

Roughing It Smoothly®



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- The Oregon Coast
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NEW FOR 2008

Tiffin Upgrades Entertainment Centers with Cutting Edge HD Technology

SPECIAL

Tiffin Adds 36 QSH to Phaeton Line



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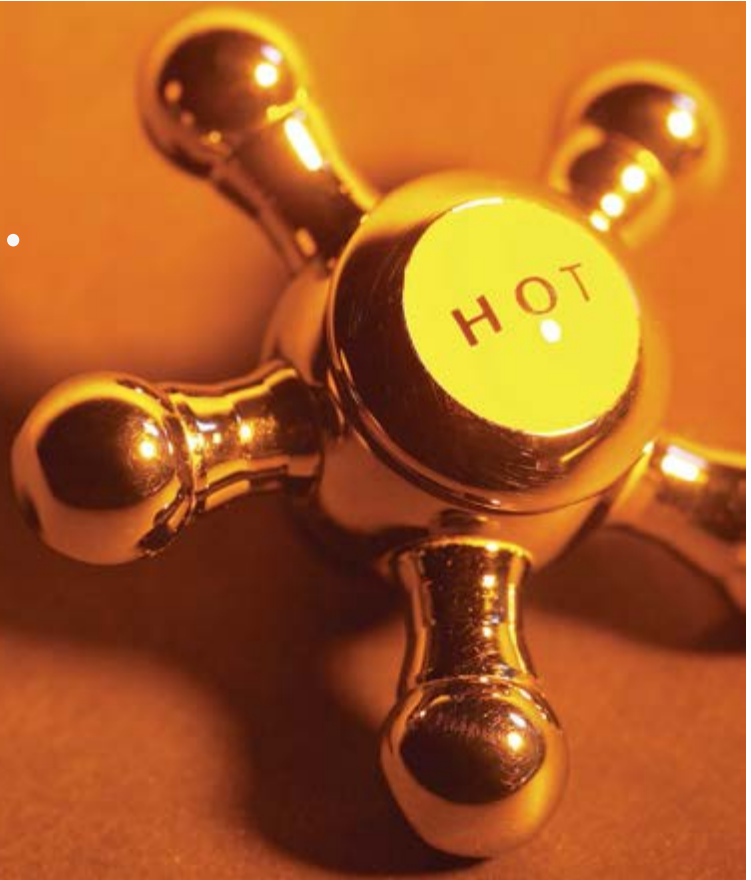
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Roughing it Smoothly®

July 2007

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Editor's Note

The July 2007 issue features stories from both the Atlantic and Pacific coasts: Maine and Oregon. Acadia National Park and the Oregon coast provide some of the most beautiful scenery America has to offer.

Staying close to home, we are running a feature about saving a small American town: Tusculumbia, Alabama, and its very beautiful municipal Spring Park. You also will not want to miss New for 2008 to learn about the new features Tiffin is offering in all five brands.

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.

Building Top Management at Tiffin

by Bob Tiffin

As many of you know, Judy and I have three sons: Tim, Van, and Lex. Neither of us had reached our twentieth birthday when we married in 1961. Tim was born a year later in 1962 and then Van in 1966. Lex came along nine years later in 1975. The way Judy and I raised our three sons was shaped to a great degree by the training we received from our parents.

At a personal level, I was very fortunate. My mother, Katie, was a strong woman who carefully guided the rearing of three children, and my father, Alex, was a man with amazing business skills who taught each of us leadership. Together they formed a solid family from which their three children—myself, David, and Beulah—were nurtured in faith, how to work, how to serve, and how to get along well with everyone. Judy came from a very similar background. Her grandfather was a minister. She and her siblings each learned a strong work ethic and have all had successful careers.

So from the beginning, Judy and I had a pattern and wonderful examples to follow in raising our boys. Daddy started Tiffin Supply Company a year before I was born. In my early teens I began to work under his watchful eye and coaching. He was a great teacher—patient, understanding, and most often teaching by example. When he thought I was ready to take on more responsibility, I got the job. Daddy knew how important it was to look our customers in the eye, remember them by name, and give them personal service. Any company could sell our products, but it was the personal interest and excellent customer service that made Tiffin Supply become a very competitive company in its region.

DEAN DIXON PHOTOGRAPHY

L to R: Van, Bob, Lex, and Tim Tiffin.

Red Bay was still a rural farming community forty years ago when we decided to get into the cotton business. Daddy put me in charge of a state-of-the-art cotton gin that could produce 10 bales per hour. With Tim and Van in tow, Judy came to the gin every day and kept the records as we bought cotton from the farmers, ginned and baled it, and sold it to warehouses in our area. It was a lot of responsibility for a couple our age. But Daddy matched responsibility to ability—age didn't matter if you could handle the job competently. Under his leadership, we gained tremendous experience. Looking back over the years, I have come to realize the great confidence he had in me and that made me respond with every ounce of effort I could muster. It was a lesson I never forgot.

A severe drought in the summer of 1972 ruined the cotton crop and a new warehouse we had built was empty. Two RV plants just over the line in Mississippi had been regular Tiffin Supply customers before they closed down that summer. I had serviced those accounts for Tiffin Supply and was confident that we could build motorhomes and make a go of it. A labor supply was available. Page Chevrolet in Red Bay had 12 motorhome chassis they were stuck with. Looking over my very simple business plan, Daddy and a few investors said, "Go for it." I was 30 and our sons were 10 and seven.

Just as Daddy had trained me and given me a new level of responsibility whenever he thought I was ready, I wanted to give Tim, Van, and Lex the same experience. While in secondary school, they received their first work experiences at Tiffin Supply and then later at Tiffin Motorhomes.

Tim graduated in 1984 with a degree in marketing. Van finished his college degree in public relations in 1988, and Lex came on board in 1998. All three attended the University of Alabama in Tuscaloosa.

Tim worked summers loading and unloading trucks in shipping and receiving and later made appointments for customers who were coming in for service. When he got out of college, I was doing the purchasing and decided to have him learn that part of the business first. I gave him several accounts to handle including the AC units. He did such a good job that I soon turned nearly all of the purchasing accounts over to him. Tim watched the decisions that were being made each day and how we made them.

Van launched his career here at TMH in customer service. Having studied public relations in college, he had a great empathy with our customers and quickly began translating customer ideas and suggestions into new designs for our motorhomes.

When we built our new office building, we designed our three offices as separate rooms, but adjoining so that we could easily speak to one another without leaving our desks. For the next decade, Tim, Van, and I grew this business together. Tim and Van had a lot of good ideas about how to develop the company, but we never lost sight of the customer. They know you can't run a business without customers.

Lex joined the company in 1998 and immediately began to

develop the Quality Assurance Department. His patience and good listening skills quickly get to the bottom of problems and find solutions. Lex has set the tone with department managers that the QA team is not a watch dog. They are problem solvers.

As time went forward, I let Tim and Van make important decisions affecting the course that the company was taking. But there is one essential key that makes our management system work: we do not make an important decision without all four of us agreeing on it. You cannot run a family business without all members agreeing. Otherwise, infighting will inevitably cause failure. We have seen companies go down the tubes because the second generation couldn't get along.

Tim assumed the general manager's role at TMH in 1998, which was fine with Van and Lex because Tim had been here the longest. However, in practice they are all three co-managers. Neither of us tries to "lord it over" the other. If there is an issue, we discuss our options and agree on the best course of action.

