

Roughing It Smoothly[®]

SPECIAL
Tiffin Introduces
Allegro Bay 35 TSB
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Music City USA
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A Pictorial



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SPRING 2007 VOLUME 4 NUMBER 2

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Roughing it Smoothly®

April 2007

Volume 4, Number 2

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Editor's Note

The April 2007 issue features the great state of Tennessee—its capital city and the great national park that it shares with North Carolina. Following our general style for feature stories, both are do-it-yourself guides to spending an extended vacation this spring in Tennessee.

While you're in Nashville, keep in mind that you're only three hours away from Tiffin Motorhomes manufacturing plant in Red Bay, Alabama. We hope you will take the opportunity to come and visit us and enjoy a plant tour. Please call ahead and check on space availability if you wish to stay in the Tiffin Campground (256-356-2769).

If you have suggestions and ideas for the magazine, please write to me at P.O. Box 292912, Tampa, FL 33687-2912 or call me toll-free at 877-538-7467. Editorial contributions are welcomed but not returnable unless you include return postage. Items accepted for publication are subject to editing.

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Training Our New Coach Owners

by Bob Tiffin

Throughout the 34 years that TMH has been manufacturing motorhomes, I have gotten feedback from owners regarding the amount of training they received by their dealers at the point they acquired their coaches. The feedback has been both positive and negative, with more of the former than the latter. As I visit dealerships, I inquire about customer training and encourage our dealers to be thorough. Depending on the customer's previous experience, training on a motorhome should take from four to eight hours, and in some cases, even more.

I have been very favorably impressed with the customer training program at King's Campers in Wausau, Wisconsin. Mark Gajewski, the shop foreman who is also in charge of employees who train owners in the use of their new Tiffin motorhomes, offered to give me a "run-through" of how they do it. As you know, I have been driving our rigs ever since we started the company, so I have a few points that I will add later. Following is Mark's approach with their customers.

We are very particular about how we train our customers to use their new Tiffin motorhomes because it makes our job easier in the future and at the same time assures that we will have satisfied owners.

We have seven techs and use four of them to train customers on Tiffin motorhomes. Each tech must go through a complete "Show and Tell" with me before he is allowed to train a customer. Once a month the five of us take at least two hours and go through all of our Tiffin coaches to make sure we are all on the same page with training procedures. We add to and reinforce each other's knowledge base.

When we train, we make sure that we are training the owners who will be using the coach. Often an owner will bring his son or best friend, as if they will learn it and help him in the future. But we make participants out of the owners as we train them. They have to practice as we demonstrate each item in the coach.

We start on the outside and go clockwise around the coach. We stress documentation in the manuals, cutting through some of the superfluous material and show the owner where pertinent information is found.

Our trainers stress understanding the warranties. For example,

you must run your Onan generator at least two hours a month to validate the warranty. We go over the warranties for the HVAC, the jacks, the furnace, and the refrigerator. We try to teach patience in dealing with problems that will invariably arise at some time in the future.

There are just a lot of details that you have to talk about like taking care of the entry door. Then there is the awning and its operation. If the temperature is below 32° they will hear a beeping on the auto retract. We caution that it is important to examine the surroundings before they put out the awning. Will it hit a limb or a low-hanging power line? And that goes double for the slides. How many times has a slide-out been damaged because the post holding the 50-amp box was two inches higher than the slide-out?

In the Allegro Bay, the first storage bay contains the control panels for the inverters and converters. After we go past the storage bays on the passenger side, we come to the storage area for the batteries. Batteries are not maintenance free in spite of what some manufacturers advertise. We show owners how to check the water and fill the cylinders.

We then climb the ladder and start out across the roof on our knees until we are safely in the top middle of the fiberglass roof. It can be slick and new owners need to be warned to wear rubber sole shoes and move about very carefully.

As we start up the driver's side from the rear, we spend at least 30 minutes on the water-sewage systems and sanitary procedures for dumping the waste tanks. We make sure the owner learns how to do the water flush on the black tank and we stress how important it is to run that procedure frequently.

The next major outdoor feature that we spend a good bit of time on is the Onan generator. First we show how to remove the cover on the Marquis model. Then we go through how to check the oil, and change the oil and the filter. We show where the circuit breakers are located and how easy it is to overload the generator, especially in the summertime, and kick the breaker. For example, if you are powering both roof ACs and then plug in a griddle to make waffles, most likely you will throw a breaker because you've exceeded the amps that the generator can support. We make sure owners know about the antifreeze reservoir and how to check it.

The techs go over all of the important fuse locations. For example, the ceramic fuse that serves the slide-outs can blow and you won't be able to bring them in. Knowing where that fuse is located and having extra fuses on hand can save a lot of grief.

Along that same line, when we are training on the Allegro Bus, the batteries located in a rear compartment on the passenger side have a 300-amp fuse. If your batteries have lost their charge, and you try to jump start them from a 200-amp land-line charger, you can blow the fuse. That fuse is not a common item and probably should be carried as a spare. The jump should be made from a service truck, the amperage of which will not over-power the fuse.

We then go over the fuse panels which are usually accessible from the outside. In the case of the Bus, it is the compartment just forward of the driver side front wheel well. There are quite a few of them, but Tiffin does a great job of labeling. Spartan and Freightliner also do a good job of labeling the fuses that they place on the coach, such as the left and right turn signals.

Tire pressures are very important. Most owners seldom think about checking the tire pressure on their cars so it is important to emphasize that they do it regularly on their motorhome. We show them how and urge them to check pressures after they have driven their first 250 miles. We point out that you should be able to place your hand on a tire after you have been driving for several hours. If it is too hot to touch, then you need to find out why. We make sure they know how to check the inside tire on duals. The Bus and Phaeton already have good extenders. But we sometimes have to add valve stem extenders on other models.

When its time to go inside, we spend several minutes on how

to use keyless entry. As the tech walks up the entry steps, he turns around and sits down in the wheel well and explains all of the switches.

Continuing to follow the clockwise pattern so we don't miss anything, we spend considerable time on the television (going through the programming for stations on antenna, satellite, or cable), the DVDs, 5-disk player, and the satellite dish receiver.

A front cabinet usually houses the tank monitoring systems, the awning controls and wind sensor, the Xantrex inverter, and one or two slide-out switches. We always emphasize putting the driver's seat forward before extending the driver side slide-out, and stress checking clearances on both sides before extending the slide-outs or the awning. At this point, or soon after, we teach the emergency crank-in procedure for the slide-outs. On the hydraulic slide-out, we teach the emergency retract system.

We give a thorough explanation of the relationship between the Xantrex inverter and the batteries, and how you can run the television and several appliances plugged into specified inverter-sourced outlets.

Thermostats, which may vary from model to model, are a key training point. We make sure the owner spends time operating them before we go on to the next feature.

On the Bus, training on the Hydro-Hot is very important. The owner must understand the design and how the system works. We make sure they know how to check the fluid levels and resets on the outside. If the battery charge is low, the system won't work. After charging the batteries, we show them how to use a pin to hit the reset button.

Continued on page 46



Public relations and customer service are two of the major roles that I have played at TMH. Here, I am visiting with Tiffin owners at King's Campers in Wausau, Wisconsin.



Developing New Combinations

THE ALLEGRO BAY 35 TSB

by Fred Thompson

When Class A motorhome buyers are searching for just the right coach to serve their personal approach to recreational living and travel, they factor a great variety of features into their plans: price, length, power plant, slide-outs, storage, amenities, quality level, and the drama of how it looks inside and out.

Tiffin's designers and engineers know the drill and keep coming up with winning combinations that fit niche markets. The just-released Allegro Bay 35 TSB won't be the coach selected by many full-timers. But for those who want to spend some serious time seeing the country in a luxury coach that offers the amenities found in units costing \$50,000 to \$100,000 more, the 35 TSB may be your best bet.

At an MSRP of just under \$162,000, the 35 TSB offers a 300-hp Cummins diesel, a Freightliner chassis, full-body paint, three slide-outs, a 4-door fridge with ice-maker, solid surface countertops throughout, Ultraleather® furniture, a gourmet galley with slide-out cabinet, twin lavatories and a separately enclosed toilet, built-in vacuum cleaner, solid hardwood cabinet doors, a Sleep Number bed, and the list goes on! Tiffin offers three design decors with color-coordinated fabrics and options. You can design your coach with Tiffin's new standard Medium Alderwood or select the optional Natural Maple or Cherry Bark.

This 35-foot floorplan is really a neat package. Of course,

that length means you will be able to camp in most state parks and Corps of Engineers campgrounds throughout the country who can't handle the longer coaches. But with two slide-outs in the living quarters and one in the bedroom, you will have plenty of elbow room.



Once Around the Coach

With that overview, let's get down to specifics. It's safe to say that Tiffin Motorhomes has built more front-end diesel coaches in the last 18 months using the FRED (Cummins 300-hp power plant on a Freightliner chassis) than any other manufacturer. The demand has been amazing. Counting the Allegro brand, TMH now offers the FRED on nine floorplans. The engine is very accessible through its door in the front cap. All fluid level checkpoints and reservoirs can be reached easily. Both Cummins and Freightliner service facilities throughout the U.S. and Canada provide excellent engine and chassis service. Following my standard approach for reviewing coaches, we will start outside and move clockwise around the motorhome.

In the 35 TSB floorplan, the entry door is positioned immediately behind the passenger chair. Just past the door, in addition to 1.5 cubic feet of storage space, the first compartment houses operating equipment for Dometic's Weather-Pro awning system and the Xantrex inverter. It also houses the outdoor service center for 110v, 12v, cable, and phone when you want to extend your living space under the coach's generous 19½-foot awning which can be operated by an indoor switch or by a small pocket-sized remote.

The next two compartments are built into the galley slide-out, making them accessible even when the slide is extended. Actually one continuous space, the compartment offers over 18 cubic feet of storage. When the slide is extended, a side-opening door permits storage of items up to 76-inches long. Two more compartments on the passenger side provide 23 cubic feet of storage.

The diesel fueling port is located in the rear cap on the driver's side. From the rear and proceeding to the front, the first compartment houses the 50-amp electrical service and a 6.3 cubic foot storage bin. Following is a compartment for the Onan 6000 Quiet Diesel generator which is capable of powering both of the optional 15,000 BTU A/C units with heat pumps.

Tiffin has efficiently combined all of the remaining utilities

into one compartment including the black and grey dump valves for the sewer system. The panel has entrance points for phone and cable. The wet service includes outdoor shower, water entrance with filter, hot water by-pass valve, drain lines for hot and cold water plus a separate line for draining the water tank and pump, and a water flush entrance for the black tank.

The largest segment of the outdoor storage resides under the slide-out on the driver's side, a total of 35 cubic feet. When extended, a side-opening door will accommodate items up to 11'6" long. Altogether, the coach provides over 76 cubic feet of basement storage.

Getting Inside

The entry door is positioned immediately behind the passenger seat. The location is a good choice because it moves the free-standing Euro-Recliner directly across from the optional Ultraleather® Air Coil Hide-a-Bed couch. When the captain's and passenger's chairs are rotated 180 degrees, you have a very evenly arranged conversation pit for six. In the test coach, both travel chairs had the UltraLeather® option, making a very handsome living room. When the travel chairs are rotated 90 degrees to face each other and a small table is placed between them, you will have a convenient game center or another dining spot for additional guests. All seating in the living area has directional lighting for reading. The Euro-Recliner with ottoman is adjustable at any point in its reclining radius. If you are watching a movie on the HDTV, you may find it a challenge to stay awake!

In Tiffin coaches, there are many options available to suit your lifestyle. With the 2007 model year, TMH made the Air Coil Hide-A-Bed an option on all of its coaches except two of the Allegro floorplans. The queen-size bed is very comfortable

With the travel chairs rotated, the living room offers seating for six. • The functionality of the Bay's dash is obvious—everything within convenient reach. The pushbutton gear selector is to the right of the steering column.



for two adults (based on personal experience). With the bed available in the dinette booth, you also have accommodations for two children.

If you have read my reviews earlier, you already know that I am amazed at the amount of cabinet storage that Tiffin designers and engineers manage to put in all of their coaches. Without identifying every cabinet, the storage in the living quarters alone totals more than 26 cubic feet.

The highly functional and accommodative galley will delight the chef. The optional 4-door 12 cu.ft. refrigerator with ice maker offers many deluxe features including 2¼ cu.ft. of freezer space. The refrigerator has four shelves plus special drawers for fruits and vegetables, salad ingredients, and meats, plus six door shelves. The breakers and fuse box for the coach are located at floor level just under the refrigerator.

Facing into the living quarters, a double pantry designed as a hutch with a solid surface countertop also houses a 32-inch Panasonic HDTV, positioned at eye-level for comfortable viewing throughout the coach. A 5-disk DVD-CD player and routing box are located in the cabinets above the dash. The double pantry offers more than 9.5 cu.ft. of storage space.

Cabinets above the galley's work surface offer 8 cu.ft. of storage, the giant pots & pans drawer contributes another 2 cu.ft., and you'll find an additional 5 cu.ft. under the double sink. The solid surface countertops present the cook with over 18 sq.ft. of work space. The attractively designed backsplashes for the galley are made from a contrasting color of the same solid surface countertop material. Two lights attached to the cabinets above the countertop provide excellent illumination for food preparation. Then, TMH surprises you with an Expand-an-Island slide-out containing three drawers 25 inches deep and an additional solid surface countertop of 2.3 sq.ft., all standard on this floorplan. An additional three drawers are positioned on the other side of the galley along with the control switches for the galley lighting, the water pump, and the roof exhaust vent.

The standard galley appliances are top quality: a two-burner cooktop, gas on glass; a double bowl stainless steel sink with single lever stainless steel faucet with sprayer pull-out; and a residential-size Sharp microwave/convection oven. The cooktop is also available in a 3-burner design with gas oven.

The dining table is made of a beautiful piece of Alderwood 37½ × 27 inches. If you take your laptop along, you will have an inverter-sourced outlet and phone jack right next to the table. The same connections are also available if it is more convenient to use your laptop in the passenger chair.

The designer fabrics in the dinette seating and the valances combined with the luxury feel of the putty-colored Ultraleather® and Medium Alderwood evoke an interesting mix somewhere between country casual and contemporary.

The standard flooring of the living quarters and galley is a split between carpet and inlaid tile blocks that begin at the entry door and extend through the bath. Wood plank galley flooring is available as an option. Throughout the coach, day-night shades are standard equipment.

With both forward slides extended, the wall-to-wall width of the living space is 12 ft. 3 in. The actual floor space of the living-galley area is 7 × 16 feet.

