricate pieces that need to be assembled. For example, it took the better part of a day just to locate a suitable runway for the 4-gauge cables used to connect the panels to the charge controller. It took four and a half days to complete the installation to satisfy all the required codes, ensure that all the components were secured properly and that the wiring was meticulously routed and wrapped.

As one might expect, such a robust solar system is not inexpensive. The complete package described above with all the ancillary pieces like the circuit breaker, fuse, BMS and cables was just shy of \$12,000.

Results

Obviously, the results from any solar array will be subject to the time of year and personal usage. On an average day, we consume about 100 amp-hours, which is less than half the capacity of the lithium-battery bank, and we usually have the batteries fully charged by noon when in good sun. The fact that the lithium batteries do not require a finish charge provides great versatility on days when the sun is not as strong.

Except to run the air conditioning, there's really no reason to hook up, which gives us exceptional freedom to travel at will. We jokingly tell our neighbors that we can sell energy back to the grid, which always initiates a conversation and tour of our system. ☎

SOURCES

AM Solar, 541-726-1091, www.amsolar.com

Blue Sky Energy

760-597-1642, www.blueskyenergyinc.com

Magnum Dimensions

425-353-8833, www.magnumenergy.com

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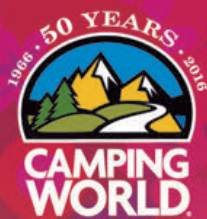
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REVEL IN THE WILD WEST
CHARM OF KANSAS, WHERE
TALLGRASS OPEN PRAIRIES
AND STREAM-CARVED VALLEYS
COMPETE FOR ATTENTION WITH
SMALL-TOWN MUSEUMS AND
FASCINATING, UNEXPECTED
WORLD TREASURES



(Above) Bluegrass on the tallgrass: musicians perform within Tallgrass Prairie National Preserve.

It's perhaps a typical Kansas scene — cowboys on horseback rounding up cattle, charging across verdant rolling hills as far as the eye can see, and then riding off into the waning sunset. Not so typical on this day, however, is that the cattle stampede thundering along the distant horizon is only a sideshow, thrilling the thousands crammed on lawn chairs and listening to Lyle Lovett's Texas twang accompanied by the Kansas City Symphony.

The event is the annual Symphony in the Flint Hills. This is more than just a concert and instead is a tribute of sorts to eastern Kansas' fragile tallgrass prairie, the largest remaining ecosystem of its kind in North America. It's within a setting apropos for the Wheat State, where the state song is the iconic "Home on the Range," and where scenic byways carve through hills and wind-blown fields that have inspired poets, songwriters and artists.

"The similarity of the waving wheat and prairie grass to the way the ocean looks with its waves has been here for a long time," says Thomas Averill,

an expert on Kansas literature and a professor at Topeka's Washburn University. "It's been a constant metaphor with the prairie grass waving and the different books or images that use the terms 'sea of grass' or 'oceans of grass.'"

When it comes to such metaphors, however, the Flint Hills — one of the most endangered ecoregions of the world — commands special status. These rocky hills include a majority of the remaining tallgrass prairie surviving today — less than 4 percent of the 140 million acres that once blanketed North America's heartland from eastern Kansas to Indiana, and from Manitoba to Texas. Because of flint rocks protruding from the surface, early settlers never plowed the land, which was instead used for cattle grazing, thus preserving its natural state.

My first Symphony in the Flint Hills concert and visit to this wildflower-dotted prairieland capped a five-day visit to central and eastern Kansas, a trip that took me from the brick streets of Old Town Wichita to the boyhood home of President Dwight

D. Eisenhower in Abilene. From the perky college town of Manhattan, I take a side trip to Wamego, a small town with a big crush on Kansas' favorite movie, *The Wizard of Oz*. I then head south to the crossroads of the Santa Fe Trail in Council Grove and onto the Flint Hills National Scenic Byway along State Highway 177, before arriving at the concert grounds in Tallgrass Prairie National Preserve with its 11,000 acres accented by rare wildflowers.

OLD TOWN WICHITA

Cobbled streets intertwine through Old Town Wichita's redbrick warehouses, filled with house shops, offices and restaurants. The district's highlight is the must-see Museum of World Treasures with exhibits that include skeletons of a tyrannosaurus and a daspletosaurus, Stone Age fossils, a slab of the Berlin Wall, a 3,000-year-old Egyptian mummy and a bronze Illyrian helmet from 500 B.C. — exhibits one might not

expect in central Kansas.

"We're happy our museum serves that gap, allowing visitors the chance to see world artifacts in Wichita so they don't have to drive to other major cities in the Midwest," says museum spokeswoman Rachel Stanley-Williams. Original documents and letters from every U.S. president line the walls of one exhibit room, while pop culture exhibits include costume uniforms worn by Matthew Broderick and Denzel Washington in the Civil War movie *Glory*.

In the evening, I visit Wichita's most-photographed attraction and iconic city symbol, the *Keeper of the Plains*. Kiowa-Comanche artist Blackbear Bosin created the 44-foot-high sculpture of an American Indian warrior above a plaza where the Arkansas and Little Arkansas rivers meet. At sunset, flames shoot up from gas-fired jets, illuminating the figure with its headdress and tomahawk — symbolic of the tribes that once camped

there, as Native Americans considered the confluence of the two rivers sacred.

In Wichita's Old Cowtown Museum, I step back to the post-Civil War period — amidst old wooden cabins and creaking, planked sidewalks along dusty dirt streets — for a high-noon view of the Wild West. Nestled in a wooded area along the Arkansas River, Old Cowtown is actually a living-history museum with many well-preserved 19th-century buildings, more than 50 structures on 23 acres. Within a musty old jail, a primitive dentist's office, a smoky blacksmith's shop and other exhibits sit some of the museum's more than 10,000 artifacts that bring the past to the present.

"You're walking on the same floorboards that Wyatt Earp walked on when he was a policeman here for a year. During the night of the city election, he punched out his boss' opponents," says Tim McGill, an interpreter in Cowtown's print shop and newspaper



(Far left) Covered-wagon rides are a fun way to spend an afternoon at Wichita's Old Cowtown Museum, a living-history experience. (Left) The boyhood home of President Dwight D. Eisenhower in Abilene. (Below) On horseback along the rolling Flint Hills.





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Travel trailer in-tow outside the modern glass-fronted Flint Hills Discovery Center in Manhattan, where the history of North America’s last remaining tallgrass prairie is highlighted.

office. “We’re pretty sure that the press we have printed the first *Wichita City Eagle*. Many of the buildings are the same original buildings — this one was a grocery store in the 1800s.”

I walk past a simple, black-sided wooden coffin outside of Gill Mortuary, while a peek inside reveals a chapel and horse-driven hearse on display. Down the dirt street sits the swirling candy-cane-like pole of O’Hara’s Barber Shop and a simple boarded law office next door. But when I turn the corner, gunfire erupts across from Cowtown’s Fritz Snitzler’s Saloon. It’s a mock gunfight depicting many from Wichita’s yesteryear, brought on by simmering tempers between pistol-wielding criminals and stern lawmen.

ABILENE, MANHATTAN AND WAMEGO

From Wichita, it’s maybe an hour and a half drive north to the tree-filled town of Abilene, home of the Dwight D. Eisenhower Presidential Library, Museum and Boyhood Home. A colossal bronze statue of the World War II five-star general and 34th U.S. president centers the 22-acre campus with its five

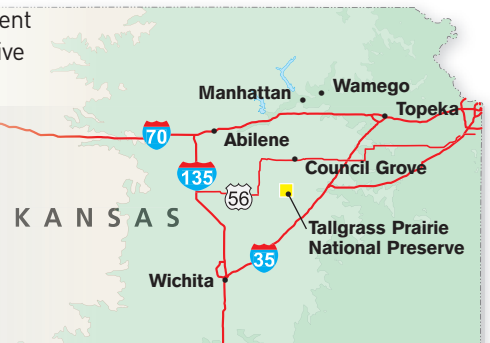
buildings, including a visitor center and the churchlike Place of Meditation where Eisenhower; his wife, Mamie; and their first-born son are buried.

The Eisenhower Presidential Museum showcases some of his administration’s key accomplishments through photographs, movie clips and artifacts. They include eradicating polio, implementing the Interstate Highway System and NASA, and enacting the first Civil Rights legislation since the Civil War. “So many of the things that he put into place as president are really affecting our lives today, and we couldn’t be where we are without him,” says the museum’s curator, William Steiner.

The small, whitewashed family home where Eisenhower grew up sits on its original site where he lived with his parents and five brothers. Born in Denison, Texas, Eisenhower moved in when he was eight years old and lived here until he was 20. The modest 19th-century home, with small rooms and modest furnishings, is where he learned

THE LAST STAND

Most of what remains of North America’s tallgrass prairie is located in the Flint Hills of Kansas. This ecosystem supports many animal and plant species, and stalks can grow to nearly 10 feet tall.



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Follow the Yellow Brick Road: *Wizard of Oz* passion is alive and well in Wamego, Kansas, with a prop of an unforgettable movie scene (left) and the Oz Museum (right).

SYMPHONY IN THE FLINT HILLS

A tribute to the tallgrass prairie that once blanketed America's heartland, the 11th-annual Symphony in the Flint Hills takes place June 11, 2016, on South Clements Pasture in Chase County, Kansas. General-admission tickets go on sale March 5 and sell out fast.

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discipline and values. "Ike came from a very typical American home, and maybe a little hackneyed, but anyone can grow up to be president," says Steiner.

"It was a hard life. There were six boys, they worked after school and had lots of fights," says docent Beth Talbott. "[Eisenhower] wanted to go to Annapolis, but he worked for two years to pay for his brother's college. By then he was too old for Annapolis, so he applied to West Point and got in, and that was the beginning of his life."

Northeast of Abilene, Manhattan is home to Kansas State University and bustles during the school year — especially its Aggieville neighborhood, a shopping district with bars and restaurants catering to students. Because Manhattan skirts the Flint Hills, the so-called Little Apple is also home to the recently opened Flint Hills Discovery Center — a modern glass-fronted museum highlighting the history and science behind North America's last remaining tallgrass prairie. Exhibits

showcase actual prairie-grass samples with their tangled maze of roots, plants and animal life, and the importance of preserving this natural habitat.

Just outside Manhattan is Wamego, where I can't help but notice a memory from my youth. It's the Wicked Witch of the East's legs — with her white-ringed black stockings and ruby slippers — darting out from under what looks like Dorothy's house after it plunged back to earth during a fierce cyclone. It's reminiscent of the scary scene for those of us who grew up watching *The Wizard of Oz* on television year after year. The house is actually the Wamego birthplace of Walter P. Chrysler, but moved from its original location.

Thanks to the extensive movie and book memorabilia collections from a local resident and others, Wamego's Oz Museum has breathed renewed enthusiasm into what was once just a small prairie town. Since its opening in 2004, Wamego's Oz fever has caught on with new businesses including the Oz Winery and Toto's Tacoz, and with yearly OZtoberfest celebrations.

The Oz Museum houses first editions of L. Frank Baum's *The Wonderful World of Oz*, figurines, plates with scenes from the movie, posters, mugs, autographs, photos, puppets and life-size wax replicas of the main characters. Original artifacts include flying-monkey miniatures and Munchkin gloves used in the movie. Scarecrow actor Ray Bolger's actual passport is another collection highlight. Last year was the 115th anniversary of the novel's publication, and 2014 marked the 75th anniversary of the MGM movie classic's release.

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IN THE LAND OF OZ



Wichita's 44-foot city symbol, the *Keeper of the Plains* sculpture, is aglow at sunset.

COUNCIL GROVE

I head south on State Highway 177 from Manhattan, passing grassy rolling hills with clumps of trees, and streams flowing through the nooks and crannies of the curving landscape. When reaching Council Grove, what looks like just an ordinary small-town intersection was actually once a 19th-century meeting point on the bustling Santa Fe Trail. Nearby are the Madonna of the Trail, a statue of a woman pioneer and her two children erected in 1928, and the Guardian of the Grove statue of an Indian Kaw (or Kansa) warrior, the tribe for which Kansas is named.

"This spot is very important, as they would rendezvous here and organize their wagon trains," says Sharon Haun with the Friends of the Kaw Heritage organization. "There were two and three wagon trains a day pulling out of Council Grove, with each having up to 50 and 100 wagons pulled by oxen or mules." The trail traversed 800 miles of open country from Missouri to Santa Fe, creating a Wild West superhighway through mostly unsettled land occupied by Comanche, Cheyenne and Kaw tribes.

At the junction of Highway 177 and U.S. Route 56, Council Grove's Main Street and the actual Santa Fe Trail, a tree stump known as Post Office Oak remains an important

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marker today. In the 1850s, travelers left notes and letters at the foot of what was then a live tree. "There were mostly men on the Santa Fe Trail back then," explains Haun, "and if you were going west and wanted to send a letter back to your sweetheart, hopefully someone coming back could pick it up and take it to somewhere where they could actually mail it."

The Old Bell Monument sits a few blocks away. "The wood tower rotted, and the bell fell and rolled down the hill," says Haun. "A woman used it to plant things in, but then schoolchildren donated pennies and nickels to restore it. But the day before the dedication ceremony, President McKinley was shot, so it was also dedicated to President McKinley — the first monument dedicated to him after his death."

From Council Grove, the Flint Hills National Scenic Byway begins along Highway 177, and it's just one of the state's many country roads that carve around bluffs and grassy pastures. Locals say these byways showcase the state's hidden beauty, and the tallgrass prairie is no exception.

"Once you get off the main roads, the clichés of flatness will be disproved," notes Professor Averill. "A lot of people like the ocean — you go to the shore and look out and sort of contemplate the infinite and the vastness of space and the earth," he muses. "And you can get that a little bit by standing on a rise and looking at the prairie grass waving. It's a similar kind of feeling." 🚚

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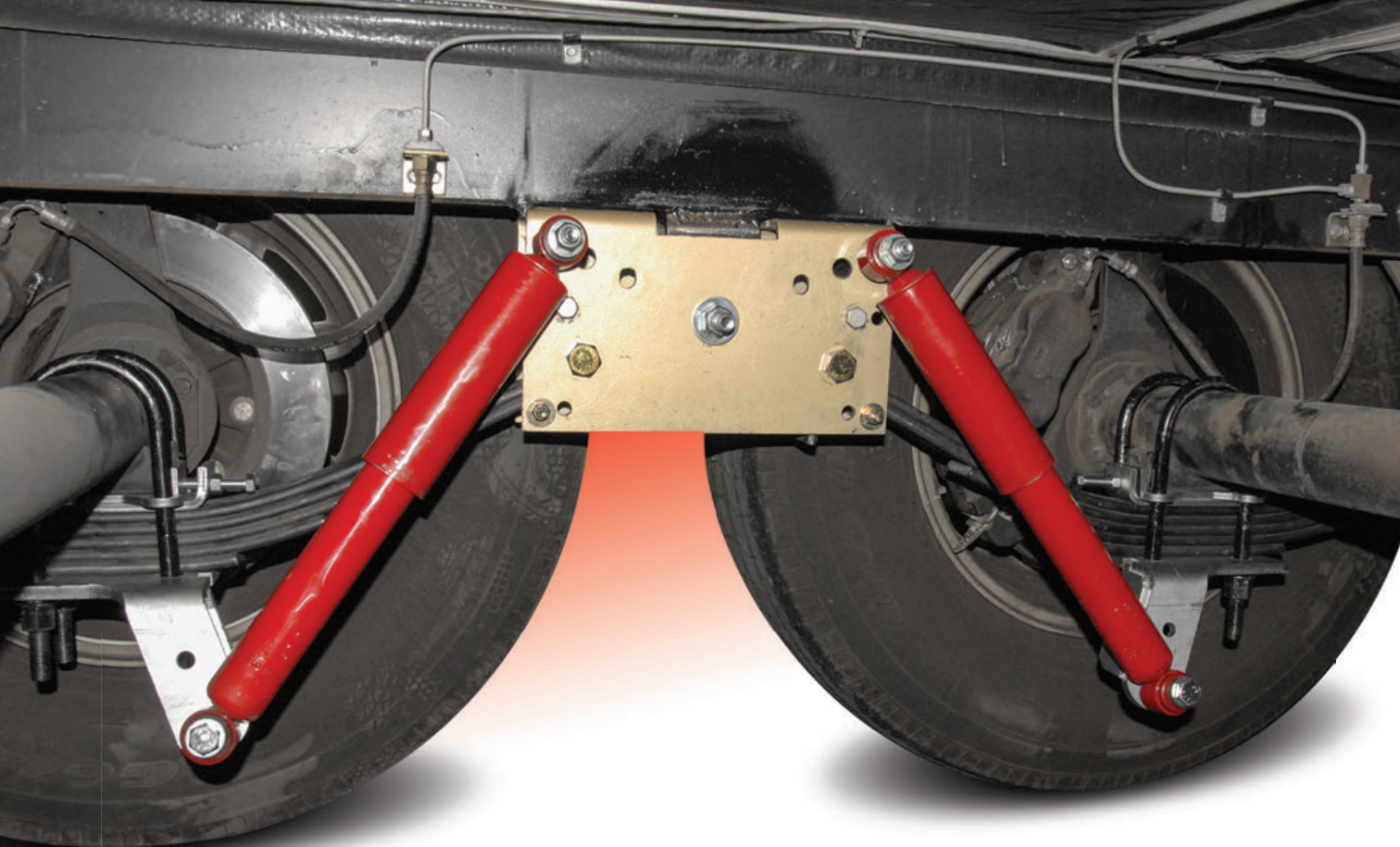
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PLEASURE CRUISE

Installing the Liberty Rider and Joy Rider II suspension systems from RV Improvement Systems results in a dramatically smoother ride that reduces strain on the chassis and components of a trailer or fifth-wheel

Among the many criteria we use to decide which trailer we're going to purchase, ride quality typically isn't one of them. The main reason is simple: we're not in the trailer when it's going down the road, so its suspension system really doesn't seem that important. But the reality is, the thousands of miles of potholes, frost heaves, railroad crossings and other highway imperfections take their toll on a trailer. Items like cabinets, appliances and the overall structure

can be damaged over time by the forces exacted upon them during travel. If you've ever opened your entry door to find the contents of the cabinets or drawers scattered all over the place, you can imagine that your trailer is subjected to a minor earthquake every time you tow it — but instead of lasting a few seconds or a minute, it lasts hours at a time.