In January 1998, Tim and Van visited several dealers and were surprised that TMH's designs and floorplans did not compare favorably with their competitors. When they returned, Van said, "We are going to do everything we can to make our motorhomes sell competitively."


From that time forward, Tim and Van began to make changes in how our products looked with regard to exterior and interior design. At that time we had the Allegro Bus, the Allegro Bay, and the Allegro. Van wanted to introduce the Zephyr to learn how to build a top-of-the-line luxury coach, and then let those features filter down into the other product lines.

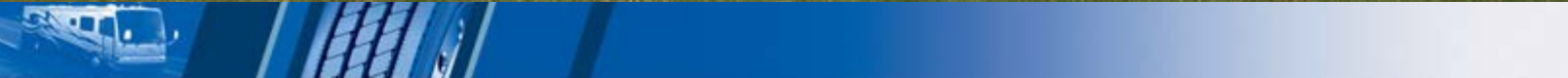
Today it would be really difficult to separate the roles of Tim, Van, and Lex. Their areas of responsibility constantly overlap and complement each other. For example, while Lex has a major responsibility in overseeing the quality of each coach, Van has the job of planning with the engineers and putting together the motorhome in a way that you *can* build quality into the unit. Otherwise, you can build something that looks good, but it doesn't have quality that can be maintained.

Tim and Van work hand-in-hand to build motorhomes that look good, have customer-demanded features, and demonstrate continuous improvement year after year.

We have a unique company as far as management goes. All four of us have as top priority taking care of our customers and building a motorhome that is as trouble-free as possible.

The question keeps coming up, "Has anyone tried to buy out Tiffin Motorhomes?" And the answer is "Yes, in the last two years." But be assured that none of us is interested in working for someone else. If that were so, I never would have started this company. Over the next three columns, I want to explain more in depth the role and responsibilities of Tim, Van, and Lex, and how the ideas and contributions of each have made Tiffin Motorhomes a successful company.

In closing, I never want to let it go unsaid when we talk about the success of Tiffin Motorhomes: "We are where we are today because the Lord has blessed us richly." 



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Phaeton's Success Story Continues with the 36 QSH

by Fred Thompson

Last year after Phaeton became America's No. 1 Class A diesel pusher, Tiffin Motorhomes capitalized on the coach's popular 40-foot floorplans by appealing to a broader market with the 42 QRH which began shipping in December. Now, going in the other direction to attract buyers who want the 40-foot coaches' features in a more compact version, the company announced in April its four-slide 36 QSH, built on a Freightliner chassis with a 360-hp ISC Cummins power plant.

With a base price differential of \$40,000 between the 36 QSH and the 42 QRH, demand for the new floorplan is expected to be strong. In a slightly more compact design, the newly introduced model retains all of the key features of its bigger brothers, including the Xantrex inverter with automatic genstart, the 32-inch Panasonic HDTV, the galley Expand-an-Island, the inlaid wood panels on the four-door refrigerator, the double lavatories, power sun visors, fully powered Ultra-Leather™ driver and passenger chairs (including a power foot rest for the latter), pas-

senger-side Ultra-Leather™ DE Sofa, the eye-level 32-inch Panasonic HDTV built into a hutch-pantry, fully tiled living room and galley, and the very popular built-in clothes hamper.

Based on customer requests, the side sun shades are now standard. Opaque shades, which can be retracted with a slight tug on the bottom edge bar, have replaced the privacy curtains which formerly covered the driver and passenger windows and the door window. The windshield privacy shade is power operated from the driver's console and also doubles as a full-windshield sun shade while in transit.

All Phaetons come with full body paint which is covered in the base price. The 2008 36 QSH reviewed for this feature offers the paint schemes Silver Sand, NASA, and Sunlit Sand. The interior decoration packages are Kona, Laguna, and Patina. Examining the infra-structure, owners will be pleased to know that the tank capacities for fresh water and black and grey waste are identical to larger versions of the Phaeton.

With only \$15,400 in options, the test coach was built with an HD-ready King Dome automatic satellite dish, automatic entry door awning, two 32-inch HD-ready TVs (one over the dash and another in the exterior galley slide-out), aluminum wheel covers, an exterior slide-out storage tray extendable from either side, Hadley air horns (the 18-wheelers won't overlook this coach!), a window awning package, chrome mirrors, side cameras activated by the turn signal, free-standing dinette with built-in cabinets, stacked washer and dryer, Ultra-Leather™ Air Coil Hide-A-Bed™ by Flexsteel, and the Select Comfort mattress.

The Air Coil Hide-A-Bed unfolds like a standard hide-a-bed sofa. It has two segments: a four-inch inflatable mattress supported by a four-inch inner-coil spring system assembled together in a very attractive padded mattress cover.

Tiffin designers continue to win kudos with the Medium Alderwood cabinetry introduced last summer. Included in the standard base price, it was ordered in over 75 percent of the 2007 Phaetons. Natural Maple and Cherry Bark are also available as cabinetry options.

If some owners are a little uncomfortable driving the longer coaches, the 36 QSH will certainly remove that concern. In addition, it may gain an entrance for you into some Corps of Engineers and state parks which were not designed for the longer big rigs. Following our usual pattern for coach reviews, let's take a look at the outside.

Starting with the Exterior

You might say this is the year of the Phaeton. Van Tiffin, director of product development, mandated new front and rear caps as well as new interior decors. All Phaetons now have four slides. Sliding out of the front cap for convenient service, the 7.5 Kw Onan generator powers all systems in the coach and makes dry camping a no-problem experience. The electrical system is enhanced by the Xantrex inverter which sources all of the 110v outlets in the coach. In addition, both front and rear televisions and

the Sharp microwave-convection oven can be operated without starting the generator. TMH utilized Xantrex's top unit which will automatically start the generator when battery reserves get low, a feature seldom found in entry-level diesel pushers.

Whether you stand back and admire from a distance any of the three paint schemes offered or bring your magnifying glass to check it closely, you will be impressed with the beauty and quality of a Tiffin paint job. In May TMH completed its second year in the Belmont paint plant. The facility brings state-of-the-art automotive technology to the full-body painting of motorcoaches. The company's quality assurance program, directed by Lex Tiffin, goes over every square inch of the paint to guarantee Tiffin owners an excellent job. With the exception of the name logos, no applied decals are used on the exterior of the Phaeton coaches.

Every driver will notice and appreciate that fueling can be done from either side of the coach at a location just behind the front wheel wells. Tiffin engineers have positioned all engine check and maintenance points in very convenient locations. Moving to the rear of the coach, the operator will find a single door that pops open with two latches and is supported by struts. The huge radiator exposure assures an efficient cooling function. Around the periphery of the radiator at eye level, you will see the dip sticks for engine oil and transmission fluid, coolant reservoir, and a clever little device called a "filter minder" which tells you when to change your fuel filter.

The first three side-opening doors just behind the entry door expose a huge basement storage area accessible to both sides of the coach. The combined area offers 112 cubic feet of storage. A 38x89-inch steel tray mounted on extension tracks is an option that offers great convenience in storing and removing items from the middle of the basement.

Outdoor entertainment under Carefree of Colorado's 19½ foot awning is provided in an optional 32-inch television housed in the exterior wall of the galley slide-out. The awning has a high wind sensor and an auto-retract system to prevent damage when





you are absent. Also available in the first compartment are outlets for outdoor use of house phones, cable TV, and 12v/110v service. The basement also houses equipment for the Xantrex inverter and a built-in vacuum system, items you do not want to forget when you spec out your next coach.