The bedroom in the 35 TSB has some really nice touches. You are surrounded by the rich grain of Alderwood, including a well-done wainscot across the back wall. Without the heat on, you might even feel warm in this bedroom. With the bed slide-out extended, the room width is 10 feet. The beige carpet and the light green print comforter give the room a feeling of airiness. The wall opposite the slide-out was thoughtfully designed with two wardrobes, six drawers, a large clothes hamper, a 19 × 29-inch sliding window (also an emergency rear EXIT), and a 20½ × 44 dresser top. An inverter-sourced outlet and phone jack are located near the dresser. Above the window the cabinetry is extended to include the housing for a 26-inch Panasonic HDTV with separate compartments for a 5-disk DVD-

The Expand-an-Island feature found on the diesel pushers has been adapted to the Allegro Bay in a slightly smaller version. • Stainless steel fixtures and the two-burner gas-on-glass are standard. • Ample pantry space is designed into the hutch above and below the television.

CD player and router, plus an IF repeater. Two side cabinets provide plenty of space to store your CDs and DVDs.

The lady's wardrobe is larger to accommodate dress-length garments (52½ inches) while the man's wardrobe is designed for shirt-lengths. A large cabinet under this wardrobe was plumbed for a washer-dryer, but in the test coach was fitted with generous shelving for towels, linens, blankets, and other bulky items.

As always, TMH packs a ton of storage above the headboard of the bed. With access through four doors, you have over 11 cu.ft. of uninterrupted space (74-inches across). Each side of the bedroom slide-out has a window for pleasant cross-ventilation during warm evenings. Bedside tables, each with an inverter-sourced outlet, offer both a deep drawer and cabinet style storage (see picture, page 10). This is another example of TMH designers finding the neatest places to create space for your often-used items.

The optional Sleep Comfort queen-size bed was another luxury feature in this coach. It is very likely that bedfellows may not like the same softness/firmness in a mattress. Now you have a choice. When you visit a Tiffin dealer, be sure to have them give you a "test drive" on this great piece of sleep technology.

For some owners, the bath may be the most important part of the motorhome. Some quarter-million dollar coaches do not have two lavatories. Standard! One in the water closet and another by the shower. Both have generous vanity storage and solid surface countertops with molded bowls and stainless steel fixtures. Art deco lights illuminate large one-piece mirrors over the medicine cabinets. The water pump, elec/gas hot water heater, and exhaust fan switches are all conveniently located. There are plenty of towel racks and rings and ample counter space to hold your favorite toiletries at the ready. The elliptically shaped

shower is 46 inches across and 28 inches deep. The toilet is the elongated style. The actual floorspace of the bath is eight feet across the coach by five feet wide. When you are in a hurry to get ready and go, two can fit in nicely and expedite the morning rush to get out and see the world.

The Cockpit

It's all in the dash—at your fingertips, intuitive, convenient. TMH was an innovator in introducing sideview cameras to make driving a motorhome safer. The turn signal activates the camera focused on the side of the motorhome toward which you are turning. It catches everything from the front corner to the back. When you complete the turn, it flips back to the rear view camera as the turn signal shuts off. At your left, you have controls for headlights, outside mirror heating and positioning, genset start and operating hours, exhaust break, windshield washer and dual fans, and 12-volt outlet. On the steering column, you have your standard lever for directional signals and cruise control.

On your right you have the Allison pushbutton shift panel, safety camera displays, automotive heating and cooling controls, radio/CD player, and Atwood auto-leveling electric jacks.

Although it is optional, everyone should order power sun visors and the side sun shades for both driver and passenger. They are worth their weight in gold.

The Infrastructure

Built on a Freightliner chassis, you are traveling on leaf springs with tuned shocks, providing a nice, firm, comfortable ride. For the money, it's probably the best ride in the business.

Many have asked, "What can I operate driving down the road?" If you've got to have 110v, you can turn on the generator. If it's really cold and the automotive dash heat isn't enough, you can turn on the furnace. Or vice versa, if it's really hot and you need more AC, you can turn on the generator and run the



With Tiffin's usual finesse, a queen-size bed in the slide-out and a 26-inch HDTV with DVD player have turned this master bedroom into a cozy retreat. • A double wardrobe, vanity, clothes hamper, and drawers plus an optional washer-dryer compartment provide plenty of storage for two.

roof AC unit. The test coach had two 15,000 BTU ACs with heat pumps, a \$700 investment (MSRP). Unless the outside temperature is below 32, you can run the roof units (with 50 amps) in a campground and save on the use of your propane—just like you do with your water heater.

Beginning with the 2007 model year, the big return air duct just below the AC roof unit disappeared. A very quiet return air system flows through the six-inch ducts on the driver side of the coach and cool air comes out on the passenger side. Now you can have a normal volume conversation with the AC running wide open.

Engine noise from the Cummins diesel is about the same, maybe just a little less, as the Ford or GM engines. You should expect to hear more noise in first through third gears, but then it quiets down nicely in fourth and fifth.

Another big feature introduced this year is the one-piece fiberglass roof for all TMH coaches. The roof curls over the edges of the sidewalls and is attached at the side rather than the top. Of course, there is much less caulking and far less corresponding maintenance.

Introduced last year, the one-piece windshield is a joy—like having a huge picture window, your unobstructed window on the world.

The Drive

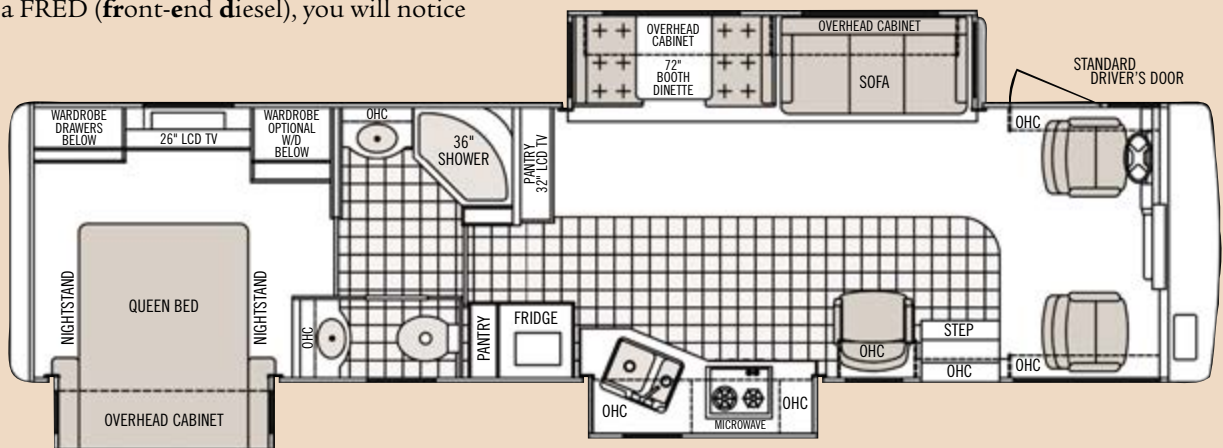
As the new owner of a FRED (front-end diesel), you will notice

two things first: the fuel economy (10 to 13 mpg depending on your driving habits, the terrain, and the elevation) and the power. With 600 lb.ft. of torque, the coach has the kick to move up significant hills fully loaded without losing more than 10 to 12 percent of its speed. You will also notice its power in traffic when you need to change lanes to get around slow-moving vehicles. The steering is firm with very little play and the 55-degree wheel cut is nothing short of amazing. Just watch your tail when you've got a long rear overhang. Speaking from experience, I logged 7,000 miles on an Allegro Bay with FRED and loved it.

Summing Up

Tiffin is building a solid, tight coach with the FRED platform for the Allegro Bay. There was almost zero "in-coach" noise. After reviewing and testing this coach, I simply could not find any significant problems. It came off the assembly line and out of final finish ready for a new owner to enjoy. The cabinetry and woodworking quality has risen to a "superb" level. The full-body paint is outstanding — Jaguar or Mercedes would be lucky to get a paint job this good. If you can schedule a tour through the plant (up to two hours), you will begin to understand why TMH builds such a dependable, attractive motorhome. It really boils down to good design and engineering, and managers and production technicians who care very much about *their product*. Everybody takes ownership and responsibility for their part in building a great coach. Tiffin's service is a legend in the industry. As the slogan on their stationery reads: "Just ask someone who owns one." **RIS**

ALLEGRO BAY 35 TSB



SPECIFICATIONS: Model tested 2007 Allegro Bay 35 TSB, Triple Slide, Base MSRP* – \$143,500 MSRP as tested with options – \$161,980

STANDARD FEATURES

Structural

Laminated floor, sidewall & roof
Steel/aluminum reinforced structure
Full one-piece fiberglass roof cap

Automotive

Allison 2100 Series automatic 5-speed w/electric control
Cummins 300 hp 5.9 liter diesel engine
600 lbs.-ft. torque @ 1600 rpm
Leaf springs with Bilstein shocks
55° wheel cut
Exhaust brake
18" Steering wheel
Cruise control
Fog lights
Daytime running lights
Emergency start switch

Exterior

Fiberglass front & rear caps
Large one-piece tinted windshield
Atwood automatic electric jacks
5.5 Onan® Quiet Diesel generator
Single motor intermittent wipers
Heated power mirrors with remote adjustment
Gel-coat fiberglass exterior
Painted exterior graphics
Entrance door with screen door and deadbolt
Triple electric step
¼-inch single pane windows
Exterior patio light
Slideout awning(s)
Wheel liners
Exterior storage doors with gas shocks
Single handle, lockable storage door latches
Ridged long-life storage boxes
Luggage compartment lights
Heated water and holding-tank compartments
Two 6-volt auxiliary batteries
50-amp service
Park ready telephone
Cable ready TV
Black holding tank flush
Exterior rinse hose/shower
110-volt exterior receptacle
110v/12v converter (55 amp)
Undercoating
Driver's door with power window
Domed fiberglass roof
TV antenna
CB antenna
Two 13,500 BTU high profile roof A/C
Roof ladder
Backup camera and monitor
Water filter
10-gallon gas/electric water heater
A/C condensation drains

Driver's Compartment

Entry floor light
Snack/beverage tray
Single CD player AM-FM stereo

12-volt dash receptacle
110-volt receptacle
Tilt steering wheel
Dual dash fans
Color backup monitor
Windshield privacy curtain
Driver's door with power window
110v receptacle
Fire extinguisher
Phone/modem receptacle
Non-powered cloth driver & passenger seats by Flexsteel®
Step switch and 12v disconnect switch

Living Area / Dinette

32-inch flat-screen color HDTV
Leather Euro recliner
Cloth Air Coil Hide-a-Bed
Booth dinette
Carbon monoxide detector

Kitchen

Solid surface countertops
Solid surface sink covers
Single lever sink faucet with pullout sprayer
Full extension ball bearing drawer slides
Double bowl kitchen sink (stainless steel)
2-burner cook top
Convection microwave (stainless steel)
8-cubic ft. refrigerator (stainless steel)
Solid wood dinette table
Upholstered dinette booth with storage drawers underneath
Power Fan-Tastic roof vent with 3-speed fan in galley
Expand-an-Island

Bath

Medicine cabinet
Skylight in shower
China toilet
Glass shower door
Solid surface countertops
Solid surface sink bowls
Single lever faucet
Water pump switch
Vanity light
Fan-Tastic fan in bathroom
Fan-Tastic fan in water closet
36-inch corner fiberglass shower

Bedroom

Bed comforter with throw pillows
Innerspring queen mattress
Flat screen color television
Bedroom DVD player
LPG leak detector
Nightstands with 110-volt receptacles
Solid wood vanity with storage
Prep washer-dryer cabinet

General interior

Soft touch vinyl ceiling
Raised panel, Medium Alderwood cabinet doors

Full extension drawer slides
7-foot ceiling
Armstrong® vinyl tile flooring in kitchen, bath & entrance
Wall-to-wall carpeting in bedroom & driver's compartment
Scotchgard® treated carpet and fabrics
Day-night pleated shades
Tank level monitor system
Home theater surround system
Concealed speakers
Smoke detector
Two 30,000 BTU ducted furnaces

OPTIONAL FEATURES ON THIS COACH

Automatic satellite dish
Automatic door awning
One exterior slide-out tray
Exterior 24-inch television on slide/swivel tray
Window awning package
Chrome mirrors
Side view cameras
Sirius radio (subscription required)
Washer-dryer combo
Vacuum cleaner
Full tile living room
Cloth Air Coil Hide-a-Bed (passenger side)
Free standing dinette with built-in cabinets
Select Comfort queen mattress

OPTIONAL FEATURES AVAILABLE

Powered cloth driver seat by Flexsteel®
Cloth Magic Bed
Ultraleather™ Magic Bed
3-burner cooktop with oven
10-cu.ft. 4-door refrigerator with icemaker (stainless steel)
Wood plank galley floor (not available with Cherry Bark cabinets)
Automatic satellite system
Natural Maple cabinetry
Cherry Bark cabinetry
Combo washer/dryer

MEASUREMENTS

Wheelbase – 254"
Overall Length (approx.) – 36'5"
Overall Height w/roof air – 12'4"
Interior Height – 80"
Overall Width – 101"
Interior Width – 96"

WEIGHTS & CAPACITIES

GVWR – 26,000 lb.
GAWR (front) – 10,000 lb.
GAWR (rear) – 17,000 lb.
GCWR – 30,000 lb.
UVW – 20,900 lb.
Trailer hitch capacity – 5,000 lb.

POWER TRAIN

Engine – 300 hp Cummins 5.9L
Torque (Lbs.-Ft.) – 600 @ 1600 rpm
Transmission – Allison 2100 Series
Automatic 5-speed w/electric control
Tire Size – 255/70R 22.5
Alternator (amps) – 160

CHASSIS

Frame – Freightliner
Brakes – Disk brakes front & rear
Suspension (front and rear) – Leaf springs with Bilstein shocks
Leveling jacks – Atwood electric

CONSTRUCTION

Body – Laminated floor, sidewalls, and roof
Support – Steel-aluminum reinforced
Front-Rear caps – Fiberglass
Exterior side panels – Gel-coat fiberglass walls with painted graphics or full body paint

ACCOMMODATIONS

Sleeps – Four adults
Fuel tank – 80 gal.
Fresh water – 84 gal.
Black water – 45 gal.
Grey water – 52 gal.
LPG tank (can only be filled to 80% capacity) – 31.3 gal.

MSRP*

MSRP is the manufacturer's suggested retail price and does not include dealer prep or options. Manufacturer reserves the right to change or discontinue models offered, standard features, optional equipment, and prices without prior notice. Dealer prices may vary.

UVW

This is the approximate weight of the vehicle with a full fuel tank, engine oil, and coolants. The UVW does not include cargo, fresh water, LP gas, passengers, or dealer-installed accessories.

DEALERS

To locate the Tiffin dealer nearest you, go to www.tiffinmotorhomes.com and click on "dealer locator." If internet access is not available, call 256-356-8661 and ask the operator for the Tiffin dealer location nearest to you.