There are other reasons a good trailer suspension makes sense. Most trailers, travel trailers in particular, don't come with shock absorbers. That means the trailer



◀ SMOOTH MOVES

The Liberty Rider system (far left) includes four leaf-spring sets and two center sections, plus all hardware and maintenance-free Never Fail roller bushings and washers. The Joy Rider II system (left) includes shock absorbers and a provision for axle alignment included with the mounting system.



“hops” over lumps and bumps, creating instability that can influence the way the tow vehicle handles. The stock suspension can also be inadequate at coping with emergency braking. During extreme hard braking or a panic stop, the stock equalizers rotate forward lifting the front tires off the ground slightly. At the same time, the rear brakes are forced to do more than 50 percent of the braking.

Most trailers are fitted with nylon leaf-spring eye bushings that commonly wear out prematurely, in as little as 1,000 miles. This can create alignment problems that adversely affect tire wear, not to mention premature wearing

1) This trailer was equipped with electric-over-hydraulic disc brakes, so the first step was to remove the brake calipers. With a traditional drum-brake setup, removing the brake assembly requires fewer steps. **2)** With the calipers removed, technician Darren Wilson drilled a small hole in the frame and attached a hook by which the caliper can be hung while the work is completed. This ensures that the brake line will not get stretched or damaged.

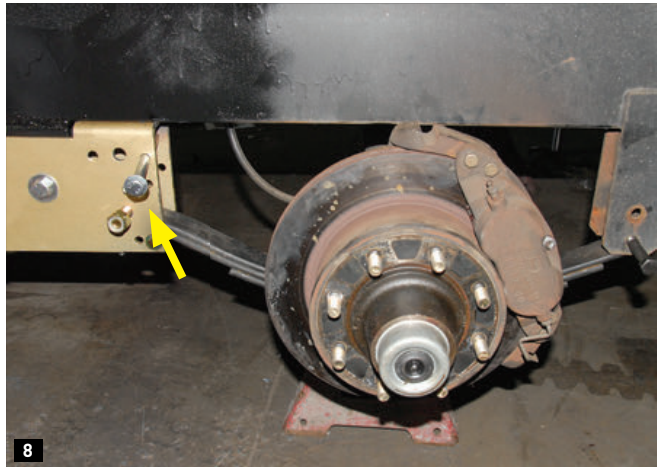
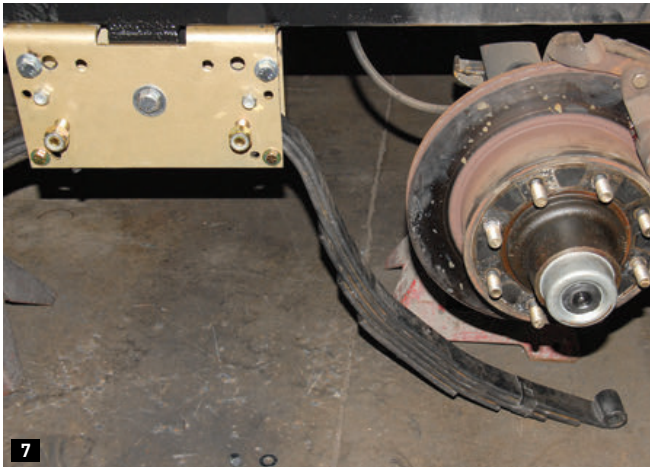
of the equalizer and suspension components, such as pivot bolts, that could lead to a dangerous failure while on the road. And there's no provision for adjustment should an axle alignment abnormality become evident. The result in this case is premature tire wear or even failure.

The new Liberty Rider suspension system from RV Improvement Systems is designed to solve these

problems. You might recall us reporting on this company's Joy Rider shock absorber system, which allows the easy mounting of shock absorbers, in the September 2014 issue. The Liberty Rider system represents the next level of trailer suspension, adding “slipper”-style leaf springs and roller bearings to further improve ride quality and towing stability. The front- and



3) Next, the leaf-spring U-bolts, equalizer bolts and tie plates were removed and the stock leaf springs cast aside. **4)** A spacer provided in the kit was placed between the two sides of the center hanger or equalizer bracket. This prevents the center hanger bracket from collapsing when the mounting bolt is installed and tightened. **5)** Here, the main bracket has been installed and the bolt snugged but not torqued to spec yet. **6)** The spring support bolts were installed next, to position the springs. These bolts are fitted with Never Fail cylinders and washers that roll as the springs move. Never Fail is a patented, composite material that does not require lubrication and is extremely resistant to wear — and warranted for life. Nuts with nylon inserts assure that the fasteners will not loosen over time.



rear-axle spring sets connect to a patent-pending center section that isolates each axle, so the two springs are no longer connected by a central equalizer. The Liberty Rider is a complete system, meaning that the original suspension — including leaf springs, shackles, equalizers and shocks (if any) — are removed and discarded.

RV Improvement Systems recently provided us with a preproduction Liberty Rider system and a Joy Rider II shock-absorber system, the latter of which adds an axle-alignment provision for precise tracking and even tire wear. To assist with the installation, we called upon our friends at C&S RV Service Center in Oxnard, California, who expertly completed the installation and helped fine-tune the system on a 34-foot fifth-wheel trailer that weighed approximately 16,000 pounds. It's not necessary to include the shock

7) Here, the fasteners have been installed and the end of the Liberty Rider leaf spring placed atop the Never Fail cylinder. **8)** The preassembled Liberty Rider system for one axle. Note that the main bracket offers height adjustment (like the hanger bracket to the right). It is designed to work with all versions of the Correct Track suspension alignment system. The top bolt protruding from the right side of the main bracket (arrow) is the top shock-absorber mount. With these steps completed, the calipers were reinstalled but not tightened.

absorbers when installing the Liberty Rider spring system, but the two kits work together to provide the biggest improvement in ride quality.

The owner of the trailer had reported that he routinely found his belongings on the floor after a road trip, so we decided that a back-to-back road-trip comparison was in order. Both before and after the installation, we towed the trailer on a test loop that consists of highway-expansion joints, rutted country roads and a railroad crossing.

At the conclusion of the first test

loop, we found that the forces inside the trailer were sufficient not only to open a bottom cabinet drawer but to cause the bottom to collapse, scattering kitchen essentials across the galley. After the Liberty Rider and Joy Rider II systems were installed, however, the same loop produced no such drama; in fact, nothing in the trailer looked disturbed. The tow vehicle also felt more stable, and there was less “chucking” (rapid forward-aft movement) over uneven pavement and bridge abutments.

The installation process takes

9, 10, 11) The alignment adjuster consists of three pieces. First, the base plate is placed atop the spring, just underneath the spring perch. The center plate has four holes through which the U-bolts pass. The last piece is an adjustment plate that pushes on the spring perch when the bolt is tightened. There is one bolt and adjustment plate on either side so the axles can be moved forward or aft as needed.



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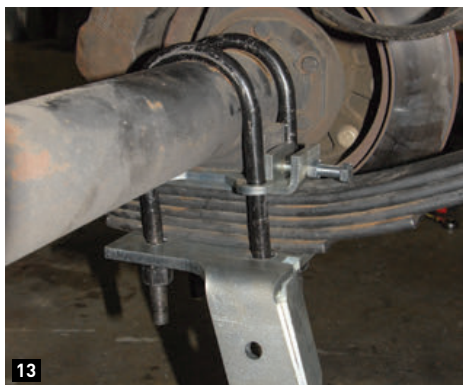


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12



13



14

12) After measuring the axles side to side, Darren made small adjustments by turning the adjustment bolt a few times and tightening the set nut. **13)** Next, the U-bolts were placed over the axle, then passed through the middle plate of the alignment adjuster and finally through the bottom plate of the Joy Rider lower shock mount. Again, the U-bolts were tightened but not torqued into place yet. After checking the alignment, all bolts were torqued to specifications. **14)** The finished Liberty Rider/Joy Rider II shock mount system. The ride and handling of this trailer were completely transformed.

about three hours for a professional and can be accomplished by seasoned do-it-yourselfers. The Liberty Rider kit for two axles retails for \$945; the Joy Rider II is \$699.90. The standard Joy Rider shock system for two axles (no alignment feature) retails for \$499.90. All the parts are covered by a three-year warranty.

Whether you own a travel trailer or a fifth-wheel, replacing the original, antiquated suspension just makes sense, especially if you travel a lot of

miles or plan to keep your trailer for a long time — or both. The Liberty Rider and Joy Rider II systems not only help protect your belongings through enhanced ride quality, they can also help protect your investment. 🚐

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by Chris Hemer

WORTH THE WEIGHT



Knowing how much your vehicle can tow will help you make an informed decision on your next purchase

Whether choosing a travel trailer or a fifth-wheel for your RVing lifestyle, the first place to start should be the vehicle you plan to tow it with. If you own a truck or SUV, you probably already know its tow rating, but if you're buying an all-new tow rig and trailer, the tow vehicle will dictate how much trailer you'll be able to pull safely.

Every year, vehicle manufacturers publish tow ratings for their vehicles. These ratings are based on a variety of factors, including engine, transmission type and final drive ratio. When choosing a new tow vehicle, it is very important to make sure the vehicle you're purchasing is properly equipped. To tow the weight of your trailer, some models may require a towing package (sometimes dealer-installed), a higher gross vehicle weight rating (GVWR) or a cooling package.

There are other things to consider as well. Make sure the tow vehicle is equipped with tires that are properly rated for the load you plan to pull; some newer trucks are equipped with passenger-car tires that, while providing a smoother ride when driving solo, aren't up to the task of a loaded trailer's hitch weight. Speaking of which, you should also be sure that the tow vehicle's hitch receiver is properly rated, and that the gross axle weight rating (GAWR) is sufficient. This last point is particularly important when towing a fifth-wheel or hauling a camper.

This towing guide lists all 2016 vehicles rated to tow 2,000 pounds or more. We've incorporated a "Key to Charts" (page 83) that will help you see how the vehicle is equipped in order to arrive at each rating. Be safe, and happy shopping!



KNOW WHAT TO TOW

The 2016 GMC Yukon Denali (left) is rated to tow up to 8,400 pounds, while the Ford Transit Connect (top) can pull up to 2,000 pounds.

a=Automatic Transmission
a6=Automatic transmission, Six Speeds
a8=Automatic transmission, Eight Speeds
m=Manual Transmission
m6=Manual Transmission, Six Speeds

p=Cooling or other accessory package required
t=Towing package required

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f=3,31:1
g=3,42:1
h=3,55:1

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AWD=All Wheel Drive
CC=Crew Cab
KC=King Cab
SB=Shortbed
Std Bed= Standard Bed

LB= Longbed
SWB=Short Wheelbase
LWB=Long Wheelbase
DRW=Dual Rear Wheels
SRW=Single Rear Wheels
CV=Cargo Van

PV=Passenger Van
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MDX SH-AWD	3.5L V-6	3,500*

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AUDI

Q7*	3.5L V-6	7,700
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*2017 model

BMW

X3	All	3,500
X4	All	3,500
X5	All	6,000*
X6	All	6,000*

*With Class III hitch

BUICK

Enclave FWD	3.6L V-6	2,000
Enclave FWD	3.6L V-6	4,500 (t)
Enclave AWD	3.6L V-6	2,000
Enclave AWD	3.6L V-6	4,500 (t)

CADILLAC

Escalade 2WD	6.2L V-8	8,300
Escalade AWD	6.2L V-8	8,100
Escalade ESV 2WD	6.2L V-8	8,100
Escalade ESV AWD	6.2L V-8	7,900
SRX FWD	3.6L V-6	3,500 (t)
SRX AWD	3.6L V-6	3,500 (t)

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Equinox/Terrain FWD/AWD	3.6L V-6	3,500 (t)
Express/Savana 2500 SWB CV	4.8L V-8	7,400
Express/Savana 2500 SWB CV	6.0L V-8	10,000
Express/Savana 2500 SWB CV	6.6L V-8 TD	10,000
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Express/Savana 2500 LWB CV	6.0L V-8	10,000
Express/Savana 2500 LWB CV	6.6L V-8 TD	10,000
Express/Savana 2500 SWB PV	6.0L V-8	6,700
Express/Savana 2500 SWB PV	6.0L V-8	9,800
Express/Savana 3500 SWB CV	4.8L V-8	7,400
Express/Savana 3500 SWB CV	6.0L V-8	10,000

Express/Savana 3500 SWB CV	6.6L V-8 TD	10,000
Express/Savana 3500 SWB PV	6.0L V-8	9,700
Express/Savana 3500 SWB PV	6.6L V-8 TD	10,000
Express/Savana 3500 LWB CV	4.8L V-8	7,100
Express/Savana 3500 LWB CV	6.0L V-8	10,000
Express/Savana 3500 LWB CV	6.6L V-8 TD	10,000
Express/Savana 3500 LWB PV	6.0L V-8	9,300
Express/Savana 3500 LWB PV	6.6L V-8 TD	9,700
Traverse/Acadia FWD	3.6L V-6	2,000
Traverse/Acadia FWD	3.6L V-6	5,200 (t)
Traverse/Acadia AWD	3.6L V-6	2,000
Traverse/Acadia AWD	3.6L V-6	5,200 (t)

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Colorado/Canyon Ext Cab	2.5L I-4	3,500
Colorado/Canyon Ext Cab	3.6L V-6	3,500
Colorado/Canyon Ext Cab	3.6L V-6	7,000 (t)
Colorado/Canyon CC SB	2.5L I-4	3,500
Colorado/Canyon CC SB	3.6L V-6	7,000 (t)
Colorado/Canyon CC SB 2WD	2.8L I-4 TD	7,700
Colorado/Canyon CC SB 4WD	2.8L I-4 TD	7,600
Colorado/Canyon CC Std Bed	3.6L V-6	3,500
Colorado/Canyon CC Std Bed	3.6L V-6	7,000 (t)
Colorado/Canyon CC Std Bed 2WD	2.8L I-4 TD	7,700
Colorado/Canyon CC Std Bed 4WD	2.8L I-4 TD	7,600

SILVERADO/SIERRA 1500 REG CAB

1500 Reg Cab Std Bed 2WD	4.3L V-6	6,000 (e)
1500 Reg Cab Std Bed 2WD	5.3L V-8	6,900 (b)
1500 Reg Cab Std Bed 2WD	5.3L V-8	8,900 (g)
1500 Reg Cab Std Bed 4WD	4.3L V-6	7,600 (g)
1500 Reg Cab Std Bed 4WD	5.3L V-8	6,600 (b)
1500 Reg Cab Std Bed 4WD	5.3L V-8	8,600 (g)
1500 Reg Cab LB 2WD	4.3L V-6	5,900 (e)
1500 Reg Cab LB 2WD	5.3L V-8	6,800 (b)
1500 Reg Cab LB 2WD	5.3L V-8	9,800 (g)
1500 Reg Cab LB 4WD	4.3L V-6	7,400 (g)
1500 Reg Cab LB 4WD	5.3L V-8	6,500 (b)
1500 Reg Cab LB 4WD	5.3L V-8	9,500 (g)

SILVERADO/SIERRA DOUBLE CAB

1500 Double Cab 2WD	4.3L V-6	5,600 (g)
1500 Double Cab 2WD	5.3L V-8	6,400 (b)
1500 Double Cab 2WD	5.3L V-8	9,400 (g)

1500 Double Cab 2WD	5.3L V-8	11,100 (g,i,t)
1500 Double Cab 2WD	6.2L V-8	9,400 (e)
1500 Double Cab 2WD	6.2L V-8	12,000 (g,t)
1500 Double Cab 4WD	4.3L V-6	7,100 (g)
1500 Double Cab 4WD	5.3L V-8	6,200 (b)
1500 Double Cab 4WD	5.3L V-8	9,200 (g)
1500 Double Cab 4WD	5.3L V-8	10,800 (g,t)
1500 Double Cab 4WD	5.3L V-8	10,900 (i,t)
1500 Double Cab 4WD	6.2L V-8	9,200 (g)
1500 Double Cab 4WD	6.2L V-8	11,800 (g,t)

SILVERADO/SIERRA 1500 CREW CAB, SHORTBED*

1500 CC SB 2WD	4.3L V-6	5,500 (e)
1500 CC SB 2WD	5.3L V-8	6,400 (b)
1500 CC SB 2WD	5.3L V-8	9,400 (g)
1500 CC SB 2WD	5.3L V-8	11,000 (g,t)
1500 CC SB 2WD	5.3L V-8	11,100 (i,t)
1500 CC SB 2WD	6.2L V-8	9,300 (e)
1500 CC SB 2WD	6.2L V-8	12,000 (g,t)
1500 CC SB 4WD	4.3L V-6	7,000 (g)
1500 CC SB 4WD	5.3L V-8	6,100 (b)
1500 CC SB 4WD	5.3L V-8	9,100 (g)
1500 CC SB 4WD	5.3L V-8	10,700 (g,t)
1500 CC SB 4WD	5.3L V-8	10,800 (i,t)
1500 CC SB 4WD	6.2L V-8	9,100 (g)
1500 CC SB 4WD	6.2L V-8	11,700 (g,t)

*Sierra Denali HD ratings may vary slightly. See dealer for details.