Tiffin engineers are very careful to place house and chassis equipment in positions where it can be easily serviced. The fourth storage compartment on the passenger side contains four house-chassis batteries plus an unexpected compartment offering five cubic feet of storage. The fifth compartment has two major electrical service panels plus a small amount of storage for non-combustible items—a good spot for storing a case of Perrier.

As we move around to the driver's side (at rear), the first compartment has a removable panel offering access to the engine's air cleaner. Next is the storage area for the 50-amp electrical service and Tiffin's Automatic Transfer Switch, a system designed to automatically change power from shore to generator without having to plug or unplug. Another little extra that TMH adds to the mix is a 12v Battery Keeper, a charger/maintainer that emphasizes the fact that you get more for your money when you buy a Tiffin. Campground connections for cable and house phone are located here.

The utility compartment in front of the rear tires is very concisely organized and labeled. You've got fresh water entrance, hot water bypass valve, water pump, grey and black dump valves, water filter, and outside shower.

The fourth and fifth side-hinged doors give you driver-side access to the primary basement storage, as well as the reversible slide-out tray. One of the nicest things about Tiffin's basement storage is that all of the sidewalls and floors are faced with a

smooth grey felt—in contrast to the raw plastic or metal surfaces often found in competitors' high-end diesel coaches.

The LPG tank is stored in the sixth compartment just behind the front tire well. The primary fuse panel is located in the very front corner of the coach and under the driver's window. Every fuse is precisely labeled. Also in this compartment is the pressurized air connector and the window wash fluid reservoir.

A Very Liveable Coach

Let's start with the bedroom and move forward. The 36 QSH seems to focus on a design-use theory that your primary living space is the living-dining-galley areas, secondary is the bathroom, and tertiary is the bedroom. This does not mean that the bedroom has reduced functionality. Quite the contrary.

The plan offers a queen-size bed with solid surface bedside tables, each with a 110v outlet and a small compartment for the various items we all like to keep nearby. The sidewalls of the bed slide-out have windows for cross ventilation on pleasant evenings. If you like to read in bed, you will appreciate the his-her decorator lamps perfectly mounted for that purpose. Overhead you will find nearly nine cubic feet of storage for additional sheets, blankets, and pillows.

The slide-out opposite the bed contains a chest with four drawers plus a clothes hamper. Positioned under a window, the chest has a solid surface top with adjacent outlets for 110v and a house phone. Just above the window is a 26-inch Panasonic HDTV for those who like to snuggle into the optional Sleep Comfort bed and watch a good movie.

The rear wall of the bedroom is all thoughtfully designed storage. The master closet with double sliding mirror doors is 65 inches wide, 63 high, and 24 deep.

The coach reviewed for this story had the optional stacked washer-dryer on the port side of the master closet. If the buyer chooses a washer-dryer combination, the cabinet above has nearly 11 cubic feet for storage of bulky items. A smaller cabinet under the washer-dryer offers another 4.6 cubic feet of open storage for less-used items.

A second lavatory-vanity with a large mirrored cabinet is located to the left of the port side slide-out. It is beautifully appointed with a solid surface counter top, bowl, and backsplash, brushed nickel hardware, and decorator shell lights. It offers a 110v inverter-sourced outlet plus three cubic feet of storage in the vanity.

The Bathroom

The walk-through bath is nicely accommodated with a large shower on the port side with an enclosed three-by-four-foot lavatory-toilet compartment on the starboard. The compartment's heavy solid core door is crafted from Medium Alderwood.

The 36-inch wide vanity has a solid surface counter top and bowl with brushed nickel hardware which is used throughout the coach. Controls for the Fan-tastic vent, the lighting, and water pump plus a 110v inverter-sourced outlet are installed on the face of the vanity. The vanity offers two deep drawers with an additional 2.5 cubic feet of storage directly under the bowl. The attractive wallpaper is accented with a handsome border. The double-mirrored doors of the medicine cabinet add spa-

aciousness, with the cabinet itself 36 inches wide, 28 high, and 8 deep. Tiffin used Thetford's Aqua-Magic Style Plus, an elongated china bowl with pedal flush.

The 39×26-inch shower has a large skylight, a seat, a deep soap dish with handle, and a 70-inch hose connected to the shower head. The fiberglass stall is enclosed with translucent rain glass.

The bath compartment may be closed off from the living space and the bedroom with two 1-inch thick pocket doors. A second Fan-tastic fan is mounted in the walk-through to evacuate humidity.

The Living Quarters

Now we are in the primary space where you will spend most of your waking hours while you are enjoying this coach. With both forward slide-outs deployed, your living area is 12 feet 4 inches by 20 feet, with a ceiling height of seven feet. With over 94 square feet of windows, the room visually becomes even more spacious. There is almost too much to describe, so let's break it down into several categories.

Lighting. Directional lights will please the avid reader while wall sconces add both functional lighting and class to the decor. Four 18-inch fluorescent lights can take the brightness of the living room and galley to any preferred level.

Cabinetry. Hand-selected hardwoods, five-piece raised panel doors, stains and satin finishes that rival fine furniture, and hand-crafted frames built to outlast the stresses of constant





travel are features brought together by quality installation.

Windows. Tiffin does not buy its windows from sub-contractors. Be sure to read the story about Wynne Enterprises (a Tiffin-owned company) in *RIS 4:2* to understand why TMH has the best RV windows in the business. By use of a thermal break, the dual pane windows incorporate warm edge technology and a dead air space that is twice as thick as those made by any competitor to assure the best possible heating and cooling efficiency. Screens permit pleasant outdoor air flows when the temperature is comfortable. Window treatments are both practical and handsome. With three interior packages, the valances bring accent colors into the decor.