PLEASE NOTE

All options may not be available on all models. Because of progressive improvements made in a model year, specifications, and standard and optional equipment are subject to change without notice or obligation.

NASHVILLE!

Music City USA

by Robert Wilson

The strong souls assembled on the banks of the Cumberland River that Christmas nearly 230 years ago must have felt both joyful and triumphant as they officially established a frontier fort and named it for a Revolutionary War commander. The site, a fur trading outpost in the early part of the eighteenth century, became Fort Nashborough in 1779, namesake of Gen. Francis Nash who had been mortally wounded two years earlier fighting the British in New Jersey. It would be more than a century and a half later that the fort, now called Nashville, would be known as the capital of both an indigenous form of American music and the state of Tennessee. It is a modern, vibrant Southern city where the lights are bright, the music is loud, and the culture is in perpetual motion.

Nashville is the historic home of a former president, an internationally respected university, and the largest Protestant religious denomination in the country. It has a National Football League franchise, hosts the longest-running radio program in the world, and has a mall so eclectic and varied in its attractions that they call it “shoppertainment.” In addition, there are antebellum homes, authentic riverboat excursions, the Country Music Hall of Fame and Museum, Tootsie’s Orchid Lounge, where innumerable country music performers got their start, and the Station Inn, where banjos roll and bluegrass is king.

Three interstate highways converge in Nashville, as do many varied forms of tourism, but make no mistake, country music is the rooster that crows from the roof of this henhouse. Over a half-million call Nashville home, from the most common to the CEO to the country superstar. Not unexpectedly, they call the town Music City.

To really take the pulse of a town like Nashville, you need to assess your priorities and set aside a little time. There’s too much to do and see here to just grab a site overnight at one of the three in-town campgrounds on Music Valley Drive. Budget



Opened in May 2001, the \$37 million structure housing the Country Music Hall of Fame and Museum is very symbolic architecture. The windows resemble black piano keys; the arc on the right side of the

your time carefully and you can experience Nashville the way it ought to be done—but you must be willing to put your jacks down for a couple of nights.

A good place to start is a visit to the Nashville Convention and Visitors Bureau Web site, www.nashvillecvb.com, but the bureau also publishes a yearly vacation guide that tells a lot about the city and the attractions that it offers. It even offers a suggested morning-to-evening itinerary that packs a ton of fun into one short day.

Based on the presumption that country music is the main draw to Nashville, then Mecca is the Country Music Hall of Fame and Museum, which is downtown. If you do not do anything but examine the exterior architecture of the building, you will have found something unique. The facility’s guide notes that the windows resemble black piano keys; the arc of the right side of the building could be a fin on a 1957 Chevrolet; the cylindrical Rotunda harkens back to rural water towers or grain silos; the discs on top of the Rotunda could be four iterations of recorded music—the 78-rpm platter, the vinyl LP, the 45-rpm,

building could be a fin from a ’57 Chevy; the tower at left is a replica from WSM; and the cylindrical rotunda harkens back to rural water towers or grain silos.

and the compact disc. A set of vertically oriented stone bars on the side of the Rotunda form an abstract rendition of the classic “Will the Circle Be Unbroken,” the theme of the Hall of Fame, which is inside the Rotunda. And if that gives you faith in what the Hall of Fame tells you, you can take their word that from overhead the building looks like a bass clef.

Inside is a multi-level celebration of country music, from its roots in Scots-Irish fiddle-based folk music brought over to the New World even before America was a nation to the modern electrified and electrifying revues featuring an ever-changing roll of fresh faces, moving lights, and cowboy boots. Glass cases house early folk instruments, along with those played by country music’s best-known pioneers and performers. You can gaze on Maybelle Carter’s archtop acoustic guitar or a collection of Chet Atkins’ electric ones.

Flashy apparel having the significance it did among country entertainers of earlier generations, there are also costumes on display that have been worn by the likes of Faron Young, Patsy Cline, Dolly Parton and others. Plus boots and hats. And

guitars, lots of guitars, with scratches and wear marks on them that were applied by some pretty famous fingers. Your entire journey through Nashville’s musical heritage is a multi-media experience, with performers narrating at stops along the way. There are walls covered with gold records and, of course, the Hall of Fame, where bronze plaques bear the images and stories of a select group of country music’s most important performers and recording executives.

There also is a re-creation of RCA’s Studio B, where more than 35,000 songs were recorded, including 1,000 Top 10 hits. Among those who recorded there are Dolly Parton, Willie Nelson, Waylon Jennings, Eddy Arnold and many others. Along with the year-round attractions within the Hall of Fame are special exhibits, such as “I Can’t Stop Loving You: Ray Charles and Country Music,” which will be on display through December, and “For the Good Times: The Ray Price Story,” which runs through June.

Another place where country music lives is the Grand Ole Opry, where the greats of the genre have performed every Saturday night for more than 80 years. Membership at the Opry is, on some level, the sign that a performer has “made it.” The Opry got its start as a radio program on Nashville’s WSM as a live broadcast featuring what was known at the time as hillbilly music. For a long time, many sophisticates over broad expanses of the nation listened to the Opry in the privacy of their homes while publicly disavowing any attraction to such a base-level form of music. It was originally called the “WSM Barn Dance” until one night in the 1930s when George D. Hay, the self-described “Solemn Ole Judge,” quipped at the show’s opening that the preceding program of the New York Opera was *grand opera*. “Well,” the former Memphis newspaper reporter said, “y’all just sit on back, ‘cause from now on you’re gonna hear the Grand Ole Opry.” The name has hung on like the price tag on Minnie Pearl’s hat.

In 1943 the Opry moved to the Ryman Auditorium, a facility built as a church in 1892. That was the Opry’s home for the next 31 years. Today the Ryman, with its classical architecture and familiar façade, houses a museum where visitors can step onto that famous stage and sit in the original pews and view memorabilia from the auditorium’s storied past. They can tour the backstage area and dressing rooms where the most famous of the famous have prepared to perform and where some have even been discovered. The Ryman also claims its position as the birthplace of bluegrass music, country’s older cousin, and it has a state historical marker to prove it. It was in December 1945 that Bill Monroe, known as the “Father of Bluegrass Music,” brought his show to the Opry stage with a band that featured Lester Flatt on guitar and vocals, Earl Scruggs on banjo and Monroe himself on mandolin. That distinctive combination, along with a fiddle and base, laid the foundation for what is arguably the most natural musical sound available today, mostly unelectrified and widely played by a dedicated mass of devoted—and non-professional—musicians all across the U.S. The Ryman also still features a concert series, with details available at www.ryman.com.

Nowadays, the Grand Ole Opry is staged at a venue appropri-



ROBERT WILSON



ROBERT WILSON

ately named the Grand Ole Opry House at the Opryland Drive exit off Briley Parkway on Nashville's east side. It is part of a complex comprising the Opry House, the Opry Museum, The Acuff Theatre and the Opry Plaza. The show is still broadcast on WSM, 650 AM, on Saturday nights, but there are shows on Tuesday and Friday nights also.

The Opry is located almost next door to one of the most popular attractions in the city—Opry Mills, a “shoppertainment” experience like no other. Inside this expansive retail complex are dozens of unique stores that offer the most unusual items imaginable, from household goods to clothes, shoes, electronics, toys, sunglasses, toiletries and a mountain of culinary delights.

Plus, there is the Gibson Showcase, a combination music store, instrument construction factory, restaurant and stage show venue. Gibson is one of the premier stringed instrument makers in the nation, known for its electric and acoustic guitars, banjos, mandolins and resonator guitars. There are hundreds of instruments hanging on the walls, and musicians can test drive any one they choose. Thus, you never know when a jam session may erupt right there in the store.

Inside a see-through room adjacent to the store, visitors can watch artisans as they make banjos, mandolins and other instruments. It is a fascinating study in craftsmanship that borders on artistry, watching the creation process in one room and seeing the finished product in another. Next door is the showcase entertainment venue, which features a full service restaurant and bar and a stage on which regular musical performances are scheduled.

Also in Opry Mills is the Rainforest Café, which actually provides much more of an experience than simply being a place to eat, and teases more senses than just the taste buds. You eat in a jungle setting complete with trumpeting elephants and lightning-laden tropical storms that burst forth without warning. The menu is broad in spectrum to appeal to any taste, and the signature dessert is called a Volcano, a mountain of ice cream and toppings served with a chorus of shouts by the staff and a sparkler on top.

Opry Mills is conceivably a daylong excursion all under one roof. But there is still plenty more to a Nashville experience. The Belle Meade Plantation, a Greek Revival mansion, was built eight years before the beginning of that 19th century unpleasantness between the Northern and Southern states. It features daily tours by costumed guides who tell about the plantation's history as a breeder of thoroughbred horses whose descendants have such famous names as Seabiscuit, Secretariat, Smarty Jones and Barbaro. You can smell open hearth cooking and hear the ring of the blacksmith's hammer on the anvil. It's a step backward to another time.

The same could be said for another famous home in

A boxy guitar and a teal green costume owned by country star Faron Young are on exhibit at the Country Music Hall of Fame and Museum.

- Visitors to the Country Music Hall of Fame and Museum gaze at a wall full of gold records awarded to singers and musicians over the past 70 years.

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NASHVILLE CONVENTIONS AND VISITORS BUREAU



DEAN DIXON PHOTOGRAPHY

Tennessee’s capital city, owned by one of the three U.S. presidents the state produced—Andrew Jackson, known as “Old Hickory,” the hero general of the War of 1812 and the Battle of New Orleans. Jackson’s story is one that encompasses more than just war and politics. It is a saga of a man’s intense love for his wife, Rachel, and a fierce loyalty to his home state. The Hermitage, as the Jackson home is known, sits on 1,100 acres with 95 percent of the furnishings inside the mansion being original to the Jacksons. Rachel’s garden, an acre of blooming trees and flowers, is still preserved for visitors, and the First Lady is said to have loved the garden so much she asked to be buried there, which she was. Jackson so loved his First Lady that he was buried there next to her.

For those who like their history a little more ancient, there is the Parthenon, a replica of the temple by the same name in Athens, Greece. Built for Tennessee’s centennial celebration in 1897, the structure is a faithful representation of its predecessor, which was built in 438 B.C. Inside the Nashville Parthenon is a 42-foot statue of Athena, just like the one in the Greek temple. The Parthenon also serves as Nashville’s art museum, containing 63 paintings by American artists of the 19th and 20th centuries.

With spring’s renewal bursting forth all over the landscape, The Nashville Zoo at Grassmere is an outdoor attraction that beckons young and old alike. Living at the zoo are hundreds of animals of all shapes, sizes and colors, from birds to reptiles to mammals and more. The marketing department at the zoo even salutes Nashville’s country music heritage by giv-

At left: Country music superstar Vince Gill performs on the stage of Nashville’s Grand Ole Opry House on Opryland Drive, the most famous country music show of all. • In our Allegro Bay, we pulled alongside the historic Ryman Auditorium in downtown Nashville, where the Grand Ole Opry played from 1943-1974. *At right:* The Hermitage is the home of America’s seventh president, Andrew Jackson, known as “Old Hickory.” The hero of the Battle of New Orleans and his beloved wife, Rachel, are both buried at the home.

ing the animals in their advertisements names that call to mind the big names in country music—like Tim McCaw and Zebra McEntire. There are regular special events at the zoo that animal lovers are sure to enjoy, such as Monkeying Around at Gibbons Islands on April 17. It is being promoted as a party with the apes, with music and tropical treats to enjoy as visitors learn about white-cheeked gibbons and siamangs, whose calls can be heard for miles through their native homelands. It is an evening event, as is the July 12 Safari Swizzle at Elephant and Giraffe Savannahs. There will be barbeque and frothy beverages at the giraffe venue and African wines and safari fare at the elephant area, all set against a rhythmic backdrop of African drumming.

Also at the zoo is the Grassmere Historic Farm, a home dating back to 1810, making it the second oldest open-to-the-public residence in Davidson County. Tours of the mansion reflect how the home looked and was furnished in the 1880s. The adjacent gardens provided not only beauty but also food and herbs and medicinal substances for the livestock. Visitors are urged to look for the name etched into a windowpane more than a century ago.

Another springtime masterpiece is

Cheekwood Botanical Garden and Museum of Art, which has a fascinating history in both culture and commerce. The story of Cheekwood begins with Christopher T. Cheek in the 1880s, when he founded a wholesale grocery business in Nashville. As the turn of the century approached, Cheek's son, Leslie, now his business partner, married Mabel Wood of nearby Clarksville. Contemporary with all this, Joel Cheek, a cousin of Christopher Cheek, developed a blend of coffee that was served in what was then the finest hotel in the city, the Maxwell House. It was in 1907 that President Theodore Roosevelt, sampling a cup of the coffee during a visit to Nashville, declared it "Good to the last drop," which has been the product's slogan ever since.

In 1928 the company that is now General Foods purchased the coffee company, and with proceeds from that sale Leslie and Mabel Cheek built the mansion that is now Cheekwood. The Cheek's descendants offered the property for sale in the 1950s. A coalition of civic groups bought the site and turned it into what it is today, a premier botanical site and home for one of Nashville's best art collections.

Sports-minded visitors to the Music City have a variety of attractions, although they should keep in mind that the NFL



NASHVILLE CONVENTIONS AND VISITORS BUREAU



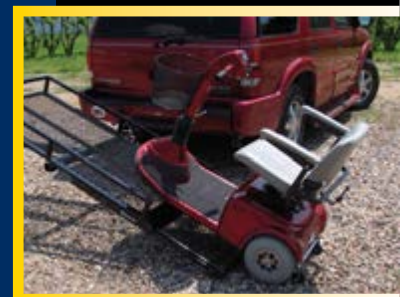
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This year marks the beginning of the second century for the Belle Meade Plantation, where the bloodlines of several thoroughbred race horses began. Tours include the Greek Revival mansion, several outbuildings and a 1790-era cabin.

Tennessee Titans have not had a home game in years that was not sold out. But that does not mean you cannot see some hard hitting by rough-and-tumble athletes. The Nashville Predators of the National Hockey League get it on with their adversaries during a half-year schedule that begins in September and ends April 7. But that overlaps two days with the beginning of the Nashville Sounds season. The Sounds, a AAA affiliate of the Milwaukee Brewers in the Pacific Coast Baseball League, open their season April 5 at home.

In May comes the 66th running of

the Iroquois Steeplechase, a seven-event horse race that benefits the Monroe Carell Jr. Children's Hospital at Nashville's prestigious Vanderbilt University. The steeplechase is at Percy Warner Park in the city. Of course, Vanderbilt is a perennial contender in basketball in the Southeastern Conference and also a formidable football presence in recent years. Held on April 28, the Country Music Marathon and Half-Marathon is the real deal for the running set, both pro and amateur. There are both 26- and 13-mile courses with some 50 bands and 28 high

A 42-foot-tall gold statue of the Greek goddess Athena commands the attention inside Nashville's replication of the Parthenon. It is the tallest indoor sculpture in the Western World.