SILVERADO/SIERRA CREW CAB, STANDARD BED*

1500 CC Std Bed 2WD	4.3L V-6	5,400 (e)
1500 CC Std Bed 2WD	5.3L V-8	6,300 (b)
1500 CC Std Bed 2WD	5.3L V-8	9,300 (g)
1500 CC Std Bed 2WD	5.3L V-8	10,900 (g,t)
1500 CC Std Bed 2WD	5.3L V-8	11,000 (i,t)
1500 CC Std Bed 2WD	6.2L V-8	9,300 (e)
1500 CC Std Bed 2WD	6.2L V-8	11,900 (g,t)
1500 CC Std Bed 4WD	4.3L V-6	7,000 (g)
1500 CC Std Bed 4WD	5.3L V-8	6,100 (b)
1500 CC Std Bed 4WD	5.3L V-8	9,100 (g)
1500 CC Std Bed 4WD	5.3L V-8	10,700 (g,t)
1500 CC Std Bed 4WD	5.3L V-8	10,800 (i,t)
1500 CC Std Bed 4WD	6.2L V-8	9,100 (e)
1500 CC Std Bed 4WD	6.2L V-8	11,700 (g,t)

*Sierra Denali HD ratings may vary slightly. See dealer for details.

SILVERADO/SIERRA 2500 CONVENTIONAL/FIFTH-WHEEL TOWING

SILVERADO/SIERRA 2500 REGULAR CAB LONG BED

2500 Reg Cab LB 2WD	6.0L V-8	14,500/14,800 (k)
2500 Reg Cab LB 2WD	6.6L V-8 TD	14,500/18,000 (i)
2500 Reg Cab LB 4WD	6.0L V-8	14,500/14,500 (k)
2500 Reg Cab LB 4WD	6.6L V-8 TD	14,000/16,400 (i)

SILVERADO/SIERRA DOUBLE CAB STANDARD BED

2500 DC Std Bed 2WD	6.0L V-8	13,000/14,500 (k)
2500 DC Std Bed 2WD	6.6L V-8 TD	13,000/16,900 (i)

2500 DC Std Bed 4WD	6.0L V-8	13,000/14,200 (k)
2500 DC Std Bed 4WD	6.6L V-8 TD	13,000/14,900 (i)
2500 DC LB 2WD	6.0L V-8	14,400 (k)
2500 DC LB 2WD	6.6L V-8 TD	14,500/16,100 (i)
2500 DC LB 4WD	6.0L V-8	14,100 (k)
2500 DC LB 4WD	6.6L V-8 TD	14,500/14,200 (i)

SILVERADO/SIERRA 2500 CREW CAB*

2500 CC Std Bed 2WD	6.0L V-8	13,000/14,300 (k)
2500 CC Std Bed 2WD	6.6L V-8 TD	13,000/15,800 (i)
2500 CC Std Bed 4WD	6.0L V-8	13,000/14,000 (k)
2500 CC Std Bed 4WD	6.6L V-8 TD	13,000/13,900 (i)
2500 CC LB 2WD	6.0L V-8	14,300/14,200 (k)
2500 CC LB 2WD	6.6L V-8 TD	14,500/15,200 (i)
2500 CC LB 4WD	6.0L V-8	13,900 (k)
2500 CC LB 4WD	6.6L V-8 TD	14,500/12,900 (i)

*Sierra Denali HD ratings may vary slightly. See dealer for details.

SILVERADO/SIERRA 3500 REGULAR CAB

3500 Reg Cab SRW 2WD	6.0L V-8	14,500/14,600 (k)
3500 Reg Cab SRW 4WD	6.0L V-8	14,300 (k)
3500 Reg Cab SRW 4WD	6.6L V-8 TD	14,500/17,500 (i)
3500 Reg Cab DRW 2WD	6.0L V-8	14,300 (k)
3500 Reg Cab DRW 4WD	6.0L V-8	14,000/13,900 (k)
3500 Reg Cab DRW 4WD	6.6L V-8 TD	20,000/23,200 (i)

SILVERADO/SIERRA 3500 DOUBLE CAB

3500 DC LB SRW 2WD	6.0L V-8	14,200 (k)
3500 DC LB SRW 2WD	6.6L V-8 TD	14,500/17,400 (i)
3500 DC LB SRW 4WD	6.0L V-8	13,900 (k)
3500 DC LB SRW 4WD	6.6L V-8 TD	14,500/17,100 (i)
3500 DC LB DRW 2WD	6.0L V-8	13,800 (k)
3500 DC LB DRW 2WD	6.6L V-8 TD	20,000/23,100 (i)
3500 DC LB DRW 4WD	6.0L V-8	13,600/13,500 (i)
3500 DC LB DRW 4WD	6.6L V-8 TD	20,000/22,800 (i)

SILVERADO/SIERRA 3500 CREW CAB*

3500 CC Std Bed SRW 2WD	6.0L V-8	13,000/14,200 (k)
3500 CC Std Bed SRW 2WD	6.6L V-8 TD	13,000/17,500 (i)
3500 CC Std Bed SRW 4WD	6.0L V-8	13,000/13,900 (k)
3500 CC Std Bed SRW 4WD	6.6L V-8 TD	13,000/17,200 (i)
3500 CC LB SRW 2WD	6.0L V-8	14,100 (k)
3500 CC LB SRW 2WD	6.6L V-8 TD	14,500/17,300 (i)
3500 CC LB SRW 4WD	6.0L V-8	13,700 (k)
3500 CC LB SRW 4WD	6.6L V-8 TD	15,000/16,900 (i)
3500 CC LB DRW 2WD	6.0L V-8	13,700 (k)
3500 CC LB DRW 2WD	6.6L V-8 TD	20,000/22,900 (i)
3500 CC LB DRW 4WD	6.0L V-8	13,400/13,300 (k)
3500 CC LB DRW 4WD	6.6L V-8 TD	20,000/22,600 (i)

*Sierra Denali HD ratings may vary slightly. See dealer for details.

CHEVY TAHOE AND SUBURBAN, GMC YUKON, YUKON XL, YUKON DENALI AND YUKON XL DENALI 1500 SERIES

Tahoe/Yukon 2WD	5.3L V-8	6,600/6,500 (b)
Tahoe/Yukon 2WD	5.3L V-8	8,600/8,500 (g)
Tahoe/Yukon 4WD	5.3L V-8	6,400/6,300 (b)

Tahoe/Yukon 4WD	5.3L V-8	8,400/8,200 (g)
Suburban/Yukon XL 2WD	5.3L V-8	6,300 (b)
Suburban/Yukon XL 2WD	5.3L V-8	8,300 (g)
Suburban/Yukon XL 4WD	5.3L V-8	6,000 (b)
Suburban/Yukon XL 4WD	5.3L V-8	8,000 (g)
Yukon Denali 2WD	6.2L V-8	8,400
Yukon Denali AWD	6.2L V-8	8,100
Yukon XL Denali 2WD	6.2L V-8	8,100
Yukon XL Denali AWD	6.2L V-8	7,900

CHRYSLER

Chrysler Town and Country	3.6L V-6	3,600 (t)
Dodge Durango RWD	3.6L V-6	6,200
Dodge Durango RWD	5.7L V-8	7,400
Dodge Durango AWD	3.6L V-6	6,200
Dodge Durango AWD	5.7L V-8	7,200
Dodge Grand Caravan	3.6L V-6	3,600 (t)
Dodge Journey FWD and AWD	3.6L V-6	2,500 (t)

RAM 1500 REGULAR CAB SHORTBED

1500 Reg Cab SB 2WD	3.6L V-6	4,990 (a8,d)
1500 Reg Cab SB 2WD	3.6L V-6	7,290 (a8,h)
1500 Reg Cab SB 2WD	5.7L V-8	7,220 (a6,d)
1500 Reg Cab SB 2WD	5.7L V-8	9,200 (a6j)
1500 Reg Cab SB 2WD	5.7L V-8	8,610 (a8,d)
1500 Reg Cab SB 2WD	5.7L V-8	9,160 (a8,j)
1500 Reg Cab SB 4WD	3.6L V-6	4,760 (a8,d)
1500 Reg Cab SB 4WD	3.6L V-6	7,050 (a8,h)
1500 Reg Cab SB 4WD	5.7L V-8	9,060 (a6,h)
1500 Reg Cab SB 4WD	5.7L V-8	8,990 (a6,j)
1500 Reg Cab SB 4WD	5.7L V-8	8,420 (a8,d)
1500 Reg Cab SB 4WD	5.7L V-8	8,970 (a8,j)

RAM 1500 REGULAR CAB LONGBED

1500 Reg Cab LB 2WD	3.6L V-6	4,770 (a8,d)
1500 Reg Cab LB 2WD	3.6L V-6	7,270 (a8,h)
1500 Reg Cab LB 2WD	5.7L V-8	7,040 (a6,d)
1500 Reg Cab LB 2WD	5.7L V-8	9,090 (a6,h)
1500 Reg Cab LB 2WD	5.7L V-8	10,640 (a6,j)
1500 Reg Cab LB 2WD	5.7L V-8	8,470 (a8,d)
1500 Reg Cab LB 2WD	5.7L V-8	10,620 (a8,j)
1500 Reg Cab LB 2WD	3.0L V-6 TD	8,240 (a8,h/j)
1500 Reg Cab LB 2WD	3.0L V-6 TD	9,210 (a8,j)
1500 Reg Cab LB 4WD	3.6L V-6	4,580 (a8,d)
1500 Reg Cab LB 4WD	3.6L V-6	7,080 (a8,h)
1500 Reg Cab LB 4WD	5.7L V-8	8,850 (a6,h)
1500 Reg Cab LB 4WD	5.7L V-8	10,400 (a6,j)
1500 Reg Cab LB 4WD	5.7L V-8	8,260 (a8,d)
1500 Reg Cab LB 4WD	5.7L V-8	10,410 (a8j)
1500 Reg Cab LB 4WD	3.0L V-6 TD	8,030 (a8,h/j)
1500 Reg Cab LB 4WD	3.0L V-6 TD	9,030 (a8,j)

RAM 1500 QUAD CAB

Ram 1500 Quad Cab 2WD	3.6L V-6	4,610 (a8,d)
Ram 1500 Quad Cab 2WD	3.6L V-6	7,610 (a8,h)

Ram 1500 Quad Cab 2WD	5.7L V-8	6,790 (a6,d)
Ram 1500 Quad Cab 2WD	5.7L V-8	8,840 (a6,h)
Ram 1500 Quad Cab 2WD	5.7L V-8	10,390 (a6,j)
Ram 1500 Quad Cab 2WD	5.7L V-8	8,210 (a8,d)
Ram 1500 Quad Cab 2WD	5.7L V-8	10,360 (a8,j)
Ram 1500 Quad Cab 2WD	3.0L V-6 TD	7,990 (a8,h/j)
Ram 1500 Quad Cab 2WD	3.0L V-6 TD	8,990 (a8,j)
Ram 1500 Quad Cab 4WD	3.6L V-6	4,410 (a8,d)
Ram 1500 Quad Cab 4WD	3.6L V-6	7,400 (a8,h)
Ram 1500 Quad Cab 4WD	5.7L V-8	8,710 (a6,h)
Ram 1500 Quad Cab 4WD	5.7L V-8	10,260 (a6,j)
Ram 1500 Quad Cab 4WD	5.7L V-8	8,050 (a8,d)
Ram 1500 Quad Cab 4WD	5.7L V-8	10,200 (a8,j)
Ram 1500 Quad Cab 4WD	3.0L V-6 TD	7,750 (a8,h/j)
Ram 1500 Quad Cab 4WD	3.0L V-6 TD	8,750 (a8,j)

RAM 1500 CREW CAB 5'7" BED

Ram 1500 CC 2WD	3.6L V-6	4,480 (a8,d)
Ram 1500 CC 2WD	3.6L V-6	7,470 (a8,h)
Ram 1500 CC 2WD	5.7L V-8	6,760 (a6,d)
Ram 1500 CC 2WD	5.7L V-8	8,810 (a6,h)
Ram 1500 CC 2WD	5.7L V-8	10,360 (a6,j)
Ram 1500 CC 2WD	5.7L V-8	8,150 (a8,d)
Ram 1500 CC 2WD	5.7L V-8	10,300 (a8,j)
Ram 1500 CC 2WD	3.0L V-6 TD	7,870 (a8,h/j)
Ram 1500 CC 2WD	3.0L V-6 TD	8,870 (a8,j)
Ram 1500 CC 4WD	3.6L V-6	4,170 (a8,d)
Ram 1500 CC 4WD	3.6L V-6	7,160 (a8,h)
Ram 1500 CC 4WD	5.7L V-8	8,640 (a6,h)
Ram 1500 CC 4WD	5.7L V-8	10,190 (a6,j)
Ram 1500 CC 4WD	5.7L V-8	8,010 (a8,d)
Ram 1500 CC 4WD	5.7L V-8	10,160 (a8,j)
Ram 1500 CC 4WD	3.0L V-6 TD	7,610 (a8,h/j)
Ram 1500 CC 4WD	3.0L V-6 TD	8,610 (a8,j)

RAM 1500 CREW CAB 6'4" BED

Ram 1500 CC 2WD	5.7L V-8	6,730 (a6,d)
Ram 1500 CC 2WD	5.7L V-8	8,780 (a6,h)
Ram 1500 CC 2WD	5.7L V-8	10,330 (a6,j)
Ram 1500 CC 2WD	5.7L V-8	8,080 (a8,d)
Ram 1500 CC 2WD	5.7L V-8	10,230 (a8,j)
Ram 1500 CC 4WD	5.7L V-8	8,540 (a6,h)
Ram 1500 CC 4WD	5.7L V-8	10,090 (a6,j)
Ram 1500 CC 4WD	5.7L V-8	7,780 (a8,d)
Ram 1500 CC 4WD	5.7L V-8	9,830 (a8,j)
Ram 1500 CC 4WD	3.0L V-6 TD	7,540 (a8,h/j)
Ram 1500 CC 4WD	3.0L V-6 TD	8,340 (a8,j)

RAM 2500 REGULAR CAB LONGBED

Ram 2500 Reg Cab LB 2WD	5.7L V-8	11,890 (a6,i)
Ram 2500 Reg Cab LB 2WD	5.7L V-8	13,890 (a6,k)
Ram 2500 Reg Cab LB 2WD	6.4L V-8	13,320 (a6,i)
Ram 2500 Reg Cab LB 2WD	6.4L V-8	16,320 (a6,k)
Ram 2500 Reg Cab LB 2WD	6.7L I-6 TD	16,890 (m6,g)
Ram 2500 Reg Cab LB 2WD	6.7L I-6 TD	17,980 (a6,g)

Ram 2500 Reg Cab LB 4WD	5.7L V-8	11,510 (a6,i)
Ram 2500 Reg Cab LB 4WD	5.7L V-8	13,510 (a6,k)
Ram 2500 Reg Cab LB 4WD	6.4L V-8	12,930 (a6,i)
Ram 2500 Reg Cab LB 4WD	6.4L V-8	15,930 (a6,k)
Ram 2500 Reg Cab LB 4WD	6.7L I-6 TD	16,450 (m6,g)
Ram 2500 Reg Cab LB 4WD	6.7L I-6 TD	17,540 (a6,g)

RAM 2500 CREW CAB SHORTBED

Ram 2500 CC SB 2WD	5.7L V-8	11,520 (a6,i)
Ram 2500 CC SB 2WD	5.7L V-8	13,520 (a6,k)
Ram 2500 CC SB 2WD	6.4L V-8	12,940 (a6,i)
Ram 2500 CC SB 2WD	6.4L V-8	15,940 (a6,k)
Ram 2500 CC SB 2WD	6.7L I-6 TD	16,450 (m6,g)
Ram 2500 CC SB 2WD	6.7L I-6 TD	17,510 (a6,g)
Ram 2500 CC SB 4WD	5.7L V-8	11,200 (a6,i)
Ram 2500 CC SB 4WD	5.7L V-8	13,190 (a6,k)
Ram 2500 CC SB 4WD	6.4L V-8	12,630 (a6,i)
Ram 2500 CC SB 4WD	6.4L V-8	15,630 (a6,k)
Ram 2500 CC SB 4WD	6.7L I-6 TD	16,140 (m6,g)
Ram 2500 CC SB 4WD	6.7L I-6 TD	17,210 (a6,g)

RAM 2500 CREW CAB LONGBED

Ram 2500 CC LB 2WD	5.7L V-8	11,390 (a6,i)
Ram 2500 CC LB 2WD	5.7L V-8	13,390 (a6,k)
Ram 2500 CC LB 2WD	6.4L V-8	12,810 (a6,i)
Ram 2500 CC LB 2WD	6.4L V-8	15,810 (a6,k)
Ram 2500 CC LB 2WD	6.7L I-6 TD	16,300 (m6,g)
Ram 2500 CC LB 2WD	6.7L I-6 TD	17,370 (a6,g)
Ram 2500 CC LB 4WD	5.7L V-8	11,030 (a6,i)
Ram 2500 CC LB 4WD	5.7L V-8	13,020 (a6,k)
Ram 2500 CC LB 4WD	6.4L V-8	12,460 (a6,i)
Ram 2500 CC LB 4WD	6.4L V-8	15,460 (a6,k)
Ram 2500 CC LB 4WD	6.7L I-6 TD	15,960 (m6,g)
Ram 2500 CC LB 4WD	6.7L I-6 TD	17,030 (a6,g)

RAM 2500 MEGA CAB

Ram 2500 Mega Cab 2WD	5.7L V-8	11,040 (a6,i)
Ram 2500 Mega Cab 2WD	5.7L V-8	13,040 (a6,k)
Ram 2500 Mega Cab 2WD	6.4L V-8	12,520 (a6,i)
Ram 2500 Mega Cab 2WD	6.4L V-8	15,520 (a6,k)
Ram 2500 Mega Cab 2WD	6.7L I-6 TD	16,100 (m6,g)
Ram 2500 Mega Cab 2WD	6.7L I-6 TD	17,170 (a6,g)
Ram 2500 Mega Cab 4WD	5.7L V-8	10,780 (a6,i)
Ram 2500 Mega Cab 4WD	5.7L V-8	12,780 (a6,k)
Ram 2500 Mega Cab 4WD	6.4L V-8	12,240 (a6,i)
Ram 2500 Mega Cab 4WD	6.4L V-8	15,240 (a6,k)
Ram 2500 Mega Cab 4WD	6.7L I-6 TD	14,870 (m6,g)
Ram 2500 Mega Cab 4WD	6.7L I-6 TD	15,540 (a6,g)