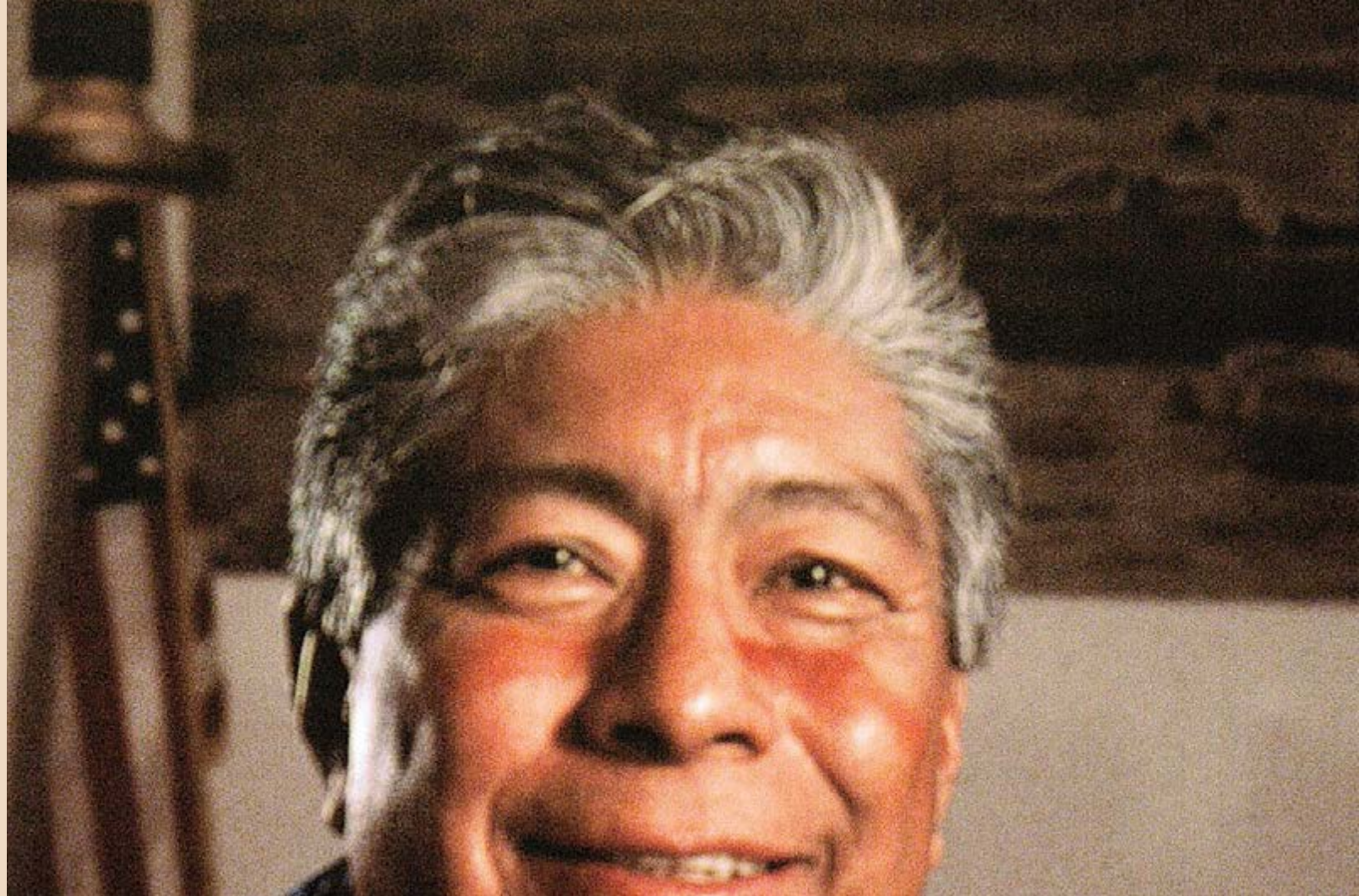
Air Conditioning. First introduced in 2007, TMH's quiet air technology eliminated the noisy 14-inch-square return air duct that connected directly to the roof AC system. The Phaeton now provides two 15,000 BTU Low Profile AC Systems *with* heat pumps as standard equipment on the 36 QRH. That means you can heat your coach with shore power instead of propane even when the outside temperature is 40 degrees.

Electrical. Although mentioned earlier, it is worth emphasizing the coach's 2000 watt inverter with 100 amp converter and transfer switching. When you are dry camping, that means the batteries will power everything except the air conditioners, microwave, vacuum cleaner, and washer-dryer. And, of course, these

can be activated with the generator. When your batteries get low and need recharging, the Xantrex will auto-start the generator for you. All are standard equipment when you buy a Tiffin Phaeton.

Entertainment. In the 36 QRH you have an eye-level 32-inch Panasonic HDTV with surround sound—again, standard equipment. The system is equipped with an infrared repeater, which means you can move a program you are watching to another TV in the coach (outside or bedroom) without having to tune in that TV. The Home Theater system includes a 5-disk DVD/CD changer for both music and movies, 2-way wireless ready. See page 36 for a late-breaking news release on HD systems.

Galley. First, just enjoy for a few minutes the beauty of the solid surface countertops throughout the living area, and the carefully finished hardwood panels on the 4-door refrigerator as well as all of the cabinets. Note the routed backsplashes with pewter medallions and contrasting accents. Tiffin is well-known for its thorough utilization of space to create the maximum amount of storage. When measured in cubic feet, TMH beats the competition every time. The top-of-the-line Sharp microwave-convection oven, the 3-burner Atwood Wedgwood Vision cooktop, and the double stainless steel sink with soap dispenser and single handle faucet with sprayer provide all the features of a home. The Expand-an-Island adds both countertop serving and prep space as well as three additional drawers. This galley



stands apart even if you're willing to spend 20 percent more on the competition's product. For fast exhaust of cooking heat, an automated Fan-Tastic vent is positioned just over the galley with controls at fingertip level near the sink. The two-way vent with variable speed fan can also serve as an attic fan for cooling the entire coach, or preventing the coach from becoming too hot while you are out sightseeing.

Dining. The optional free-standing dinette and six-door sideboard both have color coordinated solid surface tops. The 28×34-inch dining table for two extends to 42 inches for guests. Serving dishes can be arrayed across the sideboard for an elegant dinner as you enjoy the view of the mountains through your 58-inch picture window. If you need office workspace, you'll find 12- and 110-volt service just under the table.

Living Room. With seating for seven—two comfortable couches plus the driver's and passenger's chairs rotated into the room—you are enveloped in luxurious Ultra-Leather™. The horseshoe seating arrangement makes a great conversation pit, plus everyone faces the wall-mounted television. The full ceramic tile floor invites you to personalize the room with a handsome area rug.

Flooring. The ceramic tile floor from the coach entrance to the bedroom is assembled off the production line on a solid, one-piece surface just as you would in a site-built home. With a specially designed suction lift, the entire one-piece floor is

delivered to the production line and mounted on the coach's multi-layered, reinforced, steel-framed floor. Every feature in a Tiffin-built home is designed to last for years to come.

The Cockpit. Very efficiently configured, the Phaeton's cockpit begins with a display of eight gauges and the information center. You will not have to wait until a warning light comes on to learn about critical readings. The eight gauges include two for PSI (air bag pressure), battery, oil pressure, engine temperature, fuel, RPM, and speedometer.

The adjacent display on the left includes the headlights and rheostat for the lighting intensity of the dash instruments, the windshield wiper controls, and the directional mirror control. The adjacent display on the right presents the monitor for the outside cameras, the Sirius radio, and the HVAC controls, plus the generator start and two 12v outlets.

On the wall panel at elbow height, the driver will quickly acclimate to the electronic gear shift, the parking brake, and the Atwood leveling system. Flip-switches in a panel layout include docking lights, engine pre-heat, auxiliary generator start, horn and radio master switches, step cover, left and right fans, the ICC flash (to flash all exterior lights to thank other drivers for help in turning and passing), front windshield privacy shade (which doubles as the sun visor), pedal adjustment, map light and exhaust brake.

The Information Center directly over the gauges offers the

driver assistance from the simple to the complex, including date, time, and temperature. For any who are prone to forget, the center provides a pre-trip checklist to make sure you do not overlook the items you must check before departing—very much like the pre-flight checklist a pilot would use. Other helpful travel checkpoints include exact amount of fuel in your tank, segment and full trip mileage and mpg records. Using a toggle just below the gauges, the operator can track maintenance records and run diagnostics. Prepare to spend a little time with the Freightliner operator's manual to get the maximum benefit from the Information Center.

In the cabinet just above the dashboard, you will find a control center for the Xantrex inverter, the Carefree of Colorado awning and auto retract system, the controls for the forward slide-outs, the monitor for water, black and grey, and LP tanks, and the King Dome automatic satellite receiver. For the passenger, the Flexsteel chair offers six directional switches for every conceivable position plus the leg lift and full 360° rotation. Other amenities include the retractable writing desk, magazine rack and drink holder, and controls for the step cover and map light.