NASHVILLE CONVENTIONS AND VISITORS BUREAU

school cheerleading squads along the route. The post-race celebration includes a performance by a major country music superstar.

Labor Day weekend brings the John Merritt Classic, which pits two historically black colleges against each other in a season-opening football game at LP Field downtown, where the Titans play. The game is hosted by Tennessee State University and coincides with the Music City Jazz, Blues & Heritage Festival. LP Field also is home to the post-season Gaylord Hotels Music City Bowl presented by Bridgestone. It pits an SEC contender against a Big Ten opponent in a nationally televised college football classic.

If you have a need for speed, there is auto racing to check out. The Nashville Superspeedway in nearby Lebanon is the scene of Busch Cup Series races in April and June, Indy car races in July, and a truck race in August. The venue is a 2-year-old, state-of-the-art racing facility. And there is drag racing virtually year-round at the Music City Raceway.

Golfers can take advantage of 108 holes at Nashville's four resort courses, and there are 14 public courses available.

An out-of-the-ordinary Nashville attraction is the General Jackson Showboat, a 300-foot sternwheeler riverboat that plies the Cumberland River on regularly scheduled excursions that feature a country music show on the mid-day cruise and a Broadway-style musical extravaganza in the evening. Both cruises feature sumptuous meals and there are special holiday shows from mid-November through Christmas.

But if you want to take the pulse of the city—and you can bet the rhythm will be in 4/4 time, heavy on the bass—you do that in what is known as “The District,” a downtown area bounded on two sides by Broadway and 2nd Avenue. Inside The District are some of the city's best-known clubs, shops, and restaurants. It is where the lights are the brightest and the late nights are the latest.

On 2nd Avenue are the Charlie Daniels Museum, B. B. King's Blues Club, Miss Marple's Dinner Theatre, Agora Inter-

national Gifts, Hooters of Nashville, and two of the most famous nightclubs in the world of country music—the Wildhorse Saloon and Coyote Ugly. Plus, there’s Willie Nelson’s Gift Emporium, Pralines by Leon, and the Market Street Brewery. On what is known as Lower Broadway you’ll find the world-famous Tootsie’s Orchid Lounge, where many an aspiring country music performer got his or her start; Legends Corner; Hatch Show Print, a letterpress print shop that has done concert posters for most all the big names in the music business; Second Fiddle; Layla’s Bluegrass Inn; one of the three Ernest Tubb Record Shops; Gruhn Guitar, one of the best-known vintage instrument merchants in the nation; the Hard Rock Café; and the Ryman Auditorium.

Printer’s Alley is home to Fiddle and Steel, the Bourbon Street Blues & Boogie Bar, and Demos’ Steak and Spaghetti House.

Over on 12th Avenue is the Station Inn, one of the best-known bluegrass music listening rooms in the country, where some of the biggest names in the genre stop by to pick.

Nearby in the heart of downtown Nashville is the State Capitol, designed in 1845 by William Strickland, who died during its construction and is buried in the north wall. A block or two away on Deadrick is the Tennessee State Museum, which houses Daniel Boone’s musket and exhibits on the state’s three presidents—Andrew Jackson, James K. Polk, and Andrew Johnson, who succeeded Abraham Lincoln after Lincoln’s assassination. There is also information on other famous Tennesseans, among them Alamo fighter David Crockett (he never called himself “Davy”), Sam Houston, the only man ever to serve as governor of two different states—Tennessee and Texas—and Civil War Gen. Nathan Bedford Forrest.

Nashville also is the headquarters of the Southern Baptist Convention and a center of religious publishing.

Regardless of what the traveler or vacationer is interested in, at least a hunk of it can be found in Nashville, the center

Continued on page 45

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Don Lewis — Deep Roots in Alabama

“We build the best windows in the RV industry. Period!”

by Fred Thompson

Don Lewis realized as a teenager that he loved the area where he was born. “I was born in Sheffield,” he began. “But I was raised on the next hill just past the Mars Hill Church of Christ. The church was established in the 1860s and T.B. Larimore started a school there in 1946.”

The school was called Mars Hill Bible School. Don and his future wife Jackie graduated from MHBS. They have known each other since they were children. It is quickly apparent that a strong level of self-confidence and security comes from having deep roots in a community, being close to the place where you were born, worshiping on Sunday at the same church for decades, knowing that several generations of your ancestors were here before you, continuing to enjoy friends whom you knew in school, speaking through the years to the same folks in town.

After high school, Don spent two years at Florence State (now the University of North Alabama) and then six years in the National Guard. Jackie worked toward a degree in accounting. After he finished his tour of active duty with the Guard, Don began working for a boat manufacturing plant. Jackie became the bookkeeper for the MHBS bookstore. They married in 1966. “For 28 years Jackie and I lived on Cox Creek Parkway right across the street from her parents,” he continued.

Don Lewis never envisioned that his initial position as plant manager of Wynne Enterprises would lead to a 35-year career.

While continuing to study for a degree in business management at night school, Don continued his career with Seagoing Boats in industrial manufacturing. That job evolved into a position with SeaLine Boats which had its own marine window manufacturing facility. Unaware at that point, Don began a career path that ultimately led him into the RV industry.

In 1970 SeaLine hired John Wynne who was a pioneer in developing the technology for radius corner windows. Two years later as Bob Tiffin was launching Tiffin Motorhomes, he discovered that SeaLine was making the type of windows that he needed for the campers being produced by Tiffin at that time. And all the better that the company was just an hour from Red Bay.

Unfortunately, Paul Donaldson, founder of SeaLine, was not interested in expanding his operation to serve Tiffin Motorhomes. After discussing a possible business venture, Tiffin and Wynne offered to buy the marine windows operation from Donaldson. He accepted and Wynne Enterprises was formed. The new company began operations in Muscle Shoals, Alabama, in 1973. Now a part of the Quad Cities, Muscle Shoals shares contiguous borders with Tusculumbia, Sheffield, and Florence.

Concurrently, Don Lewis’s future was shaping up quickly.

Lewis did a complete frame-off restoration of this 1934 Ford Victoria including the painting.



Lewis came over from SeaLine as plant manager before Wynne Enterprises began operations and hired the new company's first five employees. The plant had only 3,000 SF of office and manufacturing space. Sadly, just one year later, John Wynne suffered a heart attack and died. Bob Tiffin purchased Wynne's shares from his heirs and the company continued to operate as Wynne Enterprises, Inc.

Lewis then became general manager as Wynne expanded into a new plant in the Colbert Industrial Park in Tuscumbia. Now with 35 employees and 40,000 SF of office and manufacturing space, the company builds over 800 motorhome windows per week for TMH. Today, as general manager, Don wears at least five hats: marketing, sales, purchasing, engineering, and general business management. Lewis has been instrumental in developing and expanding marine markets for the company; however, motorhome windows comprise two-thirds of Wynne's production.

"Today we are the primary supplier of radius corner windows for lobster boats. We have a lot of customers in New England and I travel there at least once a year to service those accounts," he said. "We also build marine windows for commercial fishing vessels and patrol boats." For the off-shore market, Wynne uses up to 1/2-inch glass.

"As far as I know," Lewis explained, "no other company builds dual pane thermal windows for motorhomes with warm edge technology and a thermal break in the assembly from the outside to the inside frame. Our air space is twice as thick as our

competitors." Lewis designs the frames and the extrusion molds from which the tracks are made.

While visiting the plant and watching the flow of production, one might conclude that RV window production was almost routine. Not so, Lewis says. "Every day is a challenge. Dealing with our glass suppliers is a major part of my job."

Lewis points out as we tour the production area that aluminum frames are flexible. "As the motorhome body flexes when you drive across uneven roads, hills, and driveways, the window frames are going to flex, too. If it is raining, then it is possible that you may get a few drops inside the channel. But that doesn't mean you have a leaky window. We put drain holes in the tracks to take out a few drops. Windows are exposed to a lot of adverse conditions. For example, we deal with significant differences in air pressure between a sea level atmosphere and a Rocky Mountain atmosphere. The more information we offer, the better our owners will understand why and how we build our windows," he said.

Don Lewis has nearly 40 years of experience in this business, 35 of which have been at Wynne Enterprises. He is quick to point out his appreciation of Bob Tiffin's business philosophy. "He doesn't put it on paper and write out long mission statements. Bob gives you the latitude to do the job and then turns you loose. He allows you to make something of the opportunities. It's like working with your best friend. If you can't get along

Continued on page 47



IMPORTANT Dometic Recall Information

Dometic Corporation is continually committed to maintaining a high level of satisfaction and excellence now and in the future. That is why Dometic is voluntarily recalling certain refrigerators that may have a potential safety defect. The recall affects Dometic two-door refrigerators manufactured between April 1997 and May 2003.

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RECALL 06E-076

Dale Cathey

An Irrepressible Entrepreneur

by Fred Thompson

Ever alert for new opportunities, Dale Cathey's career made a rocket-like ascent in its last five years. When he turned 65 on March 4, he proudly displayed his Medicare card. Ironically, his business focused on helping those who are 60 and older — designing and manufacturing walk-in bathtubs.

As cellular phone sales soared into mega-digits after the turn of the century, Cathey's 15-year success ride in reselling telephone long distance calling cards to large organizations began a fast downhill slide. He began looking for other products to which he could apply his considerable sales and marketing skills.

"I was looking for something to offset the loss of revenue in the calling card business and saw an ad in *USA Today* by a company that was trying to find sales reps to sell their walk-in bathtubs," Cathey said recently. "They were located in Vancouver, B.C. In October 2002, I was awarded the sales territory of Texas for selling their product."

Cathey began to do his research. "Many people from my parents' generation, and mine, too, like tub baths," he discovered. "They like to soak and get a good relaxing bath. But as they get older, they find they can't push up as easily out of a standard tub as when they were younger. With everything wet, climbing over the side of the tub is risky at best," he said. "At worst, a fall occurs and often results in a broken hip or other broken bones."

Government statistics show that the number of seniors who fall in their homes each year is rising significantly, and perhaps that can be attributed mostly to longer life spans. Falls often result in broken bones, long hospital confinements, and

rehabilitation programs which can last for several months.

There are usually three reasons, Cathey pointed out, that seniors have to leave their homes for assisted living facilities: inability to take their medications correctly, not being able to prepare their meals or feed themselves, and being unable to bathe themselves.

"The Vancouver tubs were so expensive that retired people who needed them simply could not afford one," he said sympathetically. In an effort to find a comparable product, he went to England where walk-in tubs had been introduced 10 years ago, and found a company that made a good product. But there were still two major problems: shipping costs to the U.S. and the fact that this company only made tubs with left-hand doors. Here in the states, he said, you have to have tubs with left- and right-hand doors. They offered to modify their design for a hefty \$20,000. Cathey declined and flew back to Ft. Worth where he found a company who could make the dual door design. With the consent of the English firm, he modified and improved their design for the American market, with the added appeal of reducing the price by nearly 50 percent.

"I started out selling two or three tubs a month in 2003," he explained. With gratifying response from advertising in AARP's bi-monthly magazine, Cathey quickly realized that he had to address a nationwide market. By 2005 he was developing a dealer network.

Cathey envisioned a rolling showroom in a trailer. But pull-

Dale Cathey shows his walk-in tub in the Phaeton "showroom." • Fishing for cutthroat trout in Jackson Hole, Wyoming.



ing it around the country with his pickup just didn't project the image he wanted. Then a college buddy introduced him to Tiffin Motorhomes. "When I saw the Phaeton, I knew it would be the perfect vehicle to display the walk-in tub. We placed our order and bought the coach in October 2005. I wanted an attractive area that would reflect the quality of our product. The surrounding appearance of our 'showroom' was a big asset. We removed the passenger side sofa and put the tub in its place. With the slides out, I had plenty of room for potential dealers to visit at the same time. With the driver's and passenger's chairs rotated, plus the couch, we had an office-like environment in which to discuss the product. The dining table became my desk. The Phaeton proved to be very effective in setting up new dealers," Cathey said.

"They often commented favorably about our showroom and the interior spaciousness of the Phaeton. The almond color of the tub blended perfectly with the interior decor," Cathey continued. "The coach gave us a homey atmosphere in which we could discuss business."

He continued to use his company's name, DC Enterprises, as he began shipping tubs in the fall of 2003. During the next 15 months sales continued to increase. "We increased our advertising in the AARP magazine with a one-third page ad every two months at \$50,000 a pop," he smiled. By March 2005, sales had jumped to 50 tubs a month.

In the meantime, Cathey improved the design of his walk-in tub by featuring hydrotherapy with 21 water jets. The tub improved the bathers circulation and massaged away aches and pains. Then he increased the number of jets to 39 with a new air handling system and added a heater option that maintains the bather-selected water temperature. The new models are now 40 inches high, three more than the earlier version, permitting a bather to soak all the way up to shoulder level, and in some cases, to the neck! The threshold was reduced from eight inches to three for easier access. "Some seniors cannot lift their feet off the ground very much at all," he said.

The company's sales reached 60 tubs a month in January 2006 and attracted the interest of the owner of the fiberglass plant which made the tubs. He was also impressed with the dealer network and service organization that Cathey had established. The two men got down to serious negotiation in the summer and finalized the sale on September 1, 2006.

"I agreed to be available as a consultant to the new owner, plus I kept the Texas sales territory as an exclusive distributorship," he explained. During negotiations, Dale and his wife Connie started building a new home in Ft. Worth which they occupied in January. Dale points out that Maggie, their Shih Tzu, now has her own private entrance. He continues to work two days a week from his home office and usually sells about five tubs a month. Their home overlooks a golf course in the valley below and a beautiful wooded area beyond.

Sales trips in the Phaeton were blended with pleasant stops along the way. "We have stayed in some beautiful campgrounds,"

he said, "not the least of which were two Outdoor Resorts at Lake of the Ozarks and Lake Toxaway." Trips into Florida, Tennessee, Virginia, Vermont, and Maine were memorable, he said.

"Overall Connie and I have been very pleased with the Phaeton and highly recommend it to friends and acquaintances. Vogt RV has been excellent in working with us on some minor repair issues," Cathey said.

So what's in the future for Dale and Connie Cathey? With three children, Lisa, 41, Greg, 40, and David, 38, plus five grandchildren, the couple has plenty of visiting to do just to keep up with their progress. Connie enjoys having them over for meals, and Dale does a pretty mean job with steaks on the grill.