RAM 3500 REGULAR CAB LONGBED SRW

Ram 3500 Reg Cab LB SRW 2WD	5.7L V-8	11,910 (a6,i)
Ram 3500 Reg Cab LB SRW 2WD	5.7L V-8	13,910 (a6,k)
Ram 3500 Reg Cab LB SRW 2WD	6.4L V-8	13,370 (a6,i)
Ram 3500 Reg Cab LB SRW 2WD	6.4L V-8	16,370 (a6,k)
Ram 3500 Reg Cab LB SRW 2WD	6.7L I-6 TD	16,870 (m6,g)

Ram 3500 Reg Cab LB SRW 2WD	6.7L I-6 TD	17,910 (a6,g)
Ram 3500 Reg Cab LB SRW 2WD	6.7L I-6 TD	17,770 (a6,g)*
Ram 3500 Reg Cab LB SRW 4WD	5.7L V-8	11,560 (a6,i)
Ram 3500 Reg Cab LB SRW 4WD	5.7L V-8	13,560 (a6,k)
Ram 3500 Reg Cab LB SRW 4WD	6.4L V-8	12,970 (a6,i)
Ram 3500 Reg Cab LB SRW 4WD	6.4L V-8	15,970 (a6,k)
Ram 3500 Reg Cab LB SRW 4WD	6.7L I-6 TD	16,520 (m6,g)
Ram 3500 Reg Cab LB SRW 4WD	6.7L I-6 TD	17,560 (a6,g)
Ram 3500 Reg Cab LB SRW 4WD	6.7L I-6 TD	17,420 (a6,g)*

RAM 3500 REGULAR CAB LONGBED DRW

Ram 3500 Reg Cab LB DRW 2WD	6.4L V-8	13,020 (a6,i)
Ram 3500 Reg Cab LB DRW 2WD	6.4L V-8	16,520 (a6,k)
Ram 3500 Reg Cab LB DRW 2WD	6.7L I-6 TD	16,510 (m6,g)
Ram 3500 Reg Cab LB DRW 2WD	6.7L I-6 TD	18,510 (m6,i)
Ram 3500 Reg Cab LB DRW 2WD	6.7L I-6 TD	17,550 (a6,g)
Ram 3500 Reg Cab LB DRW 2WD	6.7L I-6 TD	19,550 (a6,i)
Ram 3500 Reg Cab LB DRW 2WD	6.7L I-6 TD	22,550 (a6,k)
Ram 3500 Reg Cab LB DRW 2WD	6.7L I-6 TD	21,410 (a6,g)*
Ram 3500 Reg Cab LB DRW 2WD	6.7L I-6 TD	25,910 (a6,i)*
Ram 3500 Reg Cab LB DRW 2WD	6.7L I-6 TD	31,210 (a6,k)*
Ram 3500 Reg Cab LB DRW 4WD	6.4L V-8	12,640 (a6,i)
Ram 3500 Reg Cab LB DRW 4WD	6.4L V-8	16,140 (a6,k)
Ram 3500 Reg Cab LB DRW 4WD	6.7L I-6 TD	16,130 (m6,g)
Ram 3500 Reg Cab LB DRW 4WD	6.7L I-6 TD	18,130 (m6,i)
Ram 3500 Reg Cab LB DRW 4WD	6.7L I-6 TD	17,180 (a6,g)
Ram 3500 Reg Cab LB DRW 4WD	6.7L I-6 TD	19,180 (a6,i)
Ram 3500 Reg Cab LB DRW 4WD	6.7L I-6 TD	22,180 (a6,k)
Ram 3500 Reg Cab LB DRW 4WD	6.7L I-6 TD	21,030 (a6,g)*
Ram 3500 Reg Cab LB DRW 4WD	6.7L I-6 TD	25,530 (a6,i)*
Ram 3500 Reg Cab LB DRW 4WD	6.7L I-6 TD	30,830 (a6,k)*

RAM 3500 CREW CAB SHORTBED

Ram 3500 CC SB SRW 2WD	5.7L V-8	11,520 (a6,i)
Ram 3500 CC SB SRW 2WD	5.7L V-8	13,520 (a6,k)
Ram 3500 CC SB SRW 2WD	6.4L V-8	12,970 (a6,i)
Ram 3500 CC SB SRW 2WD	6.4L V-8	15,970 (a6,k)
Ram 3500 CC SB SRW 2WD	6.7L I-6 TD	16,450 (m6,g)
Ram 3500 CC SB SRW 2WD	6.7L I-6 TD	17,490 (a6,g)
Ram 3500 CC SB SRW 2WD	6.7L I-6 TD	17,350 (a6,g)*
Ram 3500 CC SB SRW 4WD	5.7L V-8	11,200 (a6,i)
Ram 3500 CC SB SRW 4WD	5.7L V-8	13,200 (a6,k)
Ram 3500 CC SB SRW 4WD	6.4L V-8	12,640 (a6,i)
Ram 3500 CC SB SRW 4WD	6.4L V-8	15,640 (a6,k)
Ram 3500 CC SB SRW 4WD	6.7L I-6 TD	16,160 (m6,g)
Ram 3500 CC SB SRW 4WD	6.7L I-6 TD	17,200 (a6,g)
Ram 3500 CC SB SRW 4WD	6.7L I-6 TD	17,050 (a6,g)*

RAM 3500 CREW CAB LONGBED

Ram 3500 CC LB SRW 2WD	5.7L V-8	11,410 (a6,i)
Ram 3500 CC LB SRW 2WD	5.7L V-8	13,410 (a6,k)
Ram 3500 CC LB SRW 2WD	6.4L V-8	12,830 (a6,i)
Ram 3500 CC LB SRW 2WD	6.4L V-8	15,830 (a6,k)
Ram 3500 CC LB SRW 2WD	6.7L I-6 TD	16,320 (m6,g)
Ram 3500 CC LB SRW 2WD	6.7L I-6 TD	17,360 (a6,g)

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*Offer subject to credit approval. Account must be in good standing at time of transaction. Cardholders will earn five (5) points for every one dollar (\$1.00) of Net Purchases spent on Good Sam Club related products and services made on their Account rounded to the nearest dollar. "Good Sam Club eligible purchases," are defined as products and services purchased from Good Sam Enterprises, LLC and its affiliates and partners, including but not limited to the following: Coast to Coast, Camping World, Good Sam, TL Enterprises, and NGIC. Cardholders will earn three (3) points for every one dollar (\$1.00) of Net Purchases made at any retail establishments that classify their merchant location to Visa as Campgrounds and Trailer Parks within the U.S. and Canada. For all other purchases made anywhere else, Cardholders will earn one (1) point for every one dollar (\$1.00) of Net Purchases made on their Account rounded to the nearest dollar. A one-time bonus award of (2,000) Rec Rewards Points will be awarded to new cardholders after the first purchase is posted to the Account. Bonus Rec Rewards Points will be posted approximately 30 days after the initial qualifying transaction. This rewards program is provided by Comenity Capital Bank and its terms may discontinue or change at any time. For information about the rates, fees, other costs, and the reward program rules (including point accrual rate, bonus point awards, etc.) and benefits associated with the use of this credit card program please visit www.comenity.net/goodsamcampingworld for complete terms and conditions.

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GCR46093 - 1215

Ram 3500 CC LB SRW 2WD	6.7L I-6 TD	17,210 (a6,g)*
Ram 3500 CC LB SRW 4WD	5.7L V-8	11,020 (a6,i)
Ram 3500 CC LB SRW 4WD	5.7L V-8	13,020 (a6,k)
Ram 3500 CC LB SRW 4WD	6.4L V-8	12,470 (a6,i)
Ram 3500 CC LB SRW 4WD	6.4L V-8	15,470 (a6,k)
Ram 3500 CC LB SRW 4WD	6.7L I-6 TD	15,960 (m6,g)
Ram 3500 CC LB SRW 4WD	6.7L I-6 TD	17,010 (a6,g)
Ram 3500 CC LB SRW 4WD	6.7L I-6 TD	16,860 (a6,g)*
Ram 3500 CC LB DRW 2WD	6.4L V-8	12,450 (a6,i)
Ram 3500 CC LB DRW 2WD	6.4L V-8	15,950 (a6,k)
Ram 3500 CC LB DRW 2WD	6.7L I-6 TD	15,960 (m6,g)
Ram 3500 CC LB DRW 2WD	6.7L I-6 TD	17,960 (m6,i)
Ram 3500 CC LB DRW 2WD	6.7L I-6 TD	17,000 (a6,g)
Ram 3500 CC LB DRW 2WD	6.7L I-6 TD	19,000 (a6,i)
Ram 3500 CC LB DRW 2WD	6.7L I-6 TD	22,000 (a6,k)
Ram 3500 CC LB DRW 2WD	6.7L I-6 TD	20,860 (a6,g)*
Ram 3500 CC LB DRW 2WD	6.7L I-6 TD	25,360 (a6,i)*
Ram 3500 CC LB DRW 2WD	6.7L I-6 TD	30,660 (a6,k)*
Ram 3500 CC LB DRW 4WD	6.4L V-8	12,100 (a6,i)
Ram 3500 CC LB DRW 4WD	6.4L V-8	15,600 (a6,k)
Ram 3500 CC LB DRW 4WD	6.7L I-6 TD	15,610 (m6,g)
Ram 3500 CC LB DRW 4WD	6.7L I-6 TD	17,610 (m6,i)
Ram 3500 CC LB DRW 4WD	6.7L I-6 TD	16,660 (a6,g)
Ram 3500 CC LB DRW 4WD	6.7L I-6 TD	18,660 (a6,i)
Ram 3500 CC LB DRW 4WD	6.7L I-6 TD	21,660 (a6,k)
Ram 3500 CC LB DRW 4WD	6.7L I-6 TD	20,510 (a6,g)*
Ram 3500 CC LB DRW 4WD	6.7L I-6 TD	25,510 (a6,i)*
Ram 3500 CC LB DRW 4WD	6.7L I-6 TD	30,310 (a6,k)*

RAM 3500 MEGA CAB

Ram 3500 Mega Cab SRW 2WD	5.7L V-8	11,270 (a6,i)
Ram 3500 Mega Cab SRW 2WD	5.7L V-8	13,270 (a6,k)
Ram 3500 Mega Cab SRW 2WD	6.4L V-8	12,710 (a6,i)
Ram 3500 Mega Cab SRW 2WD	6.4L V-8	15,710 (a6,k)
Ram 3500 Mega Cab SRW 2WD	6.7L I-6 TD	16,120 (m6,g)
Ram 3500 Mega Cab SRW 2WD	6.7L I-6 TD	17,160 (a6,g)
Ram 3500 Mega Cab SRW 2WD	6.7L I-6 TD	17,020 (a6,g)*
Ram 3500 Mega Cab SRW 4WD	5.7L V-8	10,990 (a6,i)
Ram 3500 Mega Cab SRW 4WD	5.7L V-8	12,990 (a6,k)
Ram 3500 Mega Cab SRW 4WD	6.4L V-8	12,400 (a6,i)
Ram 3500 Mega Cab SRW 4WD	6.4L V-8	15,400 (a6,k)
Ram 3500 Mega Cab SRW 4WD	6.7L I-6 TD	15,760 (m6,g)
Ram 3500 Mega Cab SRW 4WD	6.7L I-6 TD	16,800 (a6,g)
Ram 3500 Mega Cab SRW 4WD	6.7L I-6 TD	16,660 (a6,g)
Ram 3500 Mega Cab DRW 2WD	6.4L V-8	12,210 (a6,i)
Ram 3500 Mega Cab DRW 2WD	6.4L V-8	15,710 (a6,k)
Ram 3500 Mega Cab DRW 2WD	6.7L I-6 TD	15,720 (m6,g)
Ram 3500 Mega Cab DRW 2WD	6.7L I-6 TD	17,720 (m6,i)
Ram 3500 Mega Cab DRW 2WD	6.7L I-6 TD	16,770 (a6,g)
Ram 3500 Mega Cab DRW 2WD	6.7L I-6 TD	18,770 (a6,i)
Ram 3500 Mega Cab DRW 2WD	6.7L I-6 TD	21,770 (a6,k)
Ram 3500 Mega Cab DRW 2WD	6.7L I-6 TD	20,620 (a6,g)*
Ram 3500 Mega Cab DRW 2WD	6.7L I-6 TD	25,120 (a6,i)*
Ram 3500 Mega Cab DRW 2WD	6.7L I-6 TD	30,420 (a6,k)*
Ram 3500 Mega Cab DRW 4WD	6.4L V-8	12,020 (a6,i)

Ram 3500 Mega Cab DRW 4WD	6.4L V-8	15,520 (a6,k)
Ram 3500 Mega Cab DRW 4WD	6.7L I-6 TD	15,420 (m6,g)
Ram 3500 Mega Cab DRW 4WD	6.7L I-6 TD	17,420 (m6,i)
Ram 3500 Mega Cab DRW 4WD	6.7L I-6 TD	16,460 (a6,g)
Ram 3500 Mega Cab DRW 4WD	6.7L I-6 TD	18,460 (a6,i)
Ram 3500 Mega Cab DRW 4WD	6.7L I-6 TD	21,460 (a6,k)
Ram 3500 Mega Cab DRW 4WD	6.7L I-6 TD	20,320 (a6,g)*
Ram 3500 Mega Cab DRW 4WD	6.7L I-6 TD	24,820 (a6,i)*
Ram 3500 Mega Cab DRW 4WD	6.7L I-6 TD	30,120 (a6,k)*

*HO Cummins HD six-speed automatic.

FORD

EDGE, ESCAPE, EXPLORER, EXPEDITION, FLEX

Edge FWD/AWD	2.0L TC	3,500 (t)
Edge FWD/AWD	3.5L V-6	2,000
Edge FWD/AWD	3.5L V-6	3,500 (t)
Edge FWD/AWD	2.7L TC	2,000
Escape FWD/AWD	1.6L TC	2,000
Escape FWD/AWD	2.0L TC	2,000
Escape FWD/AWD	2.0L TC	3,500 (t)
Expedition 2WD	3.5L V-6 TC	6,600
Expedition 2WD	3.5L V-6 TC	9,200 (t)
Expedition 4WD	3.5L V-6 TC	6,500
Expedition 4WD	3.5L V-6 TC	9,200 (t)
Expedition EL 2WD	3.5L V-6 TC	6,600
Expedition EL 2WD	3.5L V-6 TC	9,200 (t)
Expedition EL 4WD	3.5L V-6 TC	6,600
Expedition EL 4WD	3.5L V-6 TC	9,100 (t)
Explorer FWD	2.3L TC	2,000
Explorer FWD/4WD	3.5L V-6	5,000
Explorer 4WD	3.5L V-6 TC	5,000 (t)
Flex	All	4,500 (t)

F-150 CONVENTIONAL/FIFTH-WHEEL TOWING

F-150 REGULAR CAB

F-150 Reg Cab SB 2WD	3.5L V-6	5,000 (h)
F-150 Reg Cab SB 2WD	3.5L V-6	7,600 (i)
F-150 Reg Cab SB 2WD	2.7L V-6 TC	7,600(f)
F-150 Reg Cab SB 2WD	2.7L V-6 TC	8,500 (i)
F-150 Reg Cab SB 2WD	5.0L V-8	8,300 (f)
F-150 Reg Cab SB 2WD	5.0L V-8	9,100 (h)
F-150 Reg Cab SB 4WD	3.5L V-6	5,000 (h)
F-150 Reg Cab SB 4WD	3.5L V-6	7,500 (i)
F-150 Reg Cab SB 4WD	2.7L V-6 TC	7,700 (h)
F-150 Reg Cab SB 4WD	2.7L V-6 TC	8,500 (i)
F-150 Reg Cab SB 4WD	5.0L V-8	8,300 (f/i)
F-150 Reg Cab SB 4WD	5.0L V-8	9,600 (i)
F-150 Reg Cab LB 2WD	3.5L V-6	5,000 (h)
F-150 Reg Cab LB 2WD	3.5L V-6	7,600 (i)
F-150 Reg Cab LB 2WD	2.7L V-6 TC	7,600 (f)
F-150 Reg Cab LB 2WD	2.7L V-6 TC	8,500 (i)*
F-150 Reg Cab LB 2WD	5.0L V-8	9,000 (f)
F-150 Reg Cab LB 2WD	5.0L V-8	10,000 (h)
F-150 Reg Cab LB 2WD	5.0L V-8	11,000 (i)
F-150 Reg Cab LB 2WD	3.5L V-6 TC	10,600 (c)

F-150 Reg Cab LB 2WD	3.5L V-6 TC	12,000 (h)
F-150 Reg Cab LB 4WD	3.5L V-6	7,400 (i)
F-150 Reg Cab LB 4WD	2.7L V-6 TC	7,600 (h)
F-150 Reg Cab LB 4WD	2.7L V-6 TC	8,400 (i)*
F-150 Reg Cab LB 4WD	5.0L V-8	9,000 f/h
F-150 Reg Cab LB 4WD	5.0L V-8	11,000 (i)
F-150 Reg Cab LB 4WD	3.5L V-6 TC	10,700 (f/h)
F-150 Reg Cab LB 4WD	3.5L V-6 TC	12,200 (h)