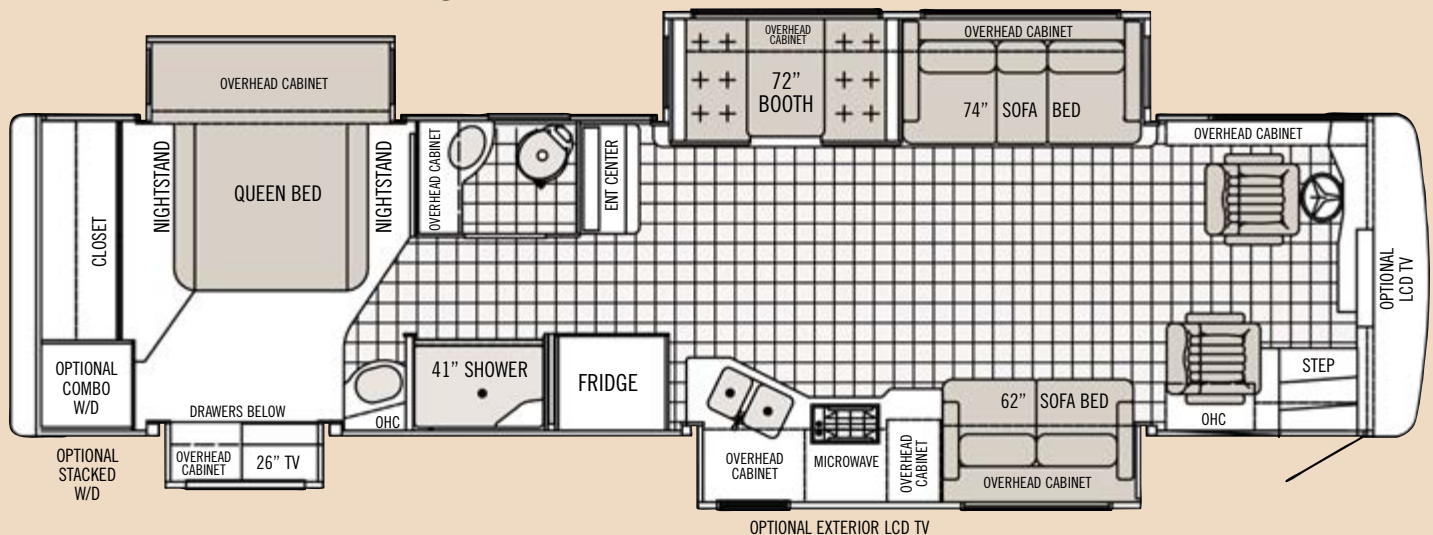
Driving the Phaeton 36 QSH

With Freightliner's new 55° wheel cut and the Phaeton's 36-ft. length, the coach is very easy to maneuver in campground parking and city traffic. Its four airbags give occupants a very acceptable comfort level when the roads get a bit rough. For the driver, they bring a leveling stability to turns and lane changes. The Cummins 360 ISC power plant provided an affirming acceleration as I negotiated interstate ramps to merge into the traffic flow. Even with sharper braking, there was no nose-diving, but a noticeably controlled even-

ness. ABS definitely makes a difference. Fuel efficiency depends on one's driving habits, but most of us have decided to pull back a little on the throttle. Although we did not have the opportunity to do a volume-distance driving economy check, the instant readout for MPG consistently showed 8+ MPG at 65 MPH.

Tiffin Motorhomes engineers and designers have without a doubt created a new niche floorplan and coach that puts luxury, reduced size, and price in a very attractive package. Demand will surely exceed supply as buyers evaluate the 36 QSH. **RIS**

The Phaeton 36 QSH



SPECIFICATIONS: Model tested 2008 Phaeton 36 QSH, Quad Slide, Base MSRP* – \$215,460 MSRP as tested with options – \$228,900

STANDARD FEATURES

Structural

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

Automotive

Allison 3000 MH six-speed automatic transmission with lock-up (torque converter)
Cummins ISC 8.3 liter 360 hp, electronic/turbocharged diesel
1,050 lbs.-ft. torque
Raised rail chassis frame
Atwood Automatic Electric Leveling System
Air ride (4 air bags)
55° wheel cut
Air brakes with automatic slack adjusters and ABS
Exhaust brake
Adjustable fuel and brake pedals
18-inch steering wheel
Cruise control
Fog lights
Daytime running lights
Emergency start switch

Exterior

Fiberglass front & rear caps
Dual fuel fills
Large tinted one-piece windshield
7.5 Kw Onan manual slide-out generator
Heated power mirrors with remote adjustment
Single motor intermittent wiper
Gel-coat fiberglass walls
Full body paint
Deadbolt front entrance door
Double electric step
Dual pane windows
Exterior patio light
Manual door awning
Automatic patio awning
Slide-out awnings
Wheel liners
Custom mud flap
Exterior swing-out storage doors with gas shocks
Single handle lockable storage door latches
Lighted exterior storage
Docking lights
Heated water and holding tank compartments
Four 6v auxiliary batteries
2000 watt inverter with 100 amp converter & transfer switching
Park telephone ready
Cable ready TV
Black tank flush system
Water filter
110v exterior receptable
110v / 12v converter
Undercoating
TV antenna
Power Fan-tastic® roof vent with 3-speed fan
Two 15,000 BTU low profile roof A/C systems with heat pumps
A/C condensation drains
Roof ladder
Sony® color back-up camera

Driver's Compartment
Flexsteel® Ultraleather™ power driver

seat and power passenger seat with foot rest
Windshield power privacy shade
Padded dash
Dual dash fans
Power sun visor
Side sun shades and privacy shades, driver & passenger
Snack-beverage tray with drawers
Step switch and 12v disconnect switch
Dual 12v dash receptacles
Single CD player AM/FM radio
Sony® color monitor
Fire extinguisher
Computer slide-out tray in dash

Living Area / Dinette

Booth dinette with solid surface table edging
12v, 110v, & phone jack receptacles at dinette
32-inch flat screen color television wall-mounted in entertainment center
Ultraleather™ DE sofa bed (passenger side)
Cloth Flexsteel® DE sofa bed (driver side)

Kitchen

Solid surface counter top with residential stainless steel sink
Solid surface sink and stove covers
Under counter storage receptacles for sink and cooktop covers
Single lever brushed nickel sink faucet and sprayer
Convention / microwave oven
4-door refrigerator with ice maker and six-panel wood insets
Built-in soap dispenser
3-burner cooktop
Expand-an-Island

Bath

Two medicine cabinets with vanity lights
Skylight in shower
Solid surface vanity tops and bowls
Custom raised panel bath door to water closet
Glass shower surround and door
3-speed Fan-Tastic® Fan
Fiberglass molded shower

Bedroom

Full wardrobe with vanity inside
Four OH storage cabinets
Washer/dryer ready closet
Bed comforter with throw pillows
Sleeping pillows
Queen-size bed
Under bed storage
Pillow top mattress
Night stands
Chest of 4 drawers, plus laundry hamper
26-inch color LCD HD-ready television
Carbon monoxide detector
LPG leak detector

General interior

7-ft. ceilings
Soft touch vinyl ceilings
Ceramic tile floor in kitchen, bath, and entry landing
Carpeting in bedroom
Raised panel hardwood cabinet doors and drawers
Medium alderwood cabinetry

Day/night shades
18-in. fluorescent 12v lights
Home theater sound system with concealed speakers
Two Fan-Tastic® power roof vents with 3-speed fans
Tank level monitoring system
Smoke detector
10-gal. gas/electric water heater
Air driven step well cover
One 42,000 BTU ducted furnace