For most of their lives, Dale and his brother Steve have enjoyed fishing together in some of North America's most scenic locations. They enjoyed a great rainbow trout and salmon fishing trip to Alaska. "We flew by bush plane to a gravel strip at a

Continued on page 47

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Interviews from Montana and Idaho

by Harold Breuninger



Georgia and Joe Saladino

Home: Florence, Oregon
Interviewed at Yogi Bear's Jellystone Park, Missoula, Montana

- The Saladinos are thrilled with their 2006 Phaeton.
- Joe loves how it drives, rides, and performs.
- They started motorhoming in a 2004 Allegro Bay and loved it, but Joe held out for a diesel pusher.
- They chose Tiffin after Georgia researched manufacturers on the Internet.
- Georgia and Joe were very favorably impressed with Bob Tiffin and all the friendly folks who work at the Red Bay plant.
- Both are dog lovers and travel with Vinnie, a cocker spaniel mix.
- They usually take four trips per year with an extended trip over the winter months.
- Joe was a chief air traffic controller serving at major airports throughout the U.S. He retired as an operations manager.
- Georgia is retired from a health care improvement organization.
- They have one son and one grandchild living in Jacksonville, Florida.
- Joe does the driving and Georgia navigates, although she has taken a driving course and may take a turn at the wheel soon.
- They belong to the Allegro Club and attended the June 2006 rally in Coeur d'Alene, Idaho.
- They also are active in a local Allegro chapter back home.
- Joe is a golfer and has two "Holes in One" to his credit.
- Georgia is planning (maybe) on renewing her interest in golf.



Buddy and Sally Rogers

Formerly from Sarasota, Florida
Interviewed at Sunrise Campground, Bozeman, Montana

- They are enjoying their pristine 2004 Phaeton.
- Buddy did a very professional job making and installing sun screens on the inside of the front windows.
- They became full timers in November 2005.
- They are no strangers to Tiffin as their previous coach was a 2002 Allegro.
- Buddy is the primary driver, but Sally plans on taking a driving course as back-up.
- Their camping experience began with tents, followed by a 13-ft. Shasta, then a van before moving up to a Tiffin Class A.
- Buddy is a retired police officer from Virginia Beach.
- Sally is a retired emergency room nurse, also from Virginia Beach.
- They have two children and two grandchildren living in Raleigh and Roxboro, North Carolina.
- They have visited Red Bay twice and were very impressed with the facility and the service they received.
- As full timers, they thoroughly enjoy meeting new people and seeing new places.
- Both enjoy golf and Buddy is a fisherman.
- A memorable occasion is the two nights they spent crowded together in a campground bathroom as tornadoes went through Fulton, Mississippi, and later through Barling, Arkansas. Sally says that really brings folks together!



Peter and Linda Fleming

Hometown: Newnan, Georgia
Interviewed at Red Rock RV Park, Island Park, Idaho

- The Flemings have a 2002 Phaeton.
- They are full timers but keep a close tie to Newnan, Georgia, where their son operates the family's machine fabrication business.
- Pete is a retired machinist.
- Linda is a retired emergency customer service representative for the National Cash Register Company.
- They have one son, one daughter, and two grandchildren.
- The Flemings have been motorhoming for three years, starting out with a Coachman acquired from a friend.
- Pete does the majority of driving but Linda is learning.
- They have been to Red Bay several times and are very satisfied with the Tiffin Service Center.
- On several occasions Pete has called Red Bay for advice on the coach's equipment and operation and has always been treated with good information by friendly technicians.
- They speak very highly about their entire Tiffin experience.
- Recently they celebrated their 40th wedding anniversary by renewing their marriage vows at Zion, Utah, with the entire family present. The service was conducted by Pete's brother, the Rev. Jimmy Fleming.
- In mid-July Pete and Linda were joined by family members for a four-day escorted tour of the Grand Tetons, traveling by horseback and Conestoga wagon.

Editor's Note: Harold Breuninger has been a contributor to *Roughing It Smoothly* from the beginning. Originally from South Carolina, he and Lynne are full-timers. His interviews give you a good flavor of Tiffin owners who travel the country extensively.

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A scenic landscape featuring a vibrant green meadow in the foreground. A line of trees with varying foliage colors, including bright red, orange, and yellow, stands in the middle ground. The background consists of rolling hills and mountains covered in dense forests, with some peaks appearing hazy. The overall scene is bathed in soft, natural light, suggesting a clear day.

Springtime in the Smokies

A PICTORIAL BY FRED THOMPSON

Springtime meadow on the Cades Cove Loop Road



Sunrise at the first overlook, Foothills Parkway



Double waterfalls on the Little River Road

Spring is one of the four seasons of temperate zones, the transition from winter into summer. Western countries in the Northern Hemisphere consider spring to begin with the vernal equinox, around March 20, and end with the summer solstice, around June 21. The hemisphere begins to warm significantly, causing new plant growth to spring forth, giving the season its name. Snow at the higher elevations begins to melt, and rivers and

streams swell with runoff and spring rains. Flowers, both domestic and wild, begin their blooming season in a long succession beginning even when snow is still on the ground, and continuing into early summer.

For many people in temperate parts of the United States, spring is synonymous with baseball, planting a garden, cleaning the house, watching for the first jonquils, or getting the grill out of the storage shed.

If you are in the Southern Appalachian mountains in early April, spring is a cool, crisp morning that requires a sweater and maybe a wind breaker. It demands a walk through the damp leaves on a mountain trail. Deep breaths of the moist air invigorate every cell of your body. A few stretches to limber up will get your muscles ready for a long walk. With keen eyes, you will be rewarded with several varieties of trillium and many shades

of chartreuse green leaves pushed out of their buds by towering hardwoods whose sap is rising. The redbuds and dogwoods add their explosion of lavender, red, and white to the canvas. Look for Dutchman's Britches, Jack-in-the-Pulpit, Fire Pink, and Showy Orchis. In May you'll see Sweet Shrub, Yellow Lady's Slipper, and Dragon's Mouth. And then in June, the real treat that most mountain hikers look forward to is the showy display of

A Spring Wildflower Blooming Schedule

MARCH

APRIL

APRIL



Birdfoot Violet



Jack-in-the-Pulpit



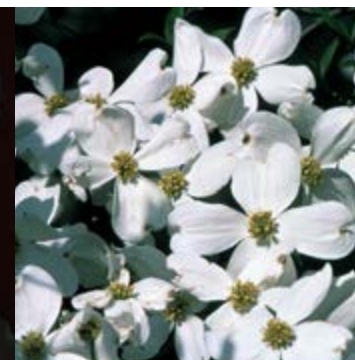
White Trillium



Dutchman's Britches



Yellow Violet



Dogwood



Fire Pink



Showy Orchis



Crested Dwarf Iris



Hyatt Lane in Cades Cove



Dogwood in bloom at Bud Ogle's cabin near the Roaring Fork Motor Nature Trail



1000 Drips on the Roaring Fork Motor Nature Trail

Mountain Laurel, Flame Azalea, and several varieties of rhododendron.

Spring in the Great Smoky Mountains is a continuous show that is governed by the elevation. If you start out early in the season at the lower elevations, you can get "instant replay" by moving up the mountain each time you hike as spring progresses.

"The park's abundance and variety of plant and animal life have earned it the United Nations designation of International Biosphere Reserve. Scientists estimate up to 100,000 different types of plants and animals live in Great Smoky Mountains National Park. In 1998, fewer than 10,000 had been identified; however, researchers have added more than 3,500 to the list, including over 550 species that were previously unknown!"*

* "Great Smoky Mountains: Your Complete Guide to the Parks, 2006/7," page 2.

To plan your springtime visit, make your first stop at one of the park's three visitor centers. The Sugarlands Visitor Center is located near the park's northern entrance, two miles south of Gatlinburg on US 441. Oconaluftee Visitor Center is on US 441 two miles north of Cherokee at the park's main southern entrance. Cades Cove Visitor Center is located off US 321 about 12 miles southwest of Townsend.

First, pick up a complimentary copy of "Great Smoky Mountains: Your Complete Guide to the Parks, 2006/7." It provides an excellent overview of everything you can do and enjoy in the GSMNP.

Of primary interest to coach owners, there are four campgrounds in GSMNP which can accommodate motorhomes: Cades Cove (max. 40'), Cosby (25'), Elkmont (35'), and Smokemont (40'). There are no hook-ups and you cannot

A Spring Wildflower Blooming Schedule

MAY

MAY

JUNE

JUNE



Dragon's Mouth

Sweet Shrub

Apple Blossom

Yellow Lady's Slipper

Mountain Laurel

Pink Rhododendron

Catawba Rhododendron

Flame Azalea

Tulip Poplar



run your generator from 8 p.m. until 8 a.m. All have dump stations except Elkmont (reservations accepted between May 15 and Oct. 31 at 800-365-2267; rates \$14–20/night). We chose Outdoor Resorts which is 10 miles east of Gatlinburg on US 321 North. To get there, we recommend approaching on I-40 (east of the Smokies) and taking exit 443. Follow the signs to Gatlinburg (west). Outdoor Resorts will be on your right about 15 miles from the I-40 exit. Full hook-ups including CATV & WIFI, plus pool, tennis courts, rec center, laundry, snack bar & restaurant. \$39/night.

There are many ways to enjoy springtime in the Smokies.

If hiking is not an option, you will find Auto Touring booklets in the visitor centers (\$1/each) for Cades Cove, Cataloochee, Roaring Fork, Clingman’s Dome, and Newfound Gap Road. A brochure on “Auto Touring” which covers each of the tours in less detail is available for \$1.

If hiking is your gig, the NPS provides an excellent collection of brochures (\$1/each) to make your springtime visit a total experience of nearly everything that the park has to offer. The brochure titles include: Wildflowers, Birds & Birding, Trees & Forests, Geology, Waterfalls, Wildlife Viewing, and Day Hikes. Two small books that

will fit neatly in your backpack are *Day Hikes of the Smokies* (\$9.95) and *History Hikes of the Smokies* (\$12.95). If you want to make a photographic album of your visit, be sure to pick up a copy of *The Smoky Mountains Photographer’s Guide* (\$15.95) by Bill Campbell and Nye Simmons, an invaluable guide on where, when, and how to shoot great pictures in the outdoors. You’ll find a complete wildflowers blooming guide on pages 78–79.


We hope this brief pictorial of the Smokies will whet your appetite to head for the GSM and rediscover spring in one of the world’s greatest parks. 

PHOTO CREDITS

The large pictures on pages 26–31, courtesy of Cory Photography, Signal Mountain, Tennessee, with the exception of “1000 Drips” which was supplied courtesy of Great Smoky Mountains National Park Service. All wildflower pictures courtesy of GSM National Park Service with the exception of Showy Orchis and Crested Dwarf Iris, courtesy of Cory Photography. The photograph on this page courtesy of William Britten, Knoxville, Tennessee.



Gulf Shores, Alabama

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Wynne Enterprises

An Innovator in RV and Marine Windows

by Fred Thompson

When an observant person boards a pleasure boat or a recreational vehicle for the first time, he will notice immediately the design of the windows and how different they are from those in his home. Because of the relatively low ceilings in boats and RVs, traditional sash windows which open vertically are not practical. Horizontal sliding windows seemed to be the solution, but 90-degree glass corners did not work well in sliding frames. Rounded corners were less likely to break, but creating a curved metal window frame with tracks for sliding the glass back and forth proved to be a challenge. John Wynne, a mechanical engineer from Ohio, was successful in making equipment that formed a radius corner using extruded aluminum stock with formed tracks which encased the sliding glass windows.

Wynne made his first radius corner windows for The Flexible Company that manufactured a delivery vehicle called the Flex Van. One of their first customers was United Parcel Service. Confident with his success at Flexible, Wynne built a plant in Evergreen,

Alabama, that he named Aluminum Sash Company of America. He eventually sold ASCA to Young Windows in Pennsylvania.

Paul Donaldson, who owned SeaLine boats, had dealt for years with the problems of manufacturing a marine window

Continued on page 38

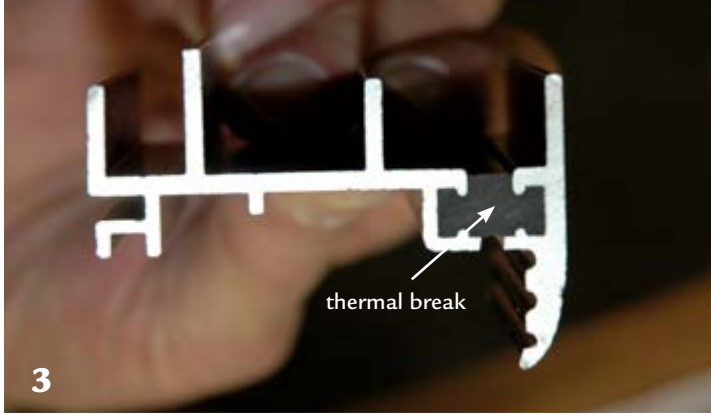
1 Brad Bates, who specializes in cutting glass freehand, discusses plans with general manager Don Lewis on a window design for one of TMH's new floorplans. **2** Wynne makes dual pane windows with $\frac{1}{8}$ -inch glass with warm edge technology and a dead air space that is twice as thick as that made by any competitor. **3** The design of the extruded aluminum frame incorporates a thermal break (see arrow) that prevents heat and cold from transferring from the exterior frame to the interior one — another reason why TMH coaches are heated and cooled efficiently. The exterior facing of the window frame is on the right, then the two tracks for the sliding windows. The track for the screen is on the left side. **4, 5, 6** The radius corner machine bends the window to any preset angle. Each pre-cut straight piece will get two radius corners to make one side of the window — an upper and lower track. In order to bend the extruded track on the machine, the aluminum must have exactly the right alloys and temper (hardness). Ricky Zahnd shows the 108-inch lower form of the driver's window on an Allegro Bus. **7** The frames for the screens are formed from aluminum extrusions with the same technology. Most of Tiffin's competitors use plastic frames for their screens. Since the frame is made with smaller material, an extra piece is added to the radius corner for strength. **8** Alan Smith installs the vinyl weather seals on a window for the front door of an Allegro Bus. **9** Adam McGuire carefully drills holes in the trim ring for a 14 × 22½-inch window. **10** John Lard installs the window handle with latch on one of the sliding glass panels. A moving part which adds rigidity to the window structure, the vertical handle bar is made from hardened metal. **11** John Zahnd inserts the glass and assembles the upper and lower tracks. **12** Justin Mann installs screen in a frame which fits into the inside extruded track of the window (see #3).



1



2



Continued from page 36

that did not leak and allowed the sliding glass to open and close smoothly. When he learned of John Wynne's successful and patented design for radius corner windows, he persuaded the inventor in 1970 to move to northwest Alabama and open a window division in his plant.

For the next two years, John Wynne applied his radius corner technology to successfully create marine windows for SeaLine boats. It was a relatively small operation that supplied windows exclusively for Donaldson's boats. But it was large enough for Bob Tiffin to hear about their success and pay them a visit. Donaldson had no interest in recreational vehicles or supplying Tiffin Motorhomes with windows. But Bob Tiffin quickly came up with a plan. He and John Wynne offered to buy the marine window operation from Donaldson, supply SeaLine with windows at a reasonable price, and expand the operation to serve Tiffin Motorhomes. Donaldson accepted and Wynne Enterprises was born.