F-150 SUPERCAB

F-150 SuperCab Std. Bed 2WD	3.5L V-6	5,000 (h)
F-150 SuperCab Std. Bed 2WD	3.5L V-6	7,400 (i)
F-150 SuperCab Std. Bed 2WD	2.7L V-6 TC	7,600 (f)
F-150 SuperCab Std. Bed 2WD	2.7L V-6 TC	8,300 (i)*
F-150 SuperCab Std. Bed 2WD	5.0L V-8	9,100 (f)
F-150 SuperCab Std. Bed 2WD	5.0L V-8	10,100 (h)
F-150 SuperCab Std. Bed 2WD	3.5L V-6 TC	10,700 (c)
F-150 SuperCab Std. Bed 2WD	3.5L V-6 TC	12,000 (h)
F-150 SuperCab Std. Bed 4WD	3.5L V-6	7,200 (i)
F-150 SuperCab Std. Bed 4WD	2.7L V-6 TC	7,500 (h)
F-150 SuperCab Std. Bed 4WD	2.7L V-6 TC	8,100 (i)
F-150 SuperCab Std. Bed 4WD	5.0L V-8	9,000 (f/h)
F-150 SuperCab Std. Bed 4WD	5.0L V-8	10,900 (i)
F-150 SuperCab Std. Bed 4WD	3.5L V-6 TC	10,600 (f/h)
F-150 SuperCab Std. Bed 4WD	3.5L V-6 TC	11,700 (h)
F-150 SuperCab LB 2WD	2.7L V-6 TC	7,600 (f)

F-150 SuperCab LB 2WD	2.7L V-6 TC	8,200 (i)*
F-150 SuperCab LB 2WD	5.0L V-8	9,100 (f)
F-150 SuperCab LB 2WD	5.0L V-8	10,100 (h)
F-150 SuperCab LB 2WD	5.0L V-8	10,900 (i)*
F-150 SuperCab LB 2WD	3.5L V-6 TC	10,600 (c)
F-150 SuperCab LB 2WD	3.5L V-6 TC	11,800 (h)
F-150 SuperCab LB 4WD	5.0L V-8	8,800 (f)
F-150 SuperCab LB 4WD	5.0L V-8	9,000 (h)
F-150 SuperCab LB 4WD	5.0L V-8	10,700 (i)
F-150 SuperCab LB 4WD	3.5L V-6 TC	10,700 (f/h)
F-150 SuperCab LB 4WD	3.5L V-6 TC	11,600 (h)

F-150 SUPERCREW CAB

F-150 SuperCrew Cab SB 2WD	3.5L V-6	5,000 (h)
F-150 SuperCrew Cab SB 2WD	3.5L V-6	7,300 (i)
F-150 SuperCrew Cab SB 2WD	2.7L V-6 TC	7,600 (f)
F-150 SuperCrew Cab SB 2WD	2.7L V-6 TC	8,200 (i)*
F-150 SuperCrew Cab SB 2WD	5.0L V-8	9,100 (f)
F-150 SuperCrew Cab SB 2WD	5.0L V-8	10,100 (h)
F-150 SuperCrew Cab SB 2WD	3.5L V-6 TC	10,600 (c)
F-150 SuperCrew Cab SB 2WD	3.5L V-6 TC	11,800 (h)
F-150 SuperCrew Cab SB 4WD	3.5L V-6	7,100 (i)
F-150 SuperCrew Cab SB 4WD	2.7L V-6 TC	7,500 (h)
F-150 SuperCrew Cab SB 4WD	2.7L V-6 TC	8,000 (i)
F-150 SuperCrew Cab SB 4WD	5.0L V-8	8,900 (f)
F-150 SuperCrew Cab SB 4WD	5.0L V-8	9,000 (h)
F-150 SuperCrew Cab SB 4WD	5.0L V-8	10,800 (i)

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F-150 SuperCrew Cab SB 4WD	3.5L V-6 TC	10,700 (f/h)
F-150 SuperCrew Cab SB 4WD	3.5L V-6 TC	11,500 (h)
F-150 SuperCrew Cab Raptor	3.5L V-6 TC	NA
F-150 SuperCrew Cab Std. Bed 2WD	2.7L V-6 TC	7,600 (i)
F-150 SuperCrew Cab Std. Bed 2WD	2.7L V-6 TC	8,200 (h)*
F-150 SuperCrew Cab Std. Bed 2WD	5.0L V-8	9,100 (f)
F-150 SuperCrew Cab Std. Bed 2WD	5.0L V-8	10,100 (h)
F-150 SuperCrew Cab Std. Bed 2WD	3.5L V-6 TC	10,700 (e)
F-150 SuperCrew Cab Std. Bed 2WD	3.5L V-6 TC	11,900 (h)
F-150 SuperCrew Cab Std. Bed 4WD	3.5L V-6 TC	10,600 (f/h)
F-150 SuperCrew Cab Std. Bed 4WD	3.5L V-6 TC	11,600 (h)

F-150 ratings may vary slightly depending on wheel and tire package and other factors. See dealer for details.

*Requires 2.7L EcoBoost V-6 Payload Package.

F-250/F-350/F-450 SUPER DUTY CONVENTIONAL TOWING

F-250/F-350 REGULAR CAB

F-250/350 Reg Cab SRW 2WD	6.2L V-8	12,500 (all)
F-250/350 Reg Cab SRW 2WD	6.7L V-8 TD	12,500 (all)
F-250/350 Reg Cab SRW 4WD	6.2L V-8	12,500 (i)
F-250/350 Reg Cab SRW 4WD	6.2L V-8	12,500 (l)
F-250/350 Reg Cab SRW 4WD	6.7L V-8 TD	12,500 (all)
F-350 Reg Cab DRW 2WD	6.2L V-8	13,200 (i)
F-350 Reg Cab DRW 2WD	6.2L V-8	16,100 (l)
F-350 Reg Cab DRW 2WD	6.7L V-8 TD	19,000 (all)
F-350 Reg Cab DRW 4WD	6.2L V-8	12,500 (i)
F-350 Reg Cab DRW 4WD	6.2L V-8	15,700 (l)

F-350 Reg Cab DRW 4WD	6.7L V-8 TD	19,000 (all)
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F-250/F-350 SUPERCAB

F-250/F350 SC SRW 2WD	6.2L V-8	12,500 (all)
F-250/F350 SC SRW 2WD	6.7L V-8 TD	14,000 (all)
F-250 SC SRW 4WD	6.2L V-8	12,400 (i)
F-250 SC SRW 4WD	6.2L V-8	12,500 (l)
F-250 SC SRW 4WD	6.7L V-8 TD	14,000 (all)
F-350 SC SRW 2WD	6.2L V-8	12,500 (i)
F-350 SC SRW 2WD	6.2L V-8	12,500 (l)
F-350 SC SRW 2WD	6.7L V-8 TD	14,000 (all)
F-350 SC SRW 4WD	6.2L V-8	12,300 (i)
F-350 SC SRW 4WD	6.2L V-8	12,500 (l)
F-350 SC SRW 4WD	6.7L V-8 TD	14,000 (all)
F-350 SC DRW 2WD	6.2L V-8	12,400 (i)
F-350 SC DRW 2WD	6.2L V-8	15,300 (l)
F-350 SC DRW 2WD	6.7L V-8 TD	19,000 (all)
F-350 SC DRW 4WD	6.2L V-8	12,400 (i)
F-350 SC DRW 4WD	6.2L V-8	15,300 (l)
F-350 SC DRW 4WD	6.7L V-8 TD	19,000 (all)

F-250/F-350 CREW CAB

F-250/350 CC SRW 2WD	6.2L V-8	12,500 (i)
F-250/350 CC SRW 2WD	6.2L V-8	12,500 (l)
F-250/350 CC SRW 2WD	6.7L V-8 TD	14,000 (all)
F-250 CC SRW 4WD	6.2L V-8	12,200 (i)

EXHAUST BRAKES



TAP SHIFTER

FORD 6.4L & 6.7L & 6.0L



New In-dash 'Push To Engage' Button!
*Ford 6.7L Only

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- Now access all 5 gears with a tap of your finger
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- Overdrive control for slower driving in town
- Works great with engine exhaust brakes like BD's VVB

FORD 6.4L & 6.0L



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F-250 CC SRW 4WD	6.2L V-8	12,500 (I)
F-250 CC SRW 4WD	6.7L V-8 TD	14,000 (all)
F-350 CC SRW 4WD	6.2L V-8	12,100 (i)
F-350 CC SRW 4WD	6.2L V-8	12,500 (I)
F-350 CC SRW 4WD	6.7L V-8 TD	14,000 (all)
F-350 CC DRW 2WD	6.2L V-8	12,500 (i)
F-350 CC DRW 2WD	6.2L V-8	15,500 (I)
F-350 CC DRW 2WD	6.7L V-8 TD	19,000 (all)
F-350 CC DRW 4WD	6.2L V-8	12,100 (i)
F-350 CC DRW 4WD	6.2L V-8	15,100 (I)
F-350 CC DRW 4WD	6.7L V-8 TD	19,000 (all)
F-450 DRW 4WD	6.7L V-8 TD	19,000 (all)

F-250/F-350/F-450 SUPER DUTY FIFTH-WHEEL TOWING

F-250/F-350 REGULAR CAB

F-250/350 Reg Cab SRW 2WD	6.2L V-8	12,900 (i)
F-250/350 Reg Cab SRW 2WD	6.2L V-8	15,900 (I)
F-250/350 Reg Cab SRW 2WD	6.7L V-8 TD	16,600/16,500 (f/h)
F-250/350 Reg Cab SRW 4WD	6.2L V-8	12,500 (i)
F-250/350 Reg Cab SRW 4WD	6.2L V-8	15,500 (I)
F-250/350 Reg Cab SRW 4WD	6.7L V-8 TD	16,200/16,100 (f/h)
F-350 Reg Cab DRW 2WD	6.2L V-8	13,100 (i)
F-350 Reg Cab DRW 2WD	6.2L V-8	16,100 (I)
F-350 Reg Cab DRW 2WD	6.7L V-8 TD	24,700 (i)
F-350 Reg Cab DRW 4WD	6.2L V-8	12,600 (i)
F-350 Reg Cab DRW 4WD	6.2L V-8	15,600 (I)

F-350 Reg Cab DRW 4WD	6.7L V-8 TD	24,300 (i)
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F-250/F-350 SUPER CAB

F-250/F-350 SC SRW 2WD	6.2L V-8	12,700/12,600 (i)
F-250/F-350 SC SRW 2WD	6.2L V-8	15,700/15,600 (I)
F-250/F-350 SC SRW 2WD	6.7L V-8 TD	16,300/16,200 (f/h)
F-250 SC SRW 4WD	6.2L V-8	12,300 (i)
F-250 SC SRW 4WD	6.2L V-8	15,300 (I)
F-250 SC SRW 4WD	6.7L V-8 TD	15,900 (f/h)
F-350 SC SRW 4WD	6.2L V-8	12,200 (i)
F-350 SC SRW 4WD	6.2L V-8	15,200 (I)
F-350 SC SRW 4WD	6.7L V-8 TD	15,900 (f/h)
F-350 SC DRW 2WD	6.2L V-8	12,700 (i)
F-350 SC DRW 2WD	6.2L V-8	15,700 (I)
F-350 SC DRW 2WD	6.7L V-8 TD	24,200 (i)
F-350 SC DRW 4WD	6.2L V-8	12,200 (i)
F-350 SC DRW 4WD	6.2L V-8	15,200 (I)
F-350 SC DRW 4WD	6.7L V-8 TD	23,800 (i)

F-250/F-350 CREW CAB

F-250/F-350 CC SRW 2WD	6.2L V-8	12,400 (i)
F-250/F-350 CC SRW 2WD	6.2L V-8	15,400 (I)
F-250/F-350 CC SRW 2WD	6.7L V-8 TD	16,100 (f/h)
F-250 CC SRW 4WD	6.2L V-8	12,100 (i)
F-250 CC SRW 4WD	6.2L V-8	15,100 (I)
F-250 CC SRW 4WD	6.7L V-8 TD	15,100 (f/h)

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F-350 CC SRW 4WD	6.2L V-8	12,000 (i)
F-350 CC SRW 4WD	6.2L V-8	15,000 (l)
F-350 CC SRW 4WD	6.7L V-8 TD	15,700 (f/h)
F-350 CC DRW 2WD	6.2L V-8	12,400 (i)
F-350 CC DRW 2WD	6.2L V-8	15,400 (l)
F-350 CC DRW 2WD	6.7L V-8 TD	24,000 (i)
F-350 CC DRW 4WD	6.2L V-8	12,000 (i)
F-350 CC DRW 4WD	6.2L V-8	15,000 (l)
F-350 CC DRW 4WD	6.7L V-8 TD	23,500 (i)
F-350 CC DRW 4WD	6.7L V-8 TD	26,500 (i)
F-450 CC DRW 4WD	6.7L V-8 TD	31,200 (l)

TRANSIT CONNECT

Transit Connect Van/Wagon XL/XLT	1.6L TC	2,000 (t)
Transit Connect Van/Wagon XL/XLT	2.5L I-4	2,000 (t)

TRANSIT T-150/250 REGULAR WHEELBASE, LOW ROOF

Transit T-150/250 RWB LR	3.7L V-6	5,400 (i)
Transit T-150/250 RWB LR	3.7L V-6	6,600 (k)
Transit T-150/250 RWB LR	3.5L V-6 TC	5,700 (f)
Transit T-150/250 RWB LR	3.5L V-6 TC	7,100 (i)
Transit T-150/250 RWB LR	3.2L I-5 TD	7,500 (i)

TRANSIT T-150/250 REGULAR WHEELBASE, MEDIUM ROOF

Transit T-150/250 RWB MR	3.7L V-6	5,200 (i)
Transit T-150/250 RWB MR	3.7L V-6	6,400 (k)

Transit T-150/250 RWB MR	3.5L V-6 TC	5,500 (f)
Transit T-150/250 RWB MR	3.5L V-6 TC	6,900 (i)
Transit T-150/250 RWB MR	3.2L I-5 TD	4,600 (f)

TRANSIT T-150/250, LONG WHEELBASE, LOW ROOF

Transit T-150/250 LWB LR	3.7L V-6	5,200 (i)
Transit T-150/250 LWB LR	3.7L V-6	6,400 (k)
Transit T-150/250 LWB LR	3.5L V-6 TC	5,600 (f)
Transit T-150/250 LWB LR	3.5L V-6 TC	7,000 (i)
Transit T-150/250 LWB LR	3.2L I-5 TD	4,600 (f)
Transit T-150/250 LWB LR	3.2L I-5 TD	7,500 (i)

TRANSIT T-150/250, LONG WHEELBASE, MEDIUM ROOF

Transit T-150/250 LWB MR	3.7L V-6	5,100 (i)
Transit T-150/250 LWB MR	3.7L V-6	6,300 (k)
Transit T-150/250 LWB MR	3.5L V-6 TC	5,400 (f)
Transit T-150/250 LWB MR	3.5L V-6 TC	6,800 (i)
Transit T-150/250 LWB MR	3.2L I-5 TD	4,600 (f)
Transit T-150/250 LWB MR	3.2L I-5 TD	7,500 (i)

TRANSIT T-250, LONG WHEELBASE, HIGH ROOF

Transit T-250 LWB HR	3.7L V-6	5,100 (i)
Transit T-250 LWB HR	3.7L V-6	6,300 (k)
Transit T-250 LWB HR	3.5L V-6 TC	5,400 (f)
Transit T-250 LWB HR	3.5L V-6 TC	6,800 (i)
Transit T-250 LWB HR	3.2L I-5 TD	4,600 (f)



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Transit T-250 LWB HR 3.2L I-5 TD 7,500 (i)

TRANSIT T-350 LONG WHEELBASE, LOW ROOF

Transit T-350 LWB LR 3.7L V-6 5,200 (i)
 Transit T-350 LWB LR 3.7L V-6 6,400 (k)
 Transit T-350 LWB LR 3.5L V-6 TC 5,600 (f)
 Transit T-350 LWB LR 3.5L V-6 TC 7,000 (i)

TRANSIT T-350 LONG WHEELBASE, MEDIUM ROOF

Transit T-350 LWB MR 3.7L V-6 5,100 (i)
 Transit T-350 LWB MR 3.7L V-6 6,300 (k)
 Transit T-350 LWB MR 3.5L V-6 TC 5,400 (f)
 Transit T-350 LWB MR 3.5L V-6 TC 6,800 (i)

TRANSIT T-350 LONG WHEELBASE, HIGH ROOF

Transit T-350 LWB HR 3.7L V-6 6,200 (k)
 Transit T-350 LWB HR 3.5L V-6 TC 5,300 (f)
 Transit T-350 LWB HR 3.5L V-6 TC 6,700 (i)

TRANSIT T-250 LONG WHEELBASE, EXT. LENGTH, HIGH ROOF

Transit T-250 LWB EL HR 3.7L V-6 6,000 (k)
 Transit T-250 LWB EL HR 3.5L V-6 TC 5,100 (f)
 Transit T-250 LWB EL HR 3.5L V-6 TC 6,500 (i)
 Transit T-250 LWB EL HR 3.2L I-5 TD 4,200 (f)
 Transit T-250 LWB EL HR 3.2L I-5 TD 7,100 (i)

TRANSIT T-350 LONG WHEELBASE, EXT. LENGTH, HIGH ROOF

Transit T-350 LWB EL HR 3.7L V-6 6,000 (k)
 Transit T-350 LWB EL HR 3.5L V-6 TC 5,100 (f)
 Transit T-350 LWB EL HR 3.5L V-6 TC 6,500 (i)
 Transit T-350 LWB EL HR 3.2L I-5 TD 4,200 (f)
 Transit T-350 LWB EL HR 3.2L I-5 TD 7,100 (i)
 Transit T-350 LWB EL HR DRW 3.5L V-6 TC 4,900 (f)
 Transit T-350 LWB EL HR DRW 3.5L V-6 TC 6,700 (i)
 Transit T-350 LWB EL HR DRW 3.2L I-5 TD 4,000 (f)
 Transit T-350 LWB EL HR DRW 3.2L I-5 TD 6,900 (i)

TRANSIT T-150 REGULAR WHEELBASE, LOW ROOF

Transit T-150 RWB LR 3.7L V-6 4,700 (i)
 Transit T-150 RWB LR 3.5L V-6 TC 5,100 (f)

TRANSIT T-150 REGULAR WHEELBASE, MEDIUM ROOF

Transit T-150 RWB MR 3.7L V-6 4,600 (i)
 Transit T-150 RWB MR 3.5L V-6 TC 5,000 (f)

TRANSIT T-350 LONG WHEELBASE, LOW ROOF

Transit T-350 LWB LR 3.7L V-6 4,200 (i)
 Transit T-350 LWB LR 3.7L V-6 4,600 (k)
 Transit T-350 LWB LR 3.5L V-6 TC 4,600 (f)
 Transit T-350 LWB LR 3.2L I-5 TD 3,700 (f)
 Transit T-350 LWB LR 3.2L I-5 TD 4,300 (i)

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TRANSIT T-350 LONG WHEELBASE, MEDIUM ROOF

Transit T-350 LWB MR	3.7L V-6	4,100 (i)
Transit T-350 LWB MR	3.7L V-6	4,500 (k)
Transit T-350 LWB MR	3.5L V-6 TC	4,500 (f.)
Transit T-350 LWB MR	3.2L I-5 TD	3,600 (f)
Transit T-350 LWB MR	3.2L I-5 TD	4,200 (i)

TRANSIT T-350 LONG WHEELBASE, HIGH ROOF

Transit T-350 LWB HR	3.7L V-6	4,400 (k)
Transit T-350 LWB HR	3.5L V-6 TC	4,400 (f)
Transit T-350 LWB HR	3.2L I-5 TD	3,500 (f)
Transit T-350 LWB HR	3.2L I-5 TD	4,100 (i)

TRANSIT T-350 LONG WHEELBASE, EXT. LENGTH HIGH ROOF

Transit T-350 LWB EL HR	3.5L V-6 TC	3,800 (f.)
Transit T-350 LWB EL HR	3.2L I-5 TD	3,500 (i)

Transit ratings vary slightly depending on seating capacity, cvwr and other factors. See dealer for details.