OPTIONAL FEATURES ON THIS COACH

Automatic satellite dish
Hadley air horns
Automatic door awning
Window awning package
One exterior slide-out tray
Exterior 32-inch television in slide-out wall
Chrome mirrors
Side view cameras
Stacked washer/dryer
Full tile living room (standard)
74-inch UltraLeather™ Air Coil Hide-A-Bed – (driver side)
Free standing dinette with built-in cabinets
Select Comfort queen mattress

OPTIONAL FEATURES AVAILABLE

Satellite radio
Combo washer/dryer
Leather Euro-recliner with computer table

PASSENGER SIDE
Cloth DE sofa bed
62-inch Cloth DE sofa bed
74-inch Ultraleather™ DE sofa bed

DRIVER SIDE
Ultraleather™ DE sofa bed
Ultraleather™ Magic Bed
Cloth Magic Bed
Cloth Air Coil Hide-A-Bed

Spotlight
Aluminum wheels
In-motion satellite dish
Computer navigational system
Gas oven
Natural Maple cabinetry (simulated)
Cherry Bark cabinetry (simulated)
Dash overhead TV

MEASUREMENTS

Wheelbase – 228"
Overall length – 36' 10"
Overall height w/roof air – 12'7"
Interior height – 84"
Overall width – 101"
Interior width – 96"

WEIGHTS & CAPACITIES

GVWR – 32,000 lb.
Front GAWR – 12,000 lb.
Rear GAWR – 20,000 lb.
GCWR – 42,000 lb.
UVW – 27,530 lb.
CCC – 4,470 lb.
Trailer hitch capacity – 10,000 lb.

POWER TRAIN

Engine – 360 hp Cummins ISC 8.3 liter, electronic, turbocharged diesel
Torque – 1,050 lb.-ft. at 1,400 rpm
Transmission – Allison 3000MH electronic six speed with two overdrives
Tire Size – 275/80R 22.5 XZA1 Michelin
Alternator – Leece-Neville 170 amps

CHASSIS

Frame – Freightliner XCR Series
Frame Design – Raised rail
Anti-locking Braking System – WABCO 4M/4S ABS System
Suspension (front) – Neway Air
Suspension (rear) – Neway Air
Shock Absorbers – Sachs tuned
Leveling Jacks – Atwood Electric Automatic

CONSTRUCTION

Body – Laminated floor, sidewalls, roof
Roof – One-piece fiberglass
Support – Steel/Aluminum reinforced structure
Front/rear body panels – One-piece fiberglass caps
Exterior side panels – Gel-coat fiberglass walls with full body paint

ACCOMMODATIONS

Sleeps – Four adults
Fuel tank – 100 gallons
Freshwater – 90 gallons
Black water – 45 gallons
Grey water – 70 gallons
LPG tank – (35 gallons; can be filled to 80% capacity) – 28 gallons

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.

Rodney Johnson

Getting 16 Hours of Results from a 10-Hour Day

by Fred Thompson

No doubt about it. Top management at Tiffin Motorhomes likes to promote from the ranks. Time after time over the years, bright and capable employees have inevitably moved into management when they demonstrated talent and ability to make things happen in production line jobs.

Rodney Johnson began his career at TMH on January 2, 1996. In May of 2000, he was making parts for dashes when Tim and Van Tiffin brought him into the office to do cabinet design work. Johnson, who grew up just a few miles down the road in Golden, Mississippi, had been going to school in the evenings at Itawamba Community College studying drafting and design. His double life of production line worker and college student had begun to pay off early.

Johnson's technical skills in drafting and design and his ability to thrive under the daily pressure of meeting deadlines and solving problems placed him on a new career path that in six years led to the enviable position of production engineer for the Phaeton, the Allegro Bus, and the Zephyr.

"As I started out in cabinet design," he related, "I would do a person's job for several hours to learn and understand the processes of making the parts, fabricating, and final assembly. Mickey Collum in the cabinet department taught me so much about cabinet fabrication. I have to understand how he makes a cabinet before I can plan and draw it. David Baggett taught me solid surface countertop construction including sink sizes and stacking parts and assembling them. The people who make the cabinets and countertops can impart so much knowledge to you."

Product engineering today uses AutoDesk CADD (computer aided drafting and design) to draw the interior walls, cabinet frames, doors, and closets for every floorplan.

Staying in tune with the market is critical in the motorhome business. "Van develops ideas gleaned from dealers, RV shows, surveys from RV owners, and visits to other plants, and Bob talks to customers constantly to learn what they want," Johnson said. "We visit our competitors' manufacturing plants and they also visit TMH. When two competitors exchange visits to discuss process and methods, it ultimately will make both companies better."

After developing input from many sources, Van and Rodney discuss and

sketch new floorplans, making notes about what they want to feature.

"When we get a complete concept for a new floorplan, I do an exact scale in CADD and we take it to Jerry Williamson, general sales manager, and Danny Inman, southeast regional sales manager," Johnson said. "If they think we can sell it, we take it to R&D where we have complete fabrication equipment for modeling and building prototypes."

As director of product development, Van Tiffin evaluates and approves the designs for prototype fabrication. As a member of the "Diesel Team," Johnson enjoys the opportunity to work on the cutting edge of developing new products. "As far as the work goes, I love it. It's not

During the interview for this story, Johnson (right) received an urgent call from the Zephyr production line. He responded immediately and solved the problem.



really work—it's really a fun job," he said.

"The Phaeton is probably the product we are most proud of. Most people know that it is the best selling Class A diesel pusher in the U.S.," Johnson pointed out. "Most of our dealers think it has the best price-to-value ratio of any motorhome on the market."

Johnson believes that creating floorplans that meet customers' needs is the most important thing the Diesel Team does. "We can take a good floorplan and make it one that people will love. Floorplans impact sales more than anything we do," he emphasized. "The motorhomes in a particular brand will look exactly alike on the outside, but you may sell 20 to 1 a good floorplan over a bad one," Johnson said. "If you have a bad floorplan, you can't add enough amenities to get people to buy it."

Surveys, sales research, and customer input point to several features that are driving sales today. Without a doubt, Johnson says that the mid-ship TV gives the motorhome a whole new feel. "It seems more residential and becomes more of an entertainment center. You don't see a television in a home mounted near the ceiling," he said as a smile broke across his face.

Other features that Johnson and his fellow engineers expect to boost sales include slide-outs that are pushing 17 to 18 feet, which really "opens up the motorhome," he observes. The team redesigned the AC ducts in the roof that significantly quietened the system. Flat panel televisions with high definition, Sleep Number beds, stacked washer/dryers in all of the diesel pusher brands, and an outdoor television in the slide-out wall have pushed Tiffin's sales up again this year.

"You can't put a price on the 'jaw drop' when you watch a lady open a full-size residential refrigerator in one of our diesel pushers," he laughed.

Johnson said that product engineering is very pleased with the improved quality in slide-outs made possible with the hydraulic wall-mounted arms that were introduced last year. Most of the equipment for extending the slide-out had been mounted under the floor. With the hydraulic extension system mounted in


the sides of the slide-out, the storage capacity in the basement was increased by 30 percent.

A product engineer at Tiffin Motorhomes will never suffer from boredom. Johnson usually arrives at the plant at 5:40 a.m. Twenty minutes later the team is meeting with Bob, Van, and Lex Tiffin, Tim Massey, production manager, and Brad Witt, director of engineering, to discuss projects. "We really get our directives from our coach owners regarding how we process and design changes into the floorplans," Johnson said. "Changes under consideration are approved or rejected at this meeting."