Don Lewis from SeaLine came over with the deal to serve as plant manager (see Tiffin Management Team story on page 20). Starting out with only 3,000 SF and five employees, the company produced enough windows to take care of both customers. One year later, John Wynne succumbed to a heart attack. Tiffin bought Wynne's share from his heirs, leaving the name of the company the same to honor the inventor's memory.

Just five years later the company's growth demanded new facilities. Relocating in Colbert Industrial Park in Tusculumbia, Alabama, in a new 10,000 SF building, Wynne Enterprises continued to grow in proportion to the growth at Tiffin Motorhomes as well as new markets that Don Lewis opened. After several more expansions, the company now has 40,000 SF and 35 employees. In addition to its marine window products, Wynne Enterprises builds 800 windows per week for 60 motorhomes. That translates to 1.5 miles of window track every week!

In addition to Don Lewis, who is now general manager, Ben McGuire is plant manager and Ginny Cox serves as bookkeeper, secretary, and receptionist. 

Tiffin Plant Tours

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King's Campers

A Dealer for All Seasons

by Fred Thompson

It was the first weekend in March. Before leaving Tampa that morning, I checked the weather in Wausau, Wisconsin. Low 10°, high 24°. Tampa's high: 77°. I dug out all of my warm clothes (including the thermal underwear) and the heavy coat that I bought for the Breckenridge, Colorado, story a year ago. I looked at pictures of the area on the Internet. Snow plows had the white stuff in piles as high as the rooftops. The week before the mercury plunged to 24 below one night. Can they really sell motorhomes when it's that cold? I wondered.

You bet! Whether it's winter, spring, summer, or fall, Ron Gajewski (pronounced *guy-es'-kee*) and his family sell enough Tiffin Motorhomes to make them one of TMH's top ten dealers. An indoor showroom helps, but the ebullient sales and customer service staff make King's Campers an outstanding dealership.

As Ron told me about his career in the RV industry, he revealed his business philosophy in a nutshell. "I've never disliked any job I've had. I always found ways to make any job fun. And I've tried to pass that on to my kids. If you're not happy in what you are doing, then that unhappiness seeps into your family life

which will ultimately cause serious problems," he said. It was obvious that Ron has successfully passed his philosophy on to everyone in the business. Cheerful contagion! It was fun to just be there. Customers were having a good time talking with the sales team *and* with Bob Tiffin who flew in from Red Bay to give the Open House an extra attraction.

Ron is a hometown product. His dad served on the Wausau police force, retiring when he was 73. Both his mother and grandmother immigrated from Poland. His surname, Gajewski, is derived from a Polish word that means "park ranger," which might explain how he and his wife Mary Lou got into the campground business—we'll get to that in a minute.

Gajewski averred that he is an engineer by education and trade, and a salesman by choice. After studies at Loras College in Dubuque and the Milwaukee School of Engineering, Ron accepted

Ron Gajewski enjoys working with customers to find the exact recreational vehicle that fits their camping lifestyle. Cheryl and Gary Pearson drove through a snow storm from Winnebago, Illinois, and purchased an Allegro Bay FRED 35 TSB.





Front row left-to-right: Connie Frieders (F&I), Teri Sukanen (comptroller), Tammy Gajewski (parts manager), Janice Skidmore (sales), Les Stan-kowski (service manager), Bud Fenner (sales). *Back row left-to-right:* Mark Sukanen(Sales&Web), Mike Gajewski (lot & facilities manager), Mark Gajewski (shop foreman), Ron Gajewski, Shannon Lodholz (sales & parts), John Gajewski (sales manager), Troy Kressel (parts & sales) *Below:* Mike Andes, TMH regional sales manager, discusses the features of a 42-ft. Phaeton with a customer visiting the King's Camper open house.

a position as a draftsman in an aluminum window plant. Six months later he was the assistant plant manager. Then it was on to a steel fabricating plant that manufactured components for bridges. He became plant manager and remained there until 1972. In a side operation, the Gajewskis started selling and renting fold-down campers, pickup tops, and snowmobiles—again, finding a business that was fun and coming to a realization that the recreation industry was his future.

Always alert to new business opportunities, Ron and Mary



Lou saw a need for quality campgrounds in Wisconsin. Ron quit his job with the steel fabricating company and made a \$50 deposit to buy 200 acres from an 80-year-old gentleman-farmer. They wrote the contract on a lined sheet of paper.

“It was a beautiful piece of land,” Ron said reflectively, “with a 40-acre spring-fed lake. It had 10 wilderness campsites (no hook-ups) at the time of the purchase. A year later in 1973 we started developing the campground.”

It quickly became a family project. They developed the campground *around* the trees, taking care never to cut a live tree. “For the first two years, we just worked during the summers and then I got jobs in excavating to tide us over during the winter,” he explained. Eventually, the Gajewskis developed 170 campsites, a bathhouse, tennis courts, a pool, and a camp store.

“In this part of the U.S., the campground business is very good for three months, decent income for six to seven months, and then pretty skimpy through the winter. But we remained open year-round. We would get 10 to 12 campers in the winter who enjoyed snowmobiling,” he continued. “All of the kids helped by mowing, operating the store, dumping the holding tanks, etc. When they had academic or athletic events, we went to watch and support them. I used to tell them, ‘We can’t afford to give you a lot of presents with a *t*, but we can give you a lot of presence with a *c*.’”

Running the campground was a lot like running a farm—dawn to dark, 7 days a week. “We always had a rule of having the main meal each day together. A lot of times, weather permitting, we cooked our meat over a fire-ring just outside our house. I remember one occasion when we had snowmobilers camping with us in the winter, I cooked 12 chickens over a wood fire while my soda froze in the can. It was a great life, we loved it, but we tried to do too much ourselves and eventually just burned out,” he said as his voice trailed off.

The Gajewskis sold the campground and went back to Wausau in 1980 where Ron established an excavating business. The children, John, Mike, and Teri, began leaving home and heading to all points on the compass. John studied business finance and played defensive tackle at the University of Wisconsin–Stevens Point. The team won the national championship in 1987 at the NCAA Division III level. Mike became a very proficient equip-



FROM MR. Martin TO Dad



How far will your Tiffin take you?



TIFFIN MOTORHOMES

WHEREVER YOU GO, WE GO.

ment operator. He attended Northcentral Technical College and studied residential design. Teri was in high school at the time and playing all sports. At the top of her class in high school, she attended St. Norbert's College and majored in accounting. After graduation, Teri began to climb the corporate ladder.

Mike got into racing by working as a pit man. During the season, the stock car owners decided to let the mechanics and the pit men race the cars. The event was a success and they staged several more. Mike won all of the mechanics' races in 1987 and at the end of the season bought the car he had been racing. He was bitten by the bug. With his own organization, Mike competed in racing circuits throughout Wisconsin and neighboring states with substantial success and notoriety.

Before leaving Wausau, Ron gave his RV business to his friend Roger King who was selling used cars and running a junk yard. King started with the the fold-down campers and expanded into travel trailers. But his real success was with tops

for pickup trucks. Roger developed a "crown" logo to go with the name of his business — King's Campers. He became the top dealer in the north central states with people driving hundreds of miles to Wausau to buy from him. His logo with the crown in the middle was on pick-up tops throughout Wisconsin and neighboring states.

King sold the business in 1983 without telling Ron that he wanted out. Ron was livid. "Why didn't you call me?" he asked Roger repeatedly. Roger didn't realize just how intense Ron was about the RVing industry. But the opportunity came again seven years later when Roger called in October 1990 to tell him the current owners wanted to sell. Ron and Mary Lou didn't hesitate. They auctioned off the excavating equipment and prepared to close the deal in less than 60 days with Mike, nephew Mark Gajewski, and Les Stankowski as partners.

Then tragedy struck! On Nov. 11, Mike and his wife Tammy were hit head-on by a drunk driver. Nearly every bone in Mike's body was broken. Tammy had an injured hip that required surgery. The doctors were doubtful Mike would survive. Fully conscious, Mike worried that Tammy was okay, that the deal would go through, and that he would be able to race again.

Not to be denied, in early December the Gajewskis closed the deal in the IC waiting room at the hospital. Mike signed the papers with both arms in casts. Although he was supposed to be laid up for a year, on April 5, 1991, Mike was on the race track in Rockford, Illinois.

"The first two years in business were a struggle," Ron admitted. John graduated from college with a degree in finance and now serves as the company's sales manager. Tammy is the parts manager and the daughter of Les Stankowski who is service manager. Mark Gajewski is shop foreman and customer training coordinator. Mike serves as the lot and facilities manager. "His job is critical to keep product moving through the shop," Ron said.

As the business began to grow and stabilize, Ron and Mary Lou took great pleasure in seeing their family grow. Mike and Tammy now have two boys 11 and 8, while John and Tracy gave them two granddaughters, also 11 and 8. Mary Lou enjoys taking care of the grandchildren while their parents work in the business. Meanwhile, Teri, still climbing the corporate ladder, had her first child, a little girl, in 2001. Noticing how her brothers' children were growing up like brothers and sisters rather than cousins, Teri and Mark Sukanen decided to come home in 2002. Teri is the company's accountant and Mark has become King's Campers number one salesman. Teri and Mark added two more little girls to the grandkid population for a total of seven.

For Ron and Mary Lou, their dream had come full circle—King's Campers now was truly a family business.

"From Day One until now, even though everyone has designated job responsibilities, we all wear many hats," he said. "No one says, 'That's not my job.' We all pitch in whenever and wherever needed."

"At first, we survived the lean winters on the truck camper



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tops. I helped wash and install them. King's Campers became the largest dealer in the nation selling one brand at one location. We were selling 800 tops annually," Ron said. Everytime they sold a camper top, the King's Camper logo with the crown was attached and became a significant part of the company's advertising.

In 1995 King's Campers moved to a new location facing I-39. The building on 1.5 acres required considerable renovation; but with typical Gajewski bravado, they started the move on Friday and opened for business on Monday, March 31, 1995. At first they could display 16 RVs inside and had room for only five service bays. With several building expansions on five acres over the next twelve years, the company now has 14 service bays over 40 feet long and can display 27 units inside.

"At our new location," Ron explained, "we started looking for motorized RVs to add to our product line. We examined 14 manufacturers. Thankfully, with the help of Mike Andes, regional sales manager for TMH, and Bob Tiffin, we decided on Tiffin Motorhomes, which today is still our only Class A product."

King's Campers started with Tiffin in the fall of 1996. Ron revealed that the major reasons for selecting TMH were product quality, price point, and dealer support. "We figured that we would probably sell 20 Allegros (gas units) annually. We were wrong! Today, we are unique among Bob's dealers because we sell far more Allegro Buses (luxury diesel pusher) than any of the other four Tiffin brands. Motorized RVs make up 40 percent of our gross sales," he said. In 2004 the company was the Number One Class A Dealer in Wisconsin.

It is worth noting that 30 to 40 percent of the company's customers come from out of state, business that is generated by referrals from Tiffin coach owners and from non-Tiffin owners who have had their coaches serviced by King's.

Gajewski is quick to acknowledge a goal that is important to TMH. "Our service techs attend a minimum of two schools every winter," he said. The company has eight service technicians, three of whom are fully RVIA certified. Two more are close to getting their certifications.


With two of the company's owners working in service, that department automatically gets top priority. "An RV dealership," Ron pointed out, "will stand or fall based on the quality of its customer service. Les can talk with a customer who is upset and irrational, sometimes wanting and expecting more than is humanly possible. But he can turn a negative situation into a positive outcome, and laugh later about being chewed out."

Ron considers King's Campers one of the best service centers in the Mid-West. The company operates a service truck that is well-equipped with parts, even furnace and refrigerator parts. The technician travels to campgrounds and even private homes where coaches or towables needing service are located. Sometimes, the tech will stay late in the evening to finish a job rather than return there again the next day.

"Anyone who works at King's Campers has to be a camper. If they don't enjoy the lifestyle, they won't be able to really understand the customer's perspective," Ron said. The company

regularly sends employees to the several RV manufacturers they represent to ensure that everyone thoroughly understands how each unit is constructed.

Ron Gajewski has a sales philosophy that he teaches to each person on the sales staff. "We focus on each customer to determine their individual needs. We do not qualify a customer with a form that we fill out. We do it with conversation in a friendly and inoffensive manner. It is important to present to each customer a unit that fits their goals for RVing. You've got to be friendly, happy, and relaxed. The salesperson has to enjoy the RV lifestyle and transfer that enjoyment to the customer. We aren't selling necessities here — we are selling a lifestyle," he said.

"We know that many who come to look are not qualified to buy a motorhome. We unlock and encourage inspection by the customer of any unit they wish to visit. We want them to dream. Some day they may just be able to buy that motorhome. After all, my life has been built by following my dreams," Ron smiled. 



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Tennessee Comfort Food



by Maureen Callahan

No matter where you head in Tennessee today, pork is the favored meat. That popularity probably harkens back to before the Civil War when the state ranked as the nation's number one producer of pork and corn, a fact that quickly earned it the nickname "Hog and Hominy" state. But as much as natives love their pork, usually in the barbecued form, they're also fond of traditional Southern comfort food like casseroles. Made with ingredients found in the pantry, a casserole can be a perfect meal for a family of two with lots of delicious easy-to-reheat leftovers. Or it can be the kind of simple supper that lets you accommodate a growing list of new friends and guests. Because it's Tennessee, you'll definitely want the casserole to feature pork. Here, we're using cured pork and pairing it with potatoes instead of hominy. A rich creamy cheese sauce pulls the two main ingredients together and makes for a hearty main course supper. Pair the casserole with a fresh salad for a complete meal. Oh, and for dessert, you could bring out one of those old familiar Tennessee favorites, Moon Pies or Goo-Goo Clusters.

Southern Ham & Potatoes Au Gratin

Serves 6

- 4 cups peeled, thinly sliced Russet potatoes, about 1¼ lbs
- ½ cup half and half
- ⅓ cup all purpose flour
- 2 cups whole milk
- ½ teaspoon salt
- ½ teaspoon paprika
- ¼ teaspoon dry mustard
- ¼ teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
- 1 cup (4 ounces) shredded extra sharp white cheddar cheese
- 1 cup (4 ounces) diced fontina cheese
- ¼ cup freshly grated Parmesan cheese, divided
- ¼ cup chopped fresh basil
- 2 (8 ounce) packages diced ham
- 1 cup thinly sliced green onion
- 1 cup fresh breadcrumbs
- 2 tablespoons butter

Place the potatoes in a large Dutch oven or stockpot and cover with cold water, about 2 inches above potatoes. Bring to a boil over high heat. Reduce heat to medium and cook, uncovered, until potatoes are tender, about 15–20 minutes. Drain well.