HONDA

Odyssey	3.5L V-6	3,500
Pilot 2WD	3.5L V-6	3,500
Pilot AWD	3.5L V-6	5,000

HYUNDAI

Santa Fe	3.3L V-6	5,000
Santa Fe	3.3L V-6	5,000

INFINITI

QX60	3.5 V-6	5,000
QX70 AWD	3.7L V-6	2,000
QX80	5.6L V-8	8,500

JEEP

Cherokee	2.4L I-4	2,000
Cherokee	3.2L V-6	4,500 (t)
Grand Cherokee 2WD	3.6L V-6	6,200
Grand Cherokee 4WD	3.6L V-6	6,200
Grand Cherokee 2WD	5.7L V-8	7,400
Grand Cherokee 4WD	5.7L V-8	7,200
Grand Cherokee 2WD	3.0L V-6 TD	7,400
Grand Cherokee 4WD	3.0L V-6 TD	7,200
Renegade 4WD	2.4L I-4 TC	2,000
Wrangler (All)	3.6L V-6	2,000

KIA

Sorento	2.3L I-4	2,000
Sorento	3.5L V-6	3,500
Sorento AWD	3.5L V-6	5,000
Sportage	All	2,000

LAND ROVER

Discovery Sport	2.0 I-4 TC	3,500
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Range Rover	All	7,716
Range Rover Sport	All	7,716

LEXUS

GX 470	4.6L V-8	6,500
LX 570	5.7L V-8	7,000
NX 200t	2.0L I-4 TC	2,000
RX 350	3.5L V-6	3,500
RX 450h AWD Hybrid	3.5L V-6	3,500

LINCOLN

MKX	All	3,500
Navigator 2WD	3.5L V-6 TC	6,200
Navigator 2WD	3.5L V-6 TC	9,000 (t)
Navigator 4WD	3.5L V-6 TC	6,200
Navigator 4WD	3.5L V-6 TC	8,600 (t)
Navigator L 2WD	3.5L V-6 TC	6,200
Navigator L 2WD	3.5L V-6 TC	8,500 (t)
Navigator L 4WD	3.5L V-6 TC	6,200
Navigator L 4WD	3.5L V-6 TC	8,300 (t)

MAZDA

CX5	2.0L	2,000
CX9 (All)	3.7L V-6	3,500

MERCEDES-BENZ

AMG GL63	5.5L V-8 TC	7,500
AMG GLE63	5.5L V-8 TC	7,200
AMG GLE63 S	5.5L V-8 TC	7,200
GL350/450 4Matic	3.0L V-6 TD	7,500
GL550 4Matic	4.7L V-8 TC	7,500
GLE300d	2.1L I-4	6,600
GLE350	3.5L V-6	6,600
GLE350 4Matic	3.5L V-6	7,200
GLE400 4Matic	3.0L V-6 TC	7,200

MITSUBISHI

Outlander 2WD/4WD	3.0L V-6	3,500
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NISSAN

Frontier 2WD	4.0L V-6	6,300
Frontier 4WD	4.0L V-6	6,100
Pathfinder	3.5L V-6	5,000
Quest	3.5 V-6	3,500
Titan XD S 2WD	5.0 V-8 TD	12,314
Titan XD S 4WD	5.0 V-8 TD	12,038
Titan XD SV 2WD	5.0 V-8 TD	12,164
Titan XD SV 4WD	5.0 V-8 TD	11,888
Titan XD P4X 4WD	5.0 V-8 TD	11,784
Titan XD SL 2WD	5.0 V-8 TD	11,915
Titan XD SL 4WD	5.0 V-8 TD	11,638

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Titan XD Platinum Reserve 2WD	5.0 V-8 TD	11,836
Titan XD Platinum Reserve 4WD	5.0 V-8 TD	10,608

PORSCHE

Cayenne	All	7,716
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SUBARU

Outback	2.5L H-4	2,700
Outback	3.6R H-6	3,000

TOYOTA

4Runner (all)	4.0L V-6	5,000
Highlander	3.5L V-6	5,000 (t)
Highlander Hybrid	3.5L V-6	3,500
Land Cruiser	5.7L V-8	8,100
Sequoia 2WD SR5	5.7L V-8	7,400
Sequoia 4WD SR5	5.7L V-8	7,100
Sequoia 2WD Ltd	5.7L V-8	7,300
Sequoia 4WD Ltd	5.7L V-8	7,100
Sequoia 2WD Platinum	5.7L V-8	7,200
Sequoia 4WD Platinum	5.7L V-8	7,000
Sienna	3.5L V-6	3,500 (t)

TACOMA

Tacoma Access Cab	2.7L I-4	3,500
Tacoma Access Cab 2WD	3.5L V-6	6,800 (t)
Tacoma Access Cab 4WD	3.5L V-6	6,500 (t)
Tacoma Double Cab 2WD/4WD	2.7L I-4	3,500

Tacoma Double Cab 2WD	3.5L V-6	6,700 (t)
Tacoma Double Cab 4WD	3.5L V-6	6,400 (t)

TUNDRA

Tundra Reg Cab LB 2WD	5.7L V-8	10,500 (t)
Tundra Reg Cab LB 4WD	5.7L V-8	10,200 (t)
Tundra Double Cab Std. Bed 2WD	4.6L V-8	6,800
Tundra Double Cab Std. Bed 2WD	5.7L V-8	10,300
Tundra Double Cab Std. Bed 4WD	4.6L V-8	6,500
Tundra Double Cab Std. Bed 4WD	5.7L V-8	10,000
Tundra Double Cab LB 2WD	5.7L V-8	10,100
Tundra Double Cab LB 4WD	5.7L V-8	9,800
Tundra CrewMax 2WD	4.6L V-8	6,700 (t)
Tundra CrewMax 2WD	5.7L V-8	10,100
Tundra CrewMax 4WD	4.6L V-8	6,400 (t)
Tundra CrewMax 4WD	5.7L V-8	9,800

Tundra ratings vary depending on trim level and equipment selected. See dealer for details.

VOLKSWAGEN

Tiguan	2.0L I-4 TC	2,200
Touareg	All	7,716

VOLVO

S60	All	3,300
S80	All	3,500
XC60	All	3,300
XC70	All	3,500
XC90	All	3,500

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3100	■	■	■	■	■		■				
3800	■	■	■	■	■		■				
4000	■	■	■	■	■		■				
7500	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■

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Game of Thrones

Dometic's gravity-flush 320 toilet has an elongated vitreous-ceramic bowl and a comfortable wooden seat – and it's even ADA-compliant

DIFFICULTY 1 2 3 4 5

TIME TO COMPLETE 45 MINUTES

TOOLS NEEDED TWO 8-INCH CRESCENT WRENCHES, ½-INCH OPEN-END WRENCH OR RATCHETING WRENCH, STAINLESS-STEEL FLEX HOSE, FITTINGS, WATER LINES, HAND TOWELS

A residential-style ceramic-bowl toilet seems to be the preferred trend these days, as RV interiors have become higher-end in an effort to placate owners who expect features that rival their stationary homes. To meet that requirement in the bathroom, Dometic offers the 320 series toilet, which can be easily retrofitted using the standard two-bolt mounting base designed to fit most existing floor flanges.

The 320 toilet stands 18 inches off the floor, which makes it compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), and it's very comfortable to use, especially for those who suffer from arthritis and other maladies that restrict bending. To make it even more comfortable, the elongated bowl has a full-size wooden seat. The high-quality vitreous-ceramic bowl is scratch-resistant and is protected by a 10-year warranty; other components are covered for two years.

Dometic's 360-degree PowerFlush technology with pressurized rim flow is one of the most efficient flushing systems available. The 320 uses as little as .5 liters (around 16 ounces) of water per flush, and the flush pedal is ergonomic and set at a convenient, lower height for ease of use.

Installation will vary widely, depending on the toilet model being replaced. Fortunately, there is a standard measurement of 11 inches from the center of the floor flange to the back wall. It is possible that the 320 will rest against the back wall of the RV bathroom, due to the size of the elongated bowl, but this should not be an issue. Older RVs



1) Before mounting the toilet on the floor flange, the new seal must be installed on the bottom of the toilet. **2)** After cleaning the area, new bolts that come with the toilet are placed in the flange that's bolted to the floor. **3)** New fittings and a stainless-steel flex hose are used to connect the toilet to the water source.

may not have the clearance between the wall and the center of the flange. It's best to take that measurement before buying the new toilet, if you're unsure of the dimensions.

Before starting, be sure to shut off the city-water spigot feeding the RV and/or turn off the demand pump. Have a few hand towels, two 8-inch crescent wrenches and a ½-inch open-end wrench (ratcheting is even better) ready to go for the 45-minute project.

We replaced a smaller ceramic-style toilet with a similar two-bolt mounting

system. Start the process by removing the existing toilet, and then remove the rubber seal that may be stuck to the floor flange. Remove the old flange bolts, clean up the area and check for



TIDY BOWL » Dometic's 320 toilet stands 18 inches off the floor, making it ADA-compliant. The foot pedal is at a good height to easily reach.

any cracks or warped surfaces before positioning the new bolts. Install the supplied flange seal on the bottom of the new Dometic toilet and carefully position the toilet over the new flange bolts. Before permanently bolting the toilet to the floor, check to see if the existing water-supply line will reach the water valve on the back of the new toilet.

The placement of the water valves varies widely among brands and models of toilets; it may be necessary to extend or modify the existing water line. In our case, we were unable to attach the original water line to the new toilet because it was too short and offset. Our solution was to use two separate fittings and a stainless-steel flex hose with a 1/2-inch female pipe thread swivel and a rubber gasket on each end. Flex hoses can be very useful when installing a toilet in tight areas since there's usually enough length to attach the water line before setting the toilet in place.

Once satisfied there were no apparent leaks, the two hold-down nuts with

4) A ratcheting wrench made it convenient to tighten the nuts that hold the toilet base to the floor flange. The nuts should not be over-tightened. 5) An elongated bowl and wooden seat are welcome features of the Dometic 320 vitreous-ceramic toilet.

built-in washers were put onto the bolts protruding through the base of the toilet and tightened; decorative covers hide the bolt ends. Retightening the flange bolts may be necessary after a period of time due to possible compression of the flange seal. From the first use, we were impressed with the efficiency of the flush and liked the way water can be added to the bowl by holding the pedal partially open.

Dometic's 320 is available in white or bone colors with or without a hand-sprayer option. The toilet retails for \$256 without the hand sprayer; add \$25 for the sprayer. 🚽

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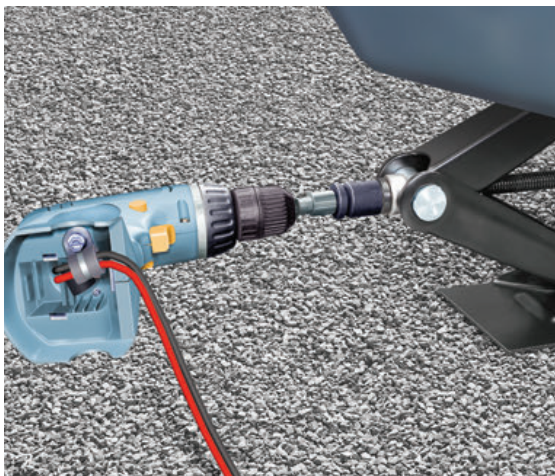


Screen Door Latch



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Crank It Up... and Down

Here's my work-around for a troublesome manual crank to raise and lower the screw-type scissor jacks on my trailer. I bought a reasonably priced used 12-volt battery-powered cordless drill with a 19mm socket adapter and attached a two-conductor cable that will reach from the scissor jacks to the trailer's battery. The drill has a two-speed selector and sufficient torque to raise the jacks a few turns past "tight." A rechargeable cordless drill was not practical because the battery would not last long enough, and I did not have a way to charge it.

One caution is to determine the polarity of the drill's battery terminals, since they are not marked (an old battery would give a clue, but we didn't get one with the used drill). We determined polarity by using a current-limited power supply, so as not to damage the drill-speed control, which is polarity-sensitive (a 6-volt battery could also be used to ascertain when you have the positive and negative terminals identified). The manufacturers do not mark the terminals, as they assume you will use the battery pack they sell for the drill.

Once you are certain of polarity, the connections can be made to the two-conductor cable.

Warren Shulz, Griffith, Indiana

To send your submission, write to 10-Minute Tech, 2750 Park View Court, Suite 240, Oxnard, California 93036 or email 10minutetech@trailerlife.com. Please include an illustration or photo, if applicable. *Trailer Life* will pay \$35 for original 10-Minute Tech ideas.



Get a Handle on Leveling

To save time when setting up our trailer, I cut a 2-foot-long 6x6-inch piece of wood into 12-inch sections to make leveling blocks. I then added handles that I purchased at a hardware store. Using the handles, I can place a block with one hand and have the other hand free. The 12-inch blocks fit perfectly into a plastic container for storage.

Chuck Downing, Waynesville, North Carolina

QUICK FIX

Keep Heat Out

I am commenting on "Bubble-Wrap Window Insulation," Tim Bob's tip from the March 2015 issue. He used clear bubble wrap on his RV's windows to keep the heat in on cold days. Here's how to adapt this method to keep the heat out when it's hot.

When we lived and traveled in the Southwest desert, instead of bubble wrap, we used water-heater insulation wrap, which is essentially the same thing as bubble wrap but with a reflective cover. It is extremely effective, but you must cut the pieces a little snug so they can easily pop into window frames and be removed when you want to see out.

This is the material used in interior windshield covers used by just about everyone in the Southwest to keep parked cars and trucks below boiling temperature in the summer. It is available at home-improvement stores and works wonders in south- and west-facing home windows, too. Clear bubble wrap lets in too much light to be useful in hot temperatures.

Lynn Bootes, Tulsa, Oklahoma 🐾

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Boost Engine Braking

With BD Diesel's new electronic exhaust-brake control, owners of 6.4- and 6.7-liter Ford Super Duty trucks can greatly enhance engine-braking performance when towing a trailer or hauling a heavy load in the bed. The computer module controls the transmission and closes off the turbocharger's variable vanes to create up to 110 retarding horsepower to help maintain speed on descents and curves, better controlling the truck and load while taking the heat off the truck and trailer brakes. The three-position switch on the dash sets enhanced engine braking, with or without downshifts, and normal operation. The kit installs easily utilizing factory components and connections.

MSRP: \$595

800-887-5030, www.dieselperformance.com
Circle 162 on Reader Service Card



RV-Friendly Tablet

With many RVers ditching their PCs for tablet computers, Rand McNally's new RV Tablet 80 is poised to become a popular travel companion. Designed with an Android operating system for use on the road and off, the tablet comes preloaded with unique navigation and travel apps that put RV campgrounds, points of interest, fuel prices and weather forecasts along the route at your fingertips. A powered magnetic mount holds the RV Tablet firmly in place and detaches easily when needed, without removing the cord. The 8-inch screen has a built-in dash cam and Wi-Fi connectivity that provides access to check email, watch videos and catch up on social media.

MSRP: \$499.99

800-275-7263

www.randmcnally.com/product/rv-tablet
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TV on-the-Fly

If watching TV on the go is high on the must-do list, it doesn't get much easier than using Winegard's new one-button-operation in-motion satellite antenna to bring in the signal. The compact roof-mounted RoadTrip T4 is a fully automatic-tracking system that is perfect for on-the-road TV watchers (as the driver handles the navigation duties) and at campsites with unobstructed views of the southern sky. When trees, bridges or buildings block the in-motion signal, new motors and tracking software quickly and quietly help make a fast recovery. The antenna allows for two TVs and can be set up to receive Dish, DirecTV and Bell programming.

MSRP: \$1,399

800-288-8094, www.winegard.com
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High-Tech Inverters

Inverters are invaluable to RVers because they make the power transition from 12 volts DC to 120 volts AC seamless, so all sorts of electrical needs are met using the trailer's and tow vehicle's batteries. Xantrex's Freedom HFS inverters are state-of-the-art in both capability and design, according to the company. With a 1,000- or 2,000-watt capacity, this new-generation inverter uses a quick-connect terminal on AC input and output for easy installation. An ignition-control feature minimizes unintended battery drain, handles 2X power surge and delivers true sine-wave output to protect the most sensitive electronic equipment. Freedom HFS inverters are also battery chargers with a built-in transfer switch.