At 8 a.m. the engineers meet with production to discuss the changes reviewed at the 6 o'clock meeting. At this standing room only meeting, forty managers and supervisors discuss implementation of new directives, and coordinate all production throughout the plants.

Johnson will spend the rest of his day addressing problems on the assembly line, developing prototypes in R&D, or creating new cabinet designs and floorplans on the Auto-CADD.

"The most challenging thing for us is 'time'—cramming 16 hours into 10 every day," he says. "The work is fairly easy—we don't design engines and transmissions here. But there are so many components, so many things to consider as we design living environments that our customers will enjoy," he says.

Rodney and his wife Stacy live at Pleasant Site, a rural community 15 miles from Red Bay in the northwest corner of Franklin County. Married for 10 years, they have three children, Gavin, 8, Tori, 6, and Seth, 3. Stacy has a part-time job but primarily focuses on being mother and homemaker. "I don't have hobbies, so we spend our free time on family oriented things. Three or four times a year we take a trip in a motorhome. After designing them and knowing how they are put together, we often will see ways to improve a particular coach," Johnson says. "Stacy has ideas to offer, too, and the kids love being out in nature and camping in the motorhome. We go to places like Destin and the mountains—recreation and testing really can be combined," he grinned. 



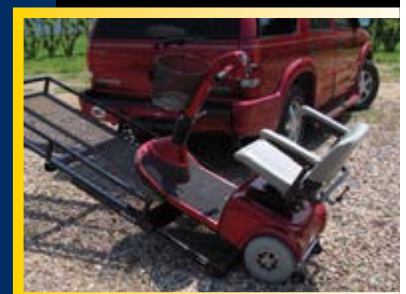
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MOUNT DESERT ISLAND has a rugged history. Geologists believe that continental glaciers over a mile thick began carving the underlying granite mountains of New England over two million years ago, leaving the 144 square mile island with the highest mountain on the eastern coast of the United States. Continuing their gouging sculpture until 18,000 years ago when climatic changes halted their activity, the glaciers presented the Atlantic coastline with its only fjord. Granite escarpments, sea-washed cliffs, narrow freshwater lakes, and deep forests offer the visitor an unusual variety of landscapes and recreational opportunities.

Its History

Long before Europeans arrived, archaeological evidence points to settlements three- to five-thousand years old. The Wabanaki people referred to Mount Desert Island as Pemetec, “the sloping land.” In 1524 they may have welcomed the Italian mariner Giovanni da Verrazano, who in his journals referred to what is now Maine and the Canadian Maritimes as *L’Acadia*. The name may have been a misspelling of Arcadia, an ancient region of Greece just across the Ionian Sea from the foot of Italy.

Eighty years later, Samuel Champlain was sent by his expedition leader, Pierre Dugua, Sieur de Mons, to explore the Gulf of Maine. After his landing on September 5, 1604, he wrote in his journal, “The mountain summits are all bare and rocky. . . . I name it *l’Isles des Monts-déserts*,” which translates “island of barren mountains.” The French pronunciation sounds like our word “dessert” and most natives pronounce it that way today.

Champlain’s visit preceded by 16 years the pilgrims landing at Plymouth Rock, and for a while caused this part of the North American coast to be known as New France. In 1613 French Jesuits established a mission at Fernald Point near the entrance to Somes Sound, the fjord mentioned earlier. Later that year, Captain Samuel Argall, commanding the *HMS Baron de la Warr* from the Virginia Company at Jamestown, destroyed the rival French settlement.

Lying between French settlements entrenched to the north and English settlements in Massachusetts and southward, the area fell into a state of limbo. For the next 150 years, Mount

Text and photography by Fred Thompson

Desert Island primarily served as a landmark for seamen since no one wanted to settle in the contested area.

Cadillac Mountain, which at 1,530 feet is the highest peak on the U.S. coastline, and the GM automobile were named after the same Frenchman. In the 1680s, the Sieur de Antoine de la Mothe Cadillac received a land grant of 100,000 acres from the French government and made plans to build a feudal estate in the New World. His enterprise failed, but he went west and founded the city of Detroit.

By 1759 the British prevailed and English settlements along the Maine coast (still part of Massachusetts) sprang up. Governor Francis Bernard, a loyalist, obtained a royal grant on Mount Desert Island and offered free land to settlers. Abraham Somes and others accepted the offer and settled in a village they named Somesville at the northern end of the fjord. After the Revolutionary War, the governor lost his claim and Massachusetts granted the western half of the island to his son, John, who had sided with the rebellion. Interestingly, the eastern half was granted to Cadillac's granddaughter.

As an agricultural economy developed, Maine separated from Massachusetts in 1820 and gained statehood. Fishing, shipbuilding, farming, lumbering, and granite quarrying were the major occupations. The population of Mount Desert Island was growing steadily.

The work of artists and journalists changed the destiny of the barren island. Artists from the Hudson River School, notably Thomas Cole and Frederic Church, came in the summer to paint pastoral settings in which people and nature coexisted peacefully. Characterized by realism and detail, the artists believed that nature in the form of the American landscape was an unspeakable manifestation of God. Sometimes called the "rusticators," they found room and board in the humble homes of fishermen and farmers.

As their paintings glorified Mount Desert Island and inspired patrons to spend their summers there, small hotels began to appear for the "summer people." By 1880, over 30 hotels competed to serve those who sought the solitude of the island and its relaxed pace.

The wealthy also discovered Mount Desert Island and for 60 years it became the retreat of the Astors, Carnegies, Vanderbilts, Pulitzers, Morgans, Fords, and Rockefellers who were not content with simple lodgings. They built elegant estates which they called "cottages." The fabulous parties of Newport were now being staged throughout the summer season on the island. The rusticators were dismayed and formed societies to build hiking trails and walking paths to connect the villages with the beautiful interior of the islands. Finally, the Depression and World War II marked the end of the extravagance and a great fire in 1947 destroyed most of the cottages.

A strong conservation movement began to form at the turn of the twentieth century. George Dorr, a wealthy bachelor who was one of the original "rusticators," by 1901 was concerned with the dangers he saw in the newly invented gas-powered

The many faces of Acadia



Quiet drives in deep forests



Somesville at the northern tip of Somes Sound



Fishing harbor

portable sawmill. Forests were disappearing at an alarming rate. That summer he received a letter from Charles Eliot, president of Harvard University who was a founder of the Northeast Harbor summer colony. He encouraged Dorr to form committees to acquire land at points of interest on the island for the perpetual use of the public. Over the next 47 years, Dorr spent his life bringing together men of wealth, politics, and power at critical times during the development of Acadia.

The committee established a corporation called the Hancock County Trustee of Public Reservations. By 1913 they had assembled 6,000 acres which Dorr offered to the federal government. President Woodrow Wilson accepted the offer in 1916 and created the *Sieur de Monts National Monument*. Dorr increased his efforts to acquire property and attain full national park status. In 1919 President Wilson signed the act establishing the Lafayette National Park, the first national park east of the Mississippi. Dorr became the park's first superintendent. In 1929 the park name was changed to Acadia National Park. Dorr rightfully became known as the "Father of Acadia."