Preheat gas or convection oven to 350°.

Combine half and half and flour in a saucepan; whisk until well blended. Gradually stir in milk and next 4 ingredients (milk through pepper.) Place over medium heat and cook, stirring occasionally, until mixture begins to come to a boil and thicken. Let boil one minute, stirring constantly. Remove from heat and stir in cheddar, fontina, 2 tablespoons Parmesan and basil.

Add half of potatoes to a buttered 3 quart baking dish. Sprinkle half of ham and half of onions evenly over top. Pour half of cheese sauce over potato-ham mixture and repeat layers with remaining potatoes, ham, onions and cheese sauce.

Combine breadcrumbs, remaining 2 tablespoons Parmesan and 2 tablespoons of melted butter. Sprinkle breadcrumb mixture evenly over top of casserole and bake at 350° for 10–12 minutes in a convection oven or until bubbly and lightly browned. Bake for 15–18 minutes in a gas or electric oven.

If you can't find white cheddar cheese, regular cheddar will work just fine. In fact, play around with other varieties of cheese to make this casserole taste different each time.

Nutrition Information per serving: Calories 596 Protein 38 Carbohydrates 31 g; Fat 36 g; Saturated fat 19 g; Monounsaturated fat 10.5g; Polyunsaturated fat 2.2 g; Sodium 673 mg; Cholesterol 147 2mg; Fiber 3 g.

Award winning food writer MAUREEN CALLAHAN studied at Le Cordon Bleu in Paris. A native Floridian, she now resides in Denver, Colorado. · Photography by FRED THOMPSON, Temple Terrace, Florida · Food Styling by CAROLYN BREUER, Tampa, Florida.

Tasting Tennessee: From Moon Pies to Jack Daniels to Barbecue, Tennessee is home to plenty of regional food favorites. If you're looking to sample some of the local cuisine, here's a few things to keep in mind. Although Memphis lays title to being the barbecue capital of the world, barbecue joints are found all over the state with saucy regional differences. In Middle Tennessee counties, pulled pork and ribs come with a tangy vinegar based sauce while in the Western part of the state (Memphis included) the sauce is sweet and tomato based. Looking for a sweet treat? Nashville is home to Goo Goo Clusters, those generous mounds of chocolate stuffed with peanuts, marshmallows, and caramel. Moon Pies and Little Debbie Snack cakes, while national these days, were birthed in Chattanooga.

Make it Light: For a casserole with less fat and calories, substitute reduced fat milk for the whole milk and half and half. Use 2% milk extra sharp reduced fat cheddar cheese in place of all the cheese. (You can also replace the butter in the breadcrumb topping with olive oil. It won't change the calories. It will, however, help lower the amount of saturated fat.)

Intellitec, Ford, Tiffin and Aqua-Hot List Recalls

The following is a list of recalls pertaining to Tiffin Motorhomes units. **Please do not attempt any of these repairs yourself.**

NHTSA # 05V-307 Changeover Box—On certain motorhomes containing a 50-amp transfer switch built by Intellitec, the material used for the wire lugs was changed from nickel plated to copper lugs. The copper lugs are softer than the nickel plated and do not retain the torque of the screw that clamps the wire connector. Models involved: Some, but not all 2005 Allegros, 2005 Bays, 2005 and 2006 Buses, 2005 Phaetons, 2005 Zephyrs.


NHTSA # 03V-149 Ford Brake Indicator Light—Exists in certain 2000 to 2004 model Allegros and Allegro Bays manufactured on the Ford F53 Chassis between August 1999 to June 2003. In these affected units the indicator light for low fluid or brake problems may not illuminate which could fail to warn you about serious brake problems. This could result in brake system failure and a crash without warning.

NHTSA # 05V-145 Potential Movement of Washer/Dryer—Specific 2005 Tiffin units containing washer/dryer have the potential for movement.

NHTSA # 05V-268 Hydro-Hot—Burner tube needs to be replaced. Aqua-Hot Heating Systems is responsible for repairs, so please call 800-685-4298. The years involved are vehicles manufactured September 2002 thru March of 2005.

If you are concerned that your unit could possibly be under any of these recalls or any Tiffin Service Bulletin, please call us with your vehicle identification number and we will check for you. 256-356-8661 ext.2302

NASHVILLE *Continued from page 19*

of attention in the center of the state. It is home to the country music stars of the past, present and future and a siren song to those who revere them. From the boisterous banjo of Uncle Dave Macon in the 1920s and 30s to Hank Williams in the 1950s to Charlie Daniels in the 1970s to Garth Brooks in the 1990s to an entirely new generation of country stars in the new millennium, country music still permeates Nashville to its very soul. It is a city of hospitality and hot licks with a song that never ends. 

Next we go over the use of the major appliances: the refrigerator, furnace, hot water heater, and the cooktop and microwave. While discussing the manual for the refrigerator, the trainer opens the doors and leaves them open while he continues to talk. He does it nonchalantly so that the two-minute alarm will go off while he is talking. He explains the refrigerator's diagnostics. From the outside, the trainer makes sure the owner understands the importance of keeping the mechanisms for the furnace, hot water heater, and the refrigerator clean and free of debris—for example, keeping bugs out of the burner tubes of the hot water heater, screens to keep dirt doobers out of the vents for the furnace, etc.

Most owners have microwaves at home, so we don't spend a lot of time on them. After demonstrating how simple it is to light the gas burners, we also show how to clean the orifice if it gets clogged with a spill.

During the training session, we have the owner put chemicals in the black tank for the first time (if they are planning to use the coach immediately). We emphasize that they must use toilet paper made specifically for RVs—leave the Charmin at home. We point out that you have to keep the black tank valve closed when you are hooked up in a campground. Many incorrectly assume that when you flush the toilet, waste goes directly into the hooked up sewer line.

When we reach the cockpit, the first training exercise is the jacks. Whether it's Atwood or HWH, we make sure that the owner practices the leveling procedure two or three times after our instruction. If HWH, we instruct on how to check the hydraulic fluid and emphasize that they should use clear fluid.

Emergency window exits could save a life. The owner learns how to open them, and then close and reattach the windows. We go through this procedure for all emergency exits.

Detectors: LP, CO, and Smoke. We demonstrate what the warning sounds are, how to reset, and how to check the batteries. You get a persistent beep when the battery is low.

The cockpit is a major training place. Participation is definitely a must here. We teach and demonstrate, but the owner must do all procedures and show proficiency. For example, we show the owner how to check the oil in the transmission (i.e., push both arrows to check the oil level, temp, etc.) If he gets a "LOC 7" code, then it shows that the transmission has not been on long enough to get a reading.

We demo the use of the in-dash computer and then have the owner use it until he understands its use and functionality.

Understanding how to use the parking brake on a diesel pusher is critical since it is totally different from an automobile. We emphasize that after bringing the coach to a stop, you press the Neutral selector, and then pull the big yellow knob up to set the brake. On the FRED, the parking brake is simply one of the buttons on the dash-mounted gear selector, so after coming to a stop, you go directly to the PB button from the drive gear position. On gas-burners, you move the gear selector to Park and set the brake with a foot pedal. We demonstrate the correct

procedures and then require the new owner to practice.

For those who have owned several coaches, the training period may take only 2–3 hours. For first-time owners, it may take 8 hours. If we cut it short, we know we will have a lot of phone calls, so it is better to take sufficient time during the training session.

When we are through, we always tell the owner: contact us first before you contact Tiffin's service techs. This gives us a chance to see how good a job we did in the training session and another chance to bond with our customer.

Thanks, Mark, for developing and implementing a very good owner training program. I would like to add a few points which may be useful to our new owners at some time in the future. In our magazine, you will find a wallet-size insert card listing all of the service numbers to call. Please make special note that the contacts for our chassis manufacturers are available 24/7.

Tire pressure is different on every coach. Both of our suppliers use a maximum cold pressure as the recommended inflation. However, after you get your coach loaded, you should go to the scales and have it weighed front and rear, and then deflate the tires according to the manufacturer's chart. This will take a little time, but give you a much better ride. Generally, a tire will lose a little pressure over time; 5 to 10 lbs. of pressure loss will make a big difference in the tire's longevity and the eventual breakdown of the sidewalls. Tire manufacturers recommend that you check the tire pressure every day while you are traveling.

Owners should check oil levels before starting the engine. Next check the coolant level while the engine is cold. On a Freightliner chassis, you should check the recovery tank. If the chassis manufacturer furnishes a radiator cap, then the coolant level needs to be checked *in* the radiator. If the coolant gets below the vacuum point in the radiator, you could ruin your engine. The coolant must be at the top of the flue. Ford and Workhorse chassis have radiator caps. Rear engine diesels have recovery reservoirs only. The front engine in the Freightliner has a radiator cap. Of course, other fluid levels need to be checked at regular intervals, but engine oil and coolant are the most important.

Be sure to check all marker lights and turn signal lights at regular intervals — at least once a week while you are traveling.

If you tow a vehicle or trailer, you should check the ball regularly to be sure the nut is tight. I recommend that you spot weld it to prevent it from coming loose. Never tow without safety chains that are attached to the car and the tow hitch. Leave some slack in the chains to make turns, but tighten the chain enough so that the tow bar will not hit the ground if it becomes detached from the ball.

If you are driving a diesel pusher, make certain that the generator in the front cap is securely latched. If it isn't and you hit the brakes hard, then your generator is going to shoot forward and possibly damage its mooring to the rails.

Rear-end diesels *cannot be towed*. You must have a "low boy" haul your coach in order to prevent damage to the front cap. You can

attach cables to the front or rear axles to winch it onto the low boy. If you get stuck, you must know where the attachment points are for pulling it out. The cables must be attached to the axle or the frame. Do not attach cables to the front generator frame. It will jerk the whole generator assembly right out of the coach.

What happens if you lose air pressure? When it gets below 40 psi, your rear air brakes will lock up. Get the coach off the road. You can drive it a few feet without damage. Call road service and they will know how to fix the line or divert the line to build air pressure. As you lose air pressure, the motorhome will start slowing down. If you are in a one-lane construction situation on the interstate, slow down to 5 mph and disregard the blowing horns. The brakes will get warm, but will not flame.

When you accept delivery of your coach, the dealer's technician needs to spend at least an hour training you to use the television, DVD and/or CD players, surround sound, and IF repeaters.

As Mark pointed out, you need to understand thoroughly how the slide-outs work, and how they can be manually retracted in the event of motor failure. Remember that the leveling jacks should be down before you deploy the slides. Be sure you understand how the jacks function with the ignition switch. If the jacks will not deploy, you can still use the slide-outs if it is comfortable to walk around inside the coach.

With the dealer's tech nearby, be sure to practice extending and retracting the awnings. Locate and check all of the fuses and relays. Practice implementing the wind sensor setting with its three levels of sensitivities. Window awnings are all manually deployed.

If you are driving an Allegro Bus or Zephyr, be sure you understand how the Hydro-Hot system works in conjunction with the heat pumps in the roof ACs. Most of the heat pumps will operate down to 28°F at which point the Hydro-Hot comes on automatically. You may choose to activate the Hydro-Hot at a temperature well above 28°.

It is extremely important that you correctly attach the coach's power cord to the campground's receptacle. *Before you connect*, turn off the campground's breaker to the receptacle. Most campgrounds use electric stove receptacles which were not designed to be used repeatedly. The receptacle gets sloppy in its fit and in some cases the neutral is lost going into the motorhome. Most people press the motorhome's plug in at an angle, allowing both 110v lines to touch before the neutral is in place. That delivers 240v right into the motorhome. Since electricity cycles at 60/sec, it only takes two cycles or 1/30 second to burn up your TV, inverters, microwave, etc. By shutting the power off at the breaker and seating the motorhome's plug flush with the face of the receptacle, you will avoid this mishap. When breaking camp, turn off the breaker first. TMH does not recommend surge protectors because third party vendors almost invariably fail to wire them properly.

I hope these guidelines for taking delivery of one of our new coaches will be helpful to both owners and dealers. Until next time, keep on *roughing it smoothly* with Tiffin. **RIS**

TIFFIN MANAGEMENT TEAM *Continued from page 21*

with Bob Tiffin, then something's wrong with you," he said.

Tiffin and Lewis do have a common passion. "We're both car nuts," he laughed. "I do Fords and Chevys. I have a '34 Ford Victoria which I restored and made into a street rod. It has a 350 Chevy engine." For the uninitiated, a street rod has a restored exterior (for the most part) with late model running gear (AC, PS, PB, stereo, and radio). The restoration and customization required two years. "Most of the parts are polished stainless steel. It looks as nice underneath as it does on the outside."

Lewis bought a '35 Chevy Phaeton in 1998 that he's still working on. "I've had it apart twice. Now it's back together and I'm ready to paint it. This is a nights and weekend hobby. You can invest a lot of time," he admitted. Lewis's "hobby" is housed in a building with five stalls. He also has a 1955 Chevy Bel Aire 2-door hardtop with just 39,000 original miles and a 1990 Nissan 300ZX with only 8,000 miles. But you should know that *before* he built his "hobby house," he built Jackie a beautiful home 7 years ago out near the hill where he grew up and across the street from Mars Hill Bible School. Jackie serves on the school's board of directors and continues to operate a very successful accounting practice.

How does one acquire the knowledge and skill to do restorations? "I just jumped in and did it. When I was in high school, I had to maintain my own car. We even rebuilt engines. You just do it and learn," he insisted.

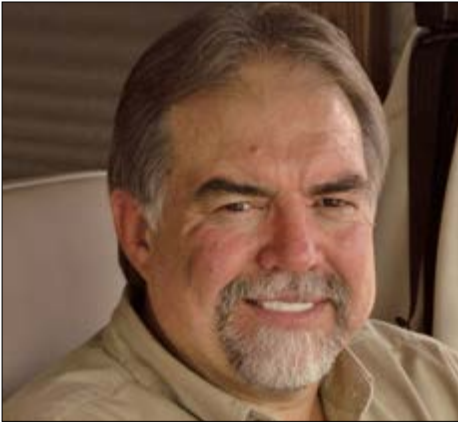
With all the time that Lewis invests in his job and car restorations, he and Jackie still find time to travel. "We did a western Mediterranean cruise in June and visited Ireland in September," he said. So far the couple has done five Caribbean cruises and traveled to almost every state in the union. In their motorhome? "Nope, cars are my thing," he smiled. **RIS**

OWNER PROFILE *Continued from page 23*

lodge on Cooke's Inlet, then used the camp's old International truck and drove an hour to a beautiful river where we caught 45 pounds of salmon and trout dressed out," he recalled. The brothers also have fished for northern pike in Ontario where Dale caught a 32-inch specimen that put up quite a fight. Last year they fished for cut throat trout in Jackson Hole, Wyoming.