MSRP: \$850, 800-670-0707, www.xantrex.com

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LOT 62334

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SAVE 57%

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SAVE \$849

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Under-Hood Maintenance

Preventive maintenance is essential to keep your tow vehicle, truck-camper hauler or motorhome running well and reliably. Many owners simply visit a quick-lube shop near home for an oil and filter change, and think they are taking proper care of their vehicles. However, there's a lot more to thorough vehicle care than most owners realize. A careful perusal of the owner's or maintenance manual and aftermarket repair manuals will show what needs to be done and when. Servicing should be done more frequently under severe conditions, including towing or hauling heavy loads and operating in extreme hot or cold weather.

It's a good idea to keep a logbook describing maintenance services performed, along with date and mileage, and to store receipts in a folder or envelope in the vehicle. That way, when something such as a battery fails when you are traveling, you'll have the necessary proof of purchase with you. Keeping good records of maintenance can also protect warranty coverage.

Oil and Oil Filters

The engine oil and filter should be changed according to the engine or vehicle manufacturer's recommendations, if not sooner. Last month's Performance Corner covered engine oils extensively, so we won't repeat that here. If you change your own vehicle's oil, be sure to use the type and viscosity recommended by the manufacturer. Install a new seal ring on the drain plug, apply a smear of oil on the rubber seal on the oil filter, and tighten the plug and filter securely, but don't overtighten. Refill the oil, checking the dipstick before starting the engine. The filter holds a considerable amount of oil, so check the oil level again after running the engine. Recycle old oil and filters.

Spark Plugs

Up until the 1970s, a tune-up on a gas engine included replacing the points, plugs and condenser, but with the advent of electronic ignitions, points and condensers went the way of the horse and buggy. Unleaded gasoline extended the life of spark plugs, and high-tech metallurgy has extended it even further, so that now many spark plugs have

100,000-mile replacement intervals in "normal" service (severe service calls for twice as often).

Spark-plug replacement is something DIYers can still do without fancy equipment, but you should tighten the new plugs with a torque wrench to specifications in the shop manual. Use the size, type and heat range recommended by the manufacturer. Inspect and compare the condition of the firing tips; all should be similar and indicate normal combustion with a tan or white color. Add a dab of anti-seize compound to the threads before installation. Some older Ford modular 4.6- and 5.4-liter V-8 and V-10 engines have a known problem with the spark plug threads stripping, so be forewarned.

Coolant

Radiator coolant deteriorates with time and mileage, and should be replaced every few years, depending on condition and the type of coolant (regular or long life). Coolant becomes more acidic, and rust can start to form in the engine if it isn't changed on time. Test strips are available at auto-parts stores to check the pH of the coolant. Coolant can also be tested for freeze-protection with a special hydrometer, also available at auto-parts stores. If the coolant looks dirty, use a radiator-flush chemical

(follow directions on the container) before changing.

Besides the different types of coolant, such as ethylene glycol and propylene glycol, there are also standard and long-life antifreezes and special low-silicate blends. Always use antifreeze-coolant that meets the requirements of the engine or vehicle manufacturer, especially with diesels.

Coolant hoses typically deteriorate from the inside out, forming small cracks in the interior surfaces, and after five years or so are due for replacement. While the coolant is drained, look inside the radiator (through the cap opening, or remove the upper hose) to inspect for mineral deposits. Thick white buildup, especially in the tube openings, indicates that the radiator is partially clogged and may need to be cleaned by a radiator shop. Thermostats also fail eventually, so it's a good idea to replace hoses, clamps, the thermostat (use the original temperature rating) and the pressure cap (use the original PSI rating) at the same time that the coolant is drained. Be sure to replace all coolant hoses; sometimes heater hoses are hidden on the other side of the firewall under the instrument panel.

Power Steering

Like everything else, power-steering fluid degrades with time and use. As the pump and steering gear wears, microscopic bits of metal and other debris contaminate the fluid, and it also breaks down and oxidizes from heat. The chemical composition of dedicated

K&N offers a variety of washable, reusable performance air filters to replace factory units. The company claims its filters can go up to 50,000 miles before cleaning but recommends inspections every 25,000 miles.



power-steering fluids varies by maker. These fluids are usually comprised of mineral oil, polyalphaolefin or organophosphate esters and may also contain glycols, silicones and corrosion inhibitors.

Most vehicles have power-steering filters that trap particles and help extend flush intervals. Check the maintenance schedule for recommended service intervals. If you don't see them listed, a good rule of thumb is about every five years or 60,000 miles, whichever comes first. Generally, there is no drain plug on the pump, and it's necessary to drain the system by removing a hose down by the steering gear. While you're at it, inspect the hoses for wear, cracks and hardening, and replace if needed.

Not all power-steering systems require the same type of fluid. Some need automatic transmission fluid (ATF), others call for generic or a specific type of power-steering fluid, while some models require Pentosin central hydraulic fluid, such as CHF 7.1,



PHOTOS BY KEN FREUND

Preventive under-hood maintenance includes making sure the battery terminals are clean and tight, and checking and flushing the radiator coolant as needed. In cold weather, make sure the windshield-washer fluid has freeze protection.

CHF 11S and CHF 202.

Always follow the recommendations of the vehicle manufacturer. If you replace the fluid, the system will contain some trapped air. This can be bled by turning the front wheels slowly and steadily back and forth from full-lock left to full-lock right until the groaning noises and shuddering stop.

Vehicles that are driven in extremely hot or difficult conditions, such as off-road in deep sand and mud, may need additional cooling for the power-

steering system. Special power-steering coolers are available for this purpose and can be plumbed into the low-pressure return side of the hoses. Derales Performance makes a variety of coolers (www.derales.com). An Internet search of "power steering cooler" will provide a number of other sources.

Air Filters

Towing and hauling heavy loads causes the engine to operate longer at wider throttle openings to draw in more air. This results in shorter intervals before the filter becomes dirty, as does driving in dusty conditions. Diesel engines flow a tremendous volume of air and should be checked often. Many diesel air filters have a telltale monitor that shows how much the filter is restricted, and this should be used to help decide when replacement is needed.

Most vehicles have dry pleated-paper air filters as original equipment. Holding the filter up to a lightbulb can help discern how dirty it is. If the filter has low mileage and looks clean but has a few bugs or other minor debris on it, it can be tapped on a flat surface to eject these items. If you have an air compressor, you can lightly blow from the back side toward the inlet side to clear dust particles; avoid high direct pressure that can damage filters. Dry filters that look dirty should, of course, be replaced.

Washable filters such as K&N (www.knfilters.com) and foam filters, which are oiled, should be cleaned and re-oiled with the special oil sold for this purpose, as per instructions. K&N offers cleaning kits that contain both a cleaning product and special oil.

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EGR

Exhaust gas recirculation (EGR) valves reduce harmful emissions by rerouting a small percentage of the exhaust gases back into the combustion chambers in the engine. The exhaust gases are depleted of oxygen, and this has the effect of reducing combustion temperatures, which in turn greatly reduces the formation of harmful oxides of nitrogen. EGR valves may become clogged with carbon deposits after extensive service, and then need to be removed and cleaned.

Many diesel engines also have EGR coolers that require inspection and cleaning. Improved aftermarket coolers are available from companies such as Shop Injectors (www.shopinjectors.com).

Some engines also have EGR filters that trap soot and hard carbon and prevent it from entering the turbo-charger compressor via the EGR line. These should be replaced as needed.

If an EGR valve is sticking open, it may cause rough idling and hesitation when accelerating. If the problem is severe, the engine may stall frequently. Most EGR valves can be removed and cleaned by hand with a small wire brush and carburetor spray cleaner.

Drive Belts

Drive belts deteriorate with time and mileage, and should be replaced when recommended in the maintenance schedule or if cracks appear. Most engines now have serpentine belts that drive all accessories. A spring-loaded adjuster typically maintains belt tension, so tension doesn't normally need to be adjusted.

Batteries

Battery terminals build up corrosion until it affects starting performance and power distribution. Inspect the terminals, and if any sign of corrosion is present, take the cables off and clean them. Special wire brushes are available in auto-parts stores to service the top and side post terminals. Remove the negative terminal first, so if a wrench touches metal on the vehicle, it won't cause a dangerous short, and plan on resetting memories such as

radio stations afterward.

A mixture of water and baking soda can be used to neutralize acid and clean posts and terminals, but do not let it get into the battery vents or caps. Tighten the terminals securely, but don't overtighten them. You can also spray a battery-terminal coating on the terminals after service to help prevent corrosion. Also make sure that the tie-downs are secure.

Most original-equipment batteries

are maintenance-free, which means they don't require the regular addition of water. However, even maintenance-free batteries (which have lead-calcium plates) use some water. On older batteries, it is sometimes possible to extend their life (if the electrolyte level is down) by removing the caps and adding distilled water.

Leaks

While you're under the hood, especially



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on older and higher-mileage vehicles, there's a good chance you will notice signs of one or more oil or coolant leaks. Sometimes the source is obvious, and you can see the fluid dripping or running out and spot the exact source. Other times, it's not so easy, particularly with slow or intermittent leaks, where the leaking fluid is blown around by the fan or wind. Sometimes, it's possible to clean off the surfaces and then spray foot powder on the suspected area. After a drive, the trail that the leaking fluid took should be more apparent and lead to the exact source.

If this method doesn't work, it may be time for a more sophisticated procedure. Some auto-parts stores sell DIY kits that contain fluorescent dyes that are added to the oil or coolant, along with an ultraviolet "black" light that is directed to the suspected areas after the fluid has been in the engine for a while. This is best done after dark, right after the engine is shut down.

Coolant leaks can also be tracked with a pressure-tester pump that brings the cooling system up to operating pressure so leaks can be spotted. If you are unsure about trying this yourself, many repair shops have the equipment to do this.

Parting Thoughts

After servicing your vehicle, you may need to reset the maintenance reminder system. Some older models have a box with a button or a small slot in the dash, and inserting the ignition key in the slot resets the system and turns out the light. Most reminders are now electronic rather than mechanical, and reset procedures may involve a combination of a reset button and the ignition switch. Others may require that a scan tool or other electronic device be connected to the vehicle. Check the owner's manual for specific information. Some vehicles may have to be reset by the dealer.

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Q I am looking to buy new tires for my travel trailer. It's a Rockwood Windjammer 32-footer, and it has 225/75R15 tires, but I want to go to a better tire, such as a 10-ply with an 8-ply sidewall. Do you have any recommendations?

Jeff Conway, via email

A You can switch from Special Trailer (ST) tires to Light Truck (LT) tires, as long as they have an equal or higher load rating. Note that you may have a tough time asking a tire dealer for a tire according to its sidewall or tread ply rating, as those terms are not commonly used in the light-truck and light-trailer-tire industries. Although Maxxis, for example, offers a 10PR tire for your trailer, today's tires are typically labeled with a load rating that takes the place of a more-or-less equivalent ply rating for comparison purposes to older tires, but that



ply rating is not the actual number of body-ply layers. You may find that, along with higher cost, the trailer might ride harsher because the tires are stiffer. This could cause problems, such as things getting rearranged more in your cupboards. If you go to higher inflation pressures, make sure the wheels are rated for the pressure you'll be running. My "RV Tires 101" article in the December 2015 issue discusses this subject of swapping. — **Ken Freund**

"BEARING MAINTENANCE AND LIFT" REVISITED

Q I read with interest the "Bearing Maintenance and Lift" discussion back in the March 2015 RV Clinic about trailer wheel-bearing maintenance. I worked for 33 years as a registered professional mechanical engineer for International Harvester Trucks and Dana Corporation, and was involved in the testing, design and development of axles of all kinds.

I have never agreed with the recommendations for annual inspection of trailer wheel bearings and seals. These components are either identical or similar to bearings used in many other types of vehicle axles, so why should they be subjected to such a stringent inspection cycle? In fact, most of these trailer axles accumulate fewer miles than most vehicles. Jim

Chenowith, who wrote the letter to RV Clinic, had about 40,000 miles on his seven-year-old trailer, for an average of less than 6,000 miles per year.

This inspection is not easy for an owner to accomplish. To really examine a bearing requires it to have all the grease flushed out so that each and every roller and race is checked carefully, then repacked, which is a very messy job. The removal and installation of the bearings is no piece of cake either. The seals need to be knocked out and new ones installed. If you have a shop do it, I have seen hourly service charges as high as \$140, so it's very expensive.

So why do trailer manufacturers post such a ridiculous requirement? In the unlikely event that there is ever a bearing problem and you cannot prove that you have inspected and re-

packed the bearings annually, it gives them an out on the warranty reimbursement. Nothing else makes sense to me. Trailer manufacturers need to rethink this area, as they are doing a great disservice to their customers.

In Chenowith's letter, he also asked about lifting the trailer. Most answers state that you should lift on the frame, not the axle. You definitely should not place the jack against the axle surface. Any kind of mark or dent on that area is inviting a catastrophic fatigue failure. However, there is nothing wrong with placing a jack under the spring bracket that is on the bottom of the axle. That is where I usually place the jack.

If my vehicle has a flat on the road, I simply run the inflated tandem tire up on a low ramp of blocks, just enough to clear the flat tire to change it. This is the safest arrangement so there is no jack to worry about. If the axles can't handle a double load in a static situation, there's a real problem, as an impact with a chuckhole can easily double the stress in the axle at that moment.

William Cook, Fort Wayne, Indiana

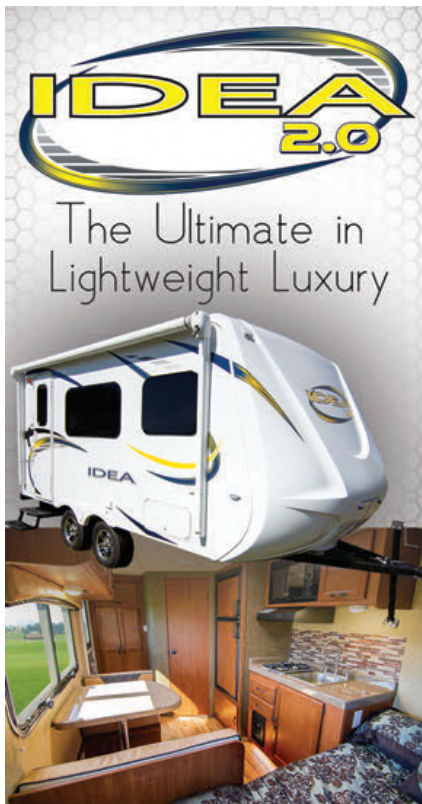
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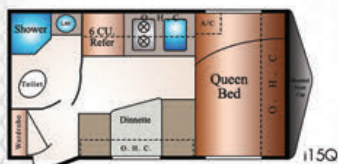
KEN FREUND: Ken is a former ASE Certified Master Technician, service manager and shop owner who has authored numerous books on automotive repair.



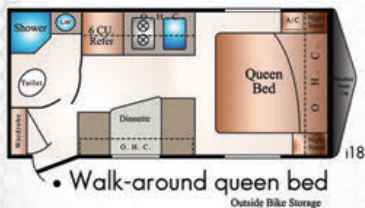
JEFF JOHNSTON: Jeff served as technical director of *Trailer Life* for 20 years and has been an RV enthusiast, mechanic and writer since he could hold a wrench.



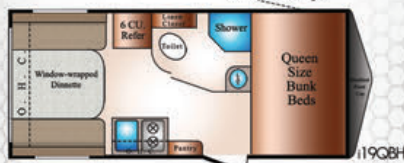
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A You bring up some excellent points. I basically agree with you, especially if the world were full of engineers and technicians. However, my years of experience dealing with the general public at shops and dealerships has given me a somewhat different outlook on how things get done in the real world.

Most people seem to be either very busy, have limited funds and/or are procrastinators. As a result, when a manufacturer suggests that something that is out of sight (and doesn't normally make any noise or have any electronic service reminders) needs maintenance on a regular schedule, that item is likely to either be overlooked until something goes wrong or get serviced less often than it calls for. Other examples include changing brake fluid and antifreeze. Changing and flushing these items typically gets overlooked or deferred; it's the same with wheel-bearing service.

So, yes, I think manufacturers recommend bearing inspections more often than is truly needed on the basis of their understanding of human behavior. Having said that, many manufacturers now use cheap imported bearings of inferior quality, which are prone to premature failure. When bearings are being inspected, read the brand names on the sides and replace any poor-quality bearings with name brands.

In addition, the recommended service intervals for RV trailer axle bearings are set by the axle manufacturers, not the trailer manufacturers. That's what they established, so that's what the trailer manufacturers need to abide by.

Regarding your ideas on jacking points, I think human nature also comes into play. Your method is fine, and it's what I do. However, it's difficult to educate the public on the fine points of where to place the jack pad, especially at night or in the pouring rain while lying in the mud, when you are on the side of a busy highway with trucks zooming by seemingly inches away. You just want to get out of there as fast as possible.

If you put the jack somewhere under the RV and the RV raises enough to change the tire, most folks call it good. But if they believe the frame is where you should lift from, that's less likely to be done wrong than looking for the pad hidden behind the wheel and brake next to the bare axle.

Thanks for your well-thought-out letter, William. It allowed some fresh ideas to be aired. — **K.F.**

FURNACE FRUSTRATION

Q I have a question about my RV furnace. When I turn on the furnace, it blows the 15-amp fuse. The air conditioner works fine, and the last time I used the furnace it worked, but not now. I'm wondering what could be causing it to do this.

Ben Accurso, College Station, Texas

A Check to see if the blower fan is jammed with (or by) something and can't turn. Check for any signs of damage, such as rodents chewing on wires. Look it over carefully, including the wiring running from the battery and converter. This type of damage can result in a sudden short circuit. Usually, with a fairly new unit such as yours, it's caused by an external force — or a manufacturing defect.