One of Dorr's greatest supporters in the development of Acadia was John D. Rockefeller, Jr., who was concurrently working to restore Williamsburg in Virginia. Rockefeller wanted a permanent ban of automobiles on the island's roads, but lost that battle to local governments. In addition to donating more than 10,000 acres of island property, including the coastal area containing Thunder Hole and Otter Cliffs, Rockefeller concentrated on building 45 miles of single lane carriage roads winding throughout the island's forests, mountains, lakes, and marshlands. Rockefeller's signature on the island is 17 bridges crafted from native granite, characterized by raised stones on the ledges that locals call "Rockefeller's teeth."

Enjoying Mount Desert Island

As you enter the island via the causeway, stop at the Thompson Island Information Center where you can pick up free copies of *Out & About in Downeast Maine*, the *Beaver Log* (a bi-monthly schedule of events, ranger programs, and schedules), a copy of *Free Acadia Shuttles* (complete schedules throughout the island), the *Acadia Weekly* (a great variety of information), *Acadia* (published by the American Park Network), and the *Menu Guide* (don't leave home without it).

On your first encounter with Mount Desert Island, I suggest you take the **Park Loop Road** tour. Along with Rt. 3 through Bar Harbor, it has been named an All-American Road, the highest designation of the National Scenic Byways program. Created under the oversight of famed landscape architect Frederick Law Olmstead, Jr., the Loop Road was designed to "... lead one through a series of visual experiences," and minimize attention to its engineering and construction. Keep in mind that some of the bridges have clearances of less than 12 feet— not a tour for your motorhome.

Stay on Rt. 3 to Bar Harbor for six miles and stop at the Hulls Cove Visitor Center. Pick up a copy of *Motorist Guide: Park Loop*

Road for \$2 and a free copy of the NPS publication "Acadia," which is a full color map of the island. Your best investment at \$4.95 is the "Acadia National Park / Mount Desert Island" map published by Map Adventures. The center has an excellent bookstore which will satisfy every area of interest you may have about the park.

Just a half mile away is the Frenchman Bay Overlook where you likely will observe a cruise ship in the harbor. We were lucky enough to see the Queen Mary 2 which had anchored for its passengers to take a day trip on the island. As you continue the tour, you will cross the Duck Brook Bridge and come to the 1947 Fire Overlook, a stop that will help you understand the magnitude of the great fire 60 years ago this fall.

Be sure to take the next exit at Sieur de Monts Spring which honors the nobleman who claimed the island for France in 1604. The stop also features the Robert Abbe Museum, the Wild Gardens of Acadia, and the Nature Center.

From the Champlain Mountain Overlook you will be able to see several points of interest, including one of the famed "cottages" named Highseas (ca. 1912). Your next stop is The Precipice, a rigorous trail up the exposed cliff face of Champlain Mountain. Between May and mid-August it may be closed to protect nesting Peregrine falcons. Park staff can help you view the Peregrines.

Sand Beach is the nearest thing to a real beach that you will find on the island. It consists of finely crushed shells and marine animals. The salt content of the water is approximately one half cup per gallon of water, which helps keep the water temperature, even during the summer months, between 50 and 60 degrees. Wading, yes. Swimming, we didn't even think about it!

Thunder Hole is a phenomenon. After a storm, when the tide is right and the waves are large, the ocean rushes into the slot and fills the void until the water has no where to go but up. The trapped air at the back of the chasm compresses and produces a thunderous sound.

Otter Cliffs is one of the highest headlands along the Atlantic coast north of Rio de Janeiro, affording a magnificent view from the 110-ft. high cliffs.

It's always time for tea and popovers when you stop at **Jordan Pond House**, a tradition that has been popular with visitors since the mid-1800s. JPH also serves homemade ice cream and offers an excellent lunch and evening dining experience. Reservations suggested. (207) 276-3316. Kayaking and canoeing are very popular here and you may want to come back when you have more time. The **Jordan Pond** self-guiding trail is a good half-mile leg stretcher after you finish lunch or dinner. For the more energetic, on the north end of Jordan Pond a steep trail leads to the South Bubble which provides a spectacular view of Jordan Pond and the ocean beyond.

Bubble Pond is a glacially carved lake, offering an easy stroll on the west side of its perimeter. Fall colors reflecting in the pond are a special treat. Nearby **Eagle Pond** is the largest body of fresh water in the park and borders a 6.1 mile section of carriage road, a great opportunity for biking.

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Sunrise viewed from Cadillac Mountain

Saving the best for last, the Cadillac Mountain Road and the Summit take you to the highest point on this country's Atlantic coastline. If you are a sunrise-sunset aficionado, check the *Acadia Weekly* for times and arrive at least 30 minutes early. I was amazed that approximately 200 people were there long before dawn to experience the sunrise, which at certain times of the year is the first point in the U.S. touched by the rising sun. Dress warmly in layers with a windbreaker.

The Villages

Some say that Mount Desert Island looks like a big crab's claw. If that's so, then the eastern claw is more densely populated and claims the largest village, **Bar Harbor**, which has a deep-water port that accommodates the largest cruise ships. Where the great summer cottages once stood, today's visitors will find charming sidewalk cafés, formal restaurants, inns, guest houses, dozens of boutiques, specialty shops, and galleries.

On the tip of the eastern claw, **Northeast Harbor** with a deep-water port of its own guards the entrance to **Somes Sound**. Its protected harbor is usually full of yachts whose owners find the low-key town a pleasant summer anchorage. Small shops with a touch of Downeast class may yield just the right item for remembering your trip. There are several good restaurants, but they barely advertise their presence. The **Asticou Azalea Garden**

and **Thuya Garden** are great places to spend a cool summer morning. From parking in town, you can take a path that ascends the granite cliffs to Thuya and a panoramic view of the harbor. The formal English flower beds will surprise you with a wide variety of blooms throughout the season. The azalea garden is at its peak from mid-May to mid-June. If sailing history is your interest, visit the Great Harbor Maritime Museum on Main Street.

Leaving **Northeast Harbor**, take Sargent Drive north along the eastern shore of Somes Sound. The beautiful U-shaped road skirting the seven-mile long Sound will not disappoint you. A brief stop at **Somesville** will transport you back into the forties with its white clapboard houses, green lawns, flowers, a bridge over the stream flowing into the Sound, and a museum.

Heading south again on Rt. 120, a leisurely pace will put you in **Southwest Harbor** in about 15 minutes. You are on the western claw now which is often referred to as the "quiet side." Southwest Harbor is the second largest town on Mount Desert and one of the top 10 commercial fishing harbors in Maine. Next to fishing, boat building is the main industry. Some of the world's finest yachts are built by The Hinckley Company on Manset Shore Road just south of town. The Wendell Gilley Museum of Bird Carving features over 200 carvings by this famous pioneer who created a unique American art form (open

Tue–Sun, 10–5). If you are ready for a bit of sailing, you can hop the ferry to Great Cranberry Island and Little Cranberry Island. Regular ferry service is also available from Bass Harbor to Swans Island and Frenchboro. As in the other villages, you will find bookstores, shops, galleries, and cafés, each with its own personal style — no chain eateries or stores of any kind!

Follow Rt. 102 into **Bass Harbor**, a typical Maine fishing village which invites visitors to walk the docks and create memorable pictures with their cameras. Lobstering is the primary business here, so be sure to sample a succulent lobster roll. You may decide to try the larger restaurants in Bar Harbor. But whatever you choose, you should *feast* on the variety of seafood while you are on Mount Desert Island. It doesn't get any fresher anywhere in the world.

Just one mile south of Bass Harbor is the **Bass Harbor Head Lighthouse**. It is not open to the public, but its location on the cliff affords great southern views into the Atlantic.

The Lobster