In Bowron Provincial Park in British Columbia, they canoed in total isolation for five and a half days on a 72-mile trip. No phones, no communication at all. "If you don't show up at the end of six days, they'll come looking for you," he laughed. The area is heavily populated with grizzlies, brown bear, and moose. On that trip a moose came through their camp one evening. "We saw him coming across the lake, filmed it, and then climbed trees to stay out of his way. Moose can sometimes be more aggressive than a grizzly," he said.

So really, what do Dale and Connie like most about retirement? "Waking up in the morning, not having to get dressed, and lounging around in our PJs while we have breakfast," he grinned. It's the simple things that make life great! **RIS**



Inman's Answers

As the editor of "Serious Tech Talk," Danny Inman, 32-year veteran with Tiffin Motorhomes, invites your questions.

Please use the postcard and send Danny your questions about your motorhome and its operation, especially those questions that may be useful to all of our readers. Address your letter to:

Danny Inman
 Roughing It Smoothly
 PO Box 292912
 Tampa, FL 33637-2912

Danny would also like to hear your ideas, suggestions, and innovations that would make our motorhomes more useful and functional. If you have a photograph to send, please put the postcard and photo in an envelope and send it to the same address. Please send a SASE if you would like for us to return your photographs, disk files, and manuscript.

We look forward to seeing this column grow larger with each issue. For *answers to urgent questions and problems*, call the Parts and Service number at 256-356-0261.

Dear Danny . . .

We have a 2004 Allegro Bus which we enjoy. When we are using the furnace, it cycles with about a 10 second off period. I have shielded the rear sensor from the outside, and I have directed the heat from the vent at the foot of the bed to a downward direction.

Nothing has changed the short off cycle. The outside temperature does not change the short off period. Has TMH changed the placement of the sensor? Is there anything that can be done to fix this problem? What can we do on our own to correct this problem?

This is our third Tiffin motorhome; the other two had normal cycles.

Richard Heavner
 Cumberland, Maryland

Dear Richard,
 The placement of the thermostat may not be the problem. It could also be the high temperature limit switch inside the furnace. This switch prevents the furnace from overheating due to airflow restriction. To check this you must bypass the thermostat at the furnace. If the shut down still occurs, check airflow coming out of the furnace and change the limit switch.

Just read your column in volume 3, number 4. I have a similar problem to Mr. Dubrawski's on my 1993 Allegro Bay, P-chassis. On curvy roads, it is hard to control the steering. It feels like the front end is trying to tuck under. Where do you get the heavy duty springs and air bags? None of the Chevy dealers around here know about them.

George S. Cameron
 Enid, Oklahoma

Dear George,
 The heavy duty coil springs are an after-market product from the same company that makes the springs for the Chevrolet chassis. Our parts department at Tiffin will be able to help you with these new springs.

I have a 2003 Allegro Bus, 40 GP. We had to purchase two new batteries in April 2006 for the engine. Bob Tiffin told me that we needed to keep a 12-volt charger working when not using or driving the motorhome. He stated that there are too many items tied to the two 12-volt batteries, which is why we were not able to start the engine. What is the best way to do this?

Bob stated that the new motorhomes have corrected this problem. Unfortunately, I had to buy two new batteries.

Edward Polash
 Flemington, New Jersey

Dear Edward,
 We have corrected these problems on newer motorhomes by adding battery disconnect switches for both the engine and house batteries when storing your motorhome for long periods of time. Also we have added a charging device that will trickle charge the engine batteries when you are plugged in to shore power. This item can be added to any motorhome.

I see a lot of advertising in all of the magazines about increasing horsepower and economy via after-market chips, larger exhausts, transmission controllers, etc.

I am totally happy with my coach. But if one wanted to increase horsepower and economy, is there one brand or addition that you would recommend?

I have a Phaeton with 330 CAT, 6-speed Allison automatic, Freightliner chassis.

Edward McFall
 Payson, Arizona

Dear Edward,
 This would be a question better answered by the chassis and engine manufacturer. I am not familiar with the after-market add-ons. When you increase horsepower you also increase heat buildup and sometimes the cooling system would also have to be upgraded when making these changes.

I received my first *Roughing It Smoothly* magazine. Great magazine! My "Tech Talk" question is: I have a 2006 Allegro 34 WA. What can I not use in the motorhome when I plug into a house current outlet with a 15-amp breaker?

Dwight Caler
 Capshaw, Alabama

Dear Dwight,
 You can use everything except your air conditioner and the microwave oven.

These questions pertain to my 1998 Allegro Bus.

1. Can the following items be left on while traveling: generator, water pump, water heater, AC systems, furnace?
2. Is there any way for me to operate my coffeemaker while in transit?
3. When traveling in cold climates, how can we insulate our water system to prevent pipes from bursting?
4. Are there other measures I should take while traveling in cold climates?

Pat Bumgardner
 Hattiesburg, Mississippi

Dear Pat,
 1. All of these items can be used while traveling in your motorhome.
 2. No, I would not recommend this. A pot of hot coffee in your coffeemaker could be dangerous if you had to stop quickly or swerve to avoid something in the road.
 3. Most of the water lines in your motorhome are above floor level. If your motorhome is above freezing on the inside, these water lines

will be ok. If you are running your furnace while traveling, it will also heat the holding tank area.

4. When you have your LP system filled for use in extremely cold weather, be sure to add alcohol to the system to prevent freeze ups in the LP regulator.

5. Also, it is a good idea to carry a back-up heat source such as an electric heater in case of furnace problems or if you are not able to get LP gas when you need it.

My wife and I have a 1990 31-ft. Allegro and love everything about it. But we have one recurring problem: the front and rear fiberglass caps get a chalky white film on them, as if the paint has oxidized. I have tried numerous remedies: compounds, buffing, waxes — but to no avail. The best temporary solution is ArmourAll, but that only lasts a few days at best. The only time it is exposed to weather is when we are on the road. Otherwise, it is parked inside.

Can you suggest any alternatives besides repainting? This has been going on for the whole nine years that we have owned this coach.

Bill & Cathy Holt
Merrill, Michigan

Dear Bill & Cathy,

This has been a problem on older motorhomes with the dark colored gelcoat on the front and rear caps. The compounds and buffing will help for short times, but the only real fix for the problem would be paint. (Sorry)

I own a 2001 Allegro. When I pulled the hood release inside the unit, it came off in my hand. Fellow RVers helped me open the hood but it will not close again. How can I get the release cable replaced? Do I go to a Ford dealer, an RV dealer, or can I do it?

Paulette Meeks
Largo, Florida

Dear Paulette,

The hood release cable is a product that we put on at Tiffin Motorhomes, and can be ordered from our parts department. This item is not that complicated to install, but it is rather difficult to get under the dash to run the new cables.

Reader Response

Congratulations on being with the same fine company for 32 years. I had heard good things for years about Tiffin Motorhomes and the company's service attitude. In February 1988, I met you at the RV Show in Kansas City where I looked at many motorhomes. Your pleasant manner and frankness caused me to visit Red Bay. At that time, the plant was much smaller and I was allowed to tour the production line unescorted. When I returned to Liberty, Missouri, I traded for a 27-ft Allegro.

At about 100,000 miles I had the radiator checked, installed a new water pump, rebuilt the carb, engine, and transmission, put in new U-joints, and had the differential lube checked and replaced.

The rig still looks good (some TLC applied) and I am very proud of it.

Kenneth Hunt
Clinton, Missouri

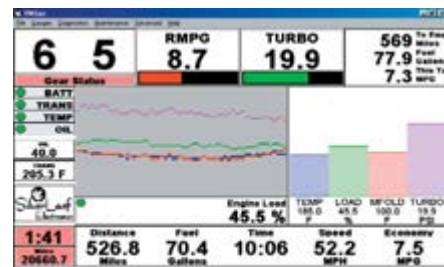


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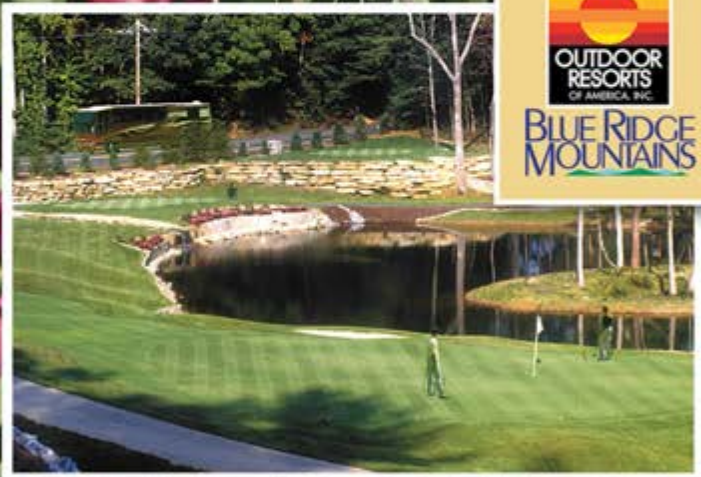
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The Life and Times of Tiffin Motorhome Owners

From Arvada, Colorado

Dear Mr. Tiffin,

My wife and I have been keeping notes on our 2006 Allegro Bay 38TDB with three slides and a gas engine. We purchased it at the show in Denver in August 2005. We spent eight hours one day at the show and returned the next day for four more. We looked at everything and every price range. We kept going back to your Allegro Bay which was exhibited by Century RV in Longmont, Colorado. They were extremely helpful. We had never been in a motorhome, much less driven one.

We kept it at the Longmont location for a month so we could have several “walk-throughs” and practice driving before taking final delivery. After we developed enough confidence and experience in driving it, we left Denver and drove up to Tiger Run RV Resort in Breckenridge at 9,000 feet and stayed from September 29 to June 1. We had quite a learning curve as you can imagine.

When we checked in, we were told we had to skirt the motorhome, heat trace our water hose, and insulate our sewer hose. The skirting is made of 2-inch thick “blueboard” in 8-foot lengths. We cut each piece to fit from the bottom of the basement to the cement pad. The heat trace is a heated wire tape that we wrapped around the water hose followed by one inch of pipe insulation. We also wrapped the sewer hose with pipe insulation and that was the extent of our cold weather preparation.

We kept the motorhome at a minimum of 65 degrees all winter. Breckenridge received more snow that season than any similar period over the last 20 years. There were a few nights when the temperature dipped to -17° and -29° . We never had any cold weather problems at all due to the double pane windows.

The people at Century RV were very helpful when we called with basic questions. Leonard, who heads up the maintenance and parts department, was very helpful to us.

During our eight-month stay at Tiger Run RV Resort we continuously received compliments on how our coach looked, especially from one gentleman who owned a new Prevost. Another gentleman who owned a Dutch Star was amazed at the size of our bedroom and the two chairs in it. Everyone we talked with had great praise for the Tiffin name. One person we met sold Monacos and he said, “You bought yourselves a great product and they really stand behind it.”

At different campgrounds we have met people with numerous motorhome problems, even new motorhomes. But we haven’t met any Tiffin owners with any real problems.

As I write this letter, we are back at Tiger Run in Breckenridge for another winter season. At the end of last summer, two of our windows had a milky appearance, so we made an appointment



Frank and Dee Hoelzle enjoy a warm day in March with Yeti as the snow begins to melt.

with Century RV and they replaced them and made a few other minor adjustments that we requested. All of this was done in a very professional and timely manner. We think they deserve a “pat on the back.”

We are living in our Allegro Bay full time; it is our house on wheels. We got a Samoyed puppy in December 2005 and now he is 82 pounds. He travels very well in the motorhome since he grew up in it. As you can tell, we are very satisfied with our Tiffin motorhome. We have heard numerous stories as to how you treat your customers and we thought you might like to hear from two very satisfied ones.

When we are down your way, we will stop in and would love to have one of those famous factory tours that you offer!

Sincerely,

Frank and Dee Hoelzle and Yeti (the dog)

From the Sun Coast Allegro Club, Tampa, Florida

My husband and I belong to the Sun Coast Allegro Club #152. Though we have all been to some great places in the U.S., I think our best surprise as a club occurred on a trip to Rally Park in Seffner, Florida. Many folks may be aware that Rally Park is associated with Lazy Days, a large RV sales center. So when you stay at Rally Park, you not only get a free newspaper at your site,



Sun Coast Allegros, Chapter 152, unexpectedly met Bob Tiffin at Lazy Days while they were enjoying a Florida vacation in January at Rally Park.

breakfast and lunch, 50-amp service, pool, WIFI, rec hall, etc., you also have plenty of opportunity to look at the new Tiffin Motorhomes at Lazy Days.

On our trip in January while at Lazy Days, we unexpectedly met Bob Tiffin! We invited him back to our campsite for a group photo and were pleased that he took the time to visit with us and talk about the new Tiffin coaches. We had 11 coaches in our camp out.

The Allegro club is a great way to meet new people, see new places, and spend time in your RV. Though we were hesitant to join, we are glad we did. I'm proud to say that at the end of our first year as a chapter, the Sun Coast Allegros as a club did several projects:

- a box of toys to Toys for Tots
- blankets, food, towels, and toys to the animal shelter
- a box of school supplies to be used for kids who cannot afford some of their own materials
- \$250 to Mary Martha House. (Provides interim housing for displaced women and children.)

We love the magazine,
Jeanie Lynch - Secretary

From Bend, Oregon

On our trip from Oregon to New England, we found several places that we put on our "favorite list."

Sauder Village in Archbold, Ohio, provided a historical look into the past. Artisans were using period tools and materials to make baskets, barrels, weaving, and printing. The museum has excellent displays and a fabric shop. An on-site campground is reasonably priced and accommodating.

Castle-in-the-Clouds near Moultonborough, New Hampshire, offered an interesting look at a home built in the early 1900s with many conveniences ahead of the time. The well-kept mansion overlooks Winnepesaukee Lake. Recreational vehicles should turn into a bus parking lot rather than go to the main gate.

Watkins Glen State Park in Watkins Glen, New York, at the south end of Seneca Lake offers at no charge a walk through 19 waterfalls. It is a gorgeous one mile walk with every step yielding a different view.

Dave and Bev King

From Huntsville, Texas

We purchased a new 2007 Tiffin Allegro and were surprised to find a blow-up mattress in place of the standard hide-a-bed. I wrote Mr. Bob Tiffin regarding my concern. He responded to me within three days and our hide-a-bed was shipped and installed promptly. He went the second mile to ensure that we were satisfied with our new coach.

My sincere thanks,
Mrs. James Alexander

From Titusville, Florida

This past summer we stopped in Dickinson, North Dakota, to spend a casual day driving down the "Enchanted Highway" (www.enchantedhighway.net). After all, that's why we're choosing to be full-timers.

We were surprised to find the town of Medora to the west of Dickinson that offered the "Pitchfork Fondue" and a musical for some unusual entertainment. The fondued ribeye steaks were great and the people marvelous!

Alice Starling

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