Without more specific information on what model furnace is in your trailer, these are the most likely sources of a problem such as you describe. Your RV may still be under warranty for this, depending on the sale date and what is wrong. For example, rodent damage would not be covered. — **K.F.**

WATER-PRESSURE REGULATORS

Q I am confused about the functionality of the following water-pressure regulator units in the Camping World catalog: 49508, 49509, 49510, 49511, 49512 and 52094. As far as I can tell, five of the six function as flow restrictors, as they can regulate pressure only when water is flowing.

If a campground-supplied pres-



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sure were 150 PSI, that would get 150 PSI at your kitchen faucet until the flow started. What good is that, and how does it protect your RV? Yes, a flow restrictor might stop the water from spurting all over the kitchen when the faucet is turned on, but when the water is not flowing, 150 PSI could cause connections to burst or leak. Could this be part of the problem in Glenn Chance's "Water-Flow Conundrum" letter in the

December 2015 RV Clinic?

Catalog item 49511 is a water-pressure regulator, and if the supply pressure is above the set pressure, you will never get more than the set pressure in your camper. If it is below the set pressure, you will get the supply pressure.

Don Leeger, Maidens, Virginia

A I think you're confusing the functions and descriptions of

these pressure regulators, Don. All of the models you mentioned serve to protect an RV's water system from excess city-water pressure. They're successfully used by thousands of RVers. If they didn't work, there would be a lot of unhappy RVers with damaged water systems.

The main difference with the water-pressure regular, item 49511, is that it's a variable-setting unit that allows the user to choose the desired pressure within the available range of its adjustment, while the others are fixed-pressure models. This adjustability accommodates the varying city-water pressure available in some campgrounds, as well as personal preference by the RVer. — **Jeff Johnston**

MORE "WATER-FLOW CONUNDRUM" COMMENTS

Like Glenn Chance, who wrote the "Water-Flow Conundrum" letter in the December 2015 RV Clinic, I keep only a small amount of water in the freshwater tank of our 2013 Outdoors RV Blackstone travel trailer when traveling. On the second day of a camping trip, I found the freshwater tank was full. The tank is filled from a freshwater fill, not the city-water connection. As we traveled, some days the tank would be full, and others it would not.

Outdoors RV replaced the water pump, and the problem was solved. It seems the pump had a spot in the pumping mechanism that would leak back into the tank, depending on where the pump stopped when used. That might be the source of Glenn's problem, especially since our trailers are the same year.

Paul Ubrun, Galt, California

I had a similar problem to Glenn Chance's on our 2003 Northwood Arctic Fox. When we were hooked to city water, the tank would fill and then overflow.

Thinking that the check valve in the pump was bad, I bought a pump rebuild kit. When I took the pump apart to install the kit, I found a small piece

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of plastic (apparently from the onboard tank, possibly from drilling the tank for fittings) that was stuck in one of the check valves, allowing the city water to backflow through the pump and fill the tank. I removed the plastic. There was no damage to the pump. I did, however, install the new parts, as the pump was well over 10 years old.

Ric Simon, Montrose, Colorado

I had the same issue as Glenn Chance with city water getting into my 2015 EverGreen Sun Valley's freshwater tank. As the travel trailer was still under warranty, I took it back to the dealer, who found nothing wrong. I have been an industrial maintenance tech for years, and I told them I suspected the pump's internal check valve, but they wouldn't listen.

While camping in Charleston, South Carolina, it occurred again. This time, I called the factory directly, and they overnighted a new pump to my location, which I installed. This cured the problem. The SHURflo pump has a check valve that prevents backflow into the freshwater tank. When I disassembled the pump, I found the O-ring had been pinched during assembly. I fixed the O-ring and now have a spare pump.

Steve Barton, Providence Forge, Virginia

Regarding the answer to Glenn Chance's letter, one additional issue I found was a leak back through the diaphragm of my SHURflo water pump (4008-101-A65). It seems sometimes it stops at a particular position, and with water pressure from the city connection, it can leak past and into the freshwater tank.

Since then, I have always run the pump, provided there is water in the holding tank, to pressurize the system prior to hooking up to city water. I then turn on the city water and turn off the pump. This has greatly reduced my unwanted filling of the fresh tank.

Peter Werenka, Calgary, Alberta

Thank you, guys, for the information. Judging by readers' response, it seems Glenn Chance's problem of mystery freshwater-tank filling troubles more

than a few RVers. The solutions presented here may help more readers find answers to their own tank-filling mysteries. — J.J.

WALKING ON THE ROOF

Q I have a 25-foot 2010 Dutchmen Lite travel trailer. The company recommends inspecting the air conditioner periodically. I wrote to Dutch-

men and sent the VIN number, and the company recommended not walking on the roof unless I used boards such as cement finishers. My knowledge of cement finishers is limited, so I am wondering how to walk, crawl, scoot or otherwise move on a roof that is not supposed to be stepped on. I have tried washing the roof from a ladder and using a brush from the side, and it was a mess. Plus, it is hard to get a

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good look at the vent sealants and impossible to check the air conditioner, which was my original goal.

Ronald Prusinski, Plymouth, Indiana

A Cement finishers use pieces of plywood to kneel and stand on when working on concrete that's not quite cured, so as to avoid creating dents and imperfections where they'd stand by spreading out their weight. Some RVs, especially those in a company's lightweight or ultralight categories, are built with very thin roof structures for weight-saving purposes. These roofs have a thin enough underlayment that standing directly on them may cause damage, so Dutchmen recommends using something like plywood to spread out your weight when working up top. This helps protect your RV's roof structure from damage, and it makes a lot of sense. Plywood scraps covering a couple of feet square and perhaps 3/4-inch thick should do nicely. Be careful not to scratch the roof. — J.J.

ROOF BUBBLES, CONTINUED

Q I read Chris Hemer's August 2015 article on roof maintenance, "Up on the Roof," which prompted me to write. In early August 2015, I took my 2012 Forest River Salem fifth-wheel to a nearby dealer, to evaluate what was causing the bubbling and separation between the rubber-roof covering and the wood underlayment. The roof had recently been damaged by a low-hanging branch. The branch skipped across the roof, poking numerous holes. I immediately put patches on the holes to keep moisture out and at that time hadn't noticed any separation until I got home and inspected the roof again.

Mentioning this new find to my wife, she told me that, while following behind in another vehicle, she noticed the roof covering flopping up and down. After inspecting the roof, the dealer said that I needed to replace the entire roof to the tune of around \$7,000, which freaked me out, to say the least. They did suggest that I contact my insurance company (Progressive) to see if I was covered for this type of damage. Progressive's agent responded immediately, and after a few phone conversations between RV Express and the adjuster, Progressive agreed to cover the entire cost. Thank you, Progressive!

Meanwhile, I discussed with the service department why there was separation between the rubber and the wood underlayment when the patches were in place before I got back on the road. He stated, as I understood, that if there are any unsealed areas, possibly where the hitch is attached to the frame or along the outside edges of the trailer or even around the window frames, air can seep in and flow between the outer skin and the frame, and eventually between the rubber-roof covering and the underlayment.

When inquiring how this could be remedied, they said they would have to do a "tunnel test" to find out exactly where the air was passing in. I agreed to have them conduct the test at my expense to correct any problems discovered. The bottom line is that I have a new roof membrane, and there appears to be some expanding-foam-type

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sealant in areas around the underside of the overhang where the hitch attaches to the frame.

I would like to hear your take on what is involved with a tunnel test.

Larry Stucker, Porterville, California

A We've never heard of an RV dealer doing a "tunnel test," so you'll need to ask the dealer what that means, Larry, since it's the one that sold the test procedure on your trailer. If it were us, we would have requested a complete explanation of the dealer's tunnel test and an outline of how this system provides the information it said it needed to make a cause-and-effect determination. The only tunnel test we know about is a wind-tunnel test, and those are crazy expensive, if you could even schedule any test time between an aerospace and automotive manufacturer's use of the facility, so we're pretty sure the dealer doesn't have a wind tunnel.

The main reasons a rubber roof comes loose and bubbles up on the road are adhesive failure and the vacuum effect of the wind traveling over the roof at highway speed. That's the same effect that causes a tarp on a pickup bed or utility trailer to billow up when on the road. It's possible that a gap or two could allow air to sneak under the RV's skin and produce enough pressure to bubble up the rubber, but that seems like a very rare circumstance.

As a rule, wind blowing over windows, roof vents and the like causes a lower-pressure situation inside the RV. If there are any openings, such as a window that's cracked open or a roof vent that's ajar, road dust and engine exhaust can be drawn inside the trailer. That interior lower pressure would have the opposite effect of holding the roof even tighter, if there were any interior-to-roof air channel routes present, but the wind at road speed would likely overcome that effect and bubble the roof, if it finds a loose spot.

It's good that the dealer found something as an attempted cure for the problem. Once a roof has a number of tears or other **(continued on page 118)**

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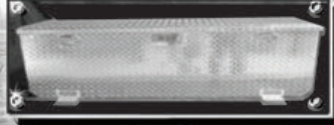
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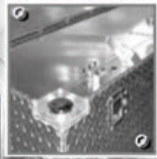
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(continued from page 115)

openings, it's probably time for a full replacement, so that part of your job was a good idea, and we hope you enjoy many miles of roof-problem-free traveling. — J.J.

AXLE-FLIP HISTORY

In reference to Dani's "Axle Flip" question in the December 2015 RV Clinic, we have the same trailer. I did not flip the 4-inch offset axle; I replaced them with straight axles, thus raising the trailer 4 inches. There was absolutely no change in the trailering characteristics, and the tail dragging was totally eliminated.

I contacted Dexter Axle directly. It knew exactly which axle was on my particular trailer, and shipped the proper replacement to me two days later.

After selling the original axles, my total expense was \$110.

John Betts, Boyne City, Michigan

People with RVs with dropped axles may find your process the right way to go for raising a trailer a few inches. The cost of the new axles may be a bit more than the cost of doing the flip, but a discussion with a local RV-service center or suspension specialist could answer that question. Thank you for the details, John. — J.J.

IMPORTED TRAILER TIRES

In response to Bob Livingston December 2015 Driver's Seat column, "Keep on Rolling," Goodyear Marathon ST tires have had separation issues, and Maxxis ST radial tires are made in Thailand. So I respectfully submit that there are no safe trailer tires imported from China. And cheap has nothing to do with it.

I bought four expensive imported Gladiator LRE tires. I purchased new tires because the original LRC tires were 10 years old, but there was no problem with them. With less than 2,000 miles on the new LREs, fully aired up and nowhere near the load capacity of the tire, (continued on page 120)

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(continued from page 118)

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one had a complete separation failure. Fortunately, due to a traffic jam, we stopped at a rest stop, and I spotted the steel plies sticking out of a tire, so we avoided damage to the trailer. I bought four new Maxxis tires, as I would never trust the other tires after that.

Rick A. Hane, Gresham, Oregon

Bob Livingston's December 2015 column did not suggest that Marathons or Maxxis tires were made exclusively in one country, or that Goodyear Marathons were trouble-free. The facts about Marathon tires are well known, and it's no secret that they've also had their share of problems, along with many other brands of tires.

As Livingston stated, there are a lot of poor-quality imported trailer tires sold in this country. And you're correct — it isn't a matter of price alone; it's also manufacturer diligence at the factory and keeping an eye on quality control. With that type of oversight, the factory can't cut corners to save costs. Unfortunately, there are also companies that build incredibly poor tires and sell them cheaply to unsuspecting buyers. The best we can hope for is that they go out of business or leave the U.S. market, but as long as there's a buck to be made, we'll always have those bottom-feeders.

The broader idea here is to shop carefully and stick with a known brand name. A big company can't afford to risk its reputation by selling bad products, so it's going to produce products that are consistent with what people expect from that brand. This applies to tires even more than to many other products: if you buy on low price alone, you'll probably get what you pay for.

— J.J. 🐘

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Daylight Saving Time

While most of the country changes the clocks twice a year, two states and one county choose not to spring forward or fall back



This morning we began Daylight Saving Time (DST) again. Many people like it, but I've always thought of it as cutting off the top of a blanket and sewing it onto the bottom, then being told that I have a longer blanket.

DST, or fast time, has been part of the American scene for a hundred years, mostly as a community option.

During World War II, President Roosevelt put the country on year-round Daylight Saving Time. Called War Time, it lasted from February 1942 to the end of September 1945. The idea was that we would save fuel used to produce electric power. After the war ended, the states were given the option to choose if they wanted to keep DST or not.

By the 1960s, the country was a hodgepodge of different pockets of time with no agreement about when it started or ended. In 1966, the federal government stepped in and established national Daylight Saving Time for the summer months. States, however, could opt out, and two did — Hawaii and Arizona. (Canada changes the clocks on the same days as the United States, except for most of Saskatchewan, parts of British Columbia and a few communities in Nunavut, Ontario and Quebec that have opted out.)

Traveling in northern Arizona, I discovered that time can still be a hodgepodge in the summer. I was in the great Navajo Nation, the largest of all American Indian reservations. Covering 25,000 square miles, it spreads into neighboring New Mexico and Utah. At the center of the reservation is Hopi territory. Although the Hopi have lived here longer than any other surviving people, they are now, by decree of the government, totally surrounded by their former enemies, the Navajo.

Tuba City is where things happen. I drove in just before sundown. Founded in 1870 by Mormon missionaries and named for a Hopi chieftain, Tuba City is now totally Navajo. The trading post has been a landmark in Arizona since the 1880s. Now fully restored, it is perhaps the last remnant of Tuba City's Anglo heritage. In contrast, McDonald's is across the street.

I looked for an RV park and picked the one behind the Quality Inn. Checking in ahead of me were six people who



The Tuba City Trading Post was built in 1902 as a place of warmth, protection and knowledge to the Navajos. Now it sells pottery, rugs, blankets and jewelry.

spoke primarily German. The two young girls running the place spoke primarily English — the high school version.

A policy of the Quality Inn threatened to turn a simple communication problem into an international incident. A key was required to turn on the water at each RV site (not a smart idea), and the Quality Inn wanted a deposit for the key. Obviously, if you are paying for full hookups, you want to be able to turn on the water without a lot of falderal. The Germans, three families in three campers, apparently did not understand that the money would be refunded. Finally, it was agreed: they would rent one key and they would all use it.

My turn. The Quality Inn girls seemed relieved to see a native American — at least I used to be, until government bureaucrats changed its meaning. Then one of them commented: "You know, we are an hour behind Tuba City."

"Who is?" I asked, dumbfounded.

"The hotel, the trading post, the restaurant."

"Why is that?"

"Tuba City is on daylight time."

"Aren't we in Tuba City?"

"Yes, but this is county land here."

"It's not the reservation?"

"No...well, yes, but the county is on regular Mountain Time."

"OK, so the whole reservation is on daylight time."

"Exactly!"

"What do you mean 'exactly'?"

"I mean, yes, except for right here."

"Isn't that confusing?"

"No, we're used to it."

"I mean for customers."

"Don't know. Why should it be?"

Before I went to bed, I looked at my watch and the clock. They were on the same time. At the end of the day, that's all that matters.

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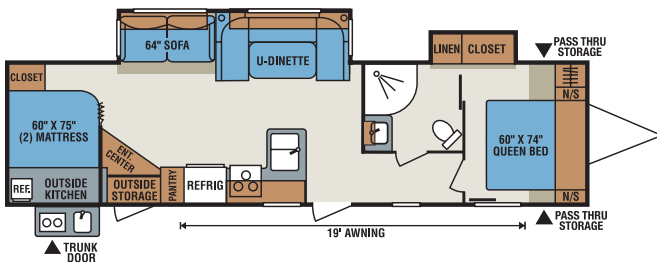
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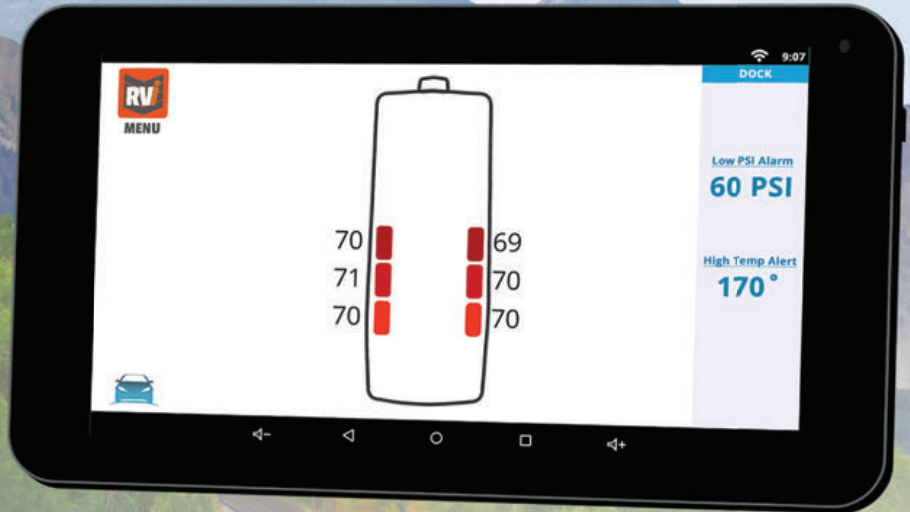


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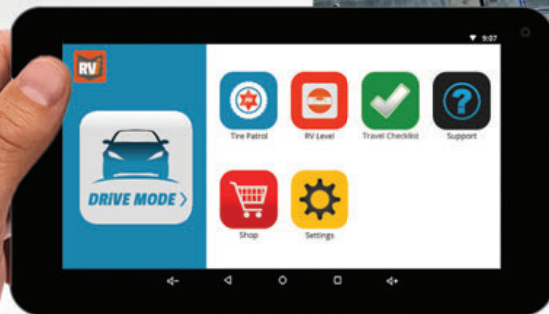
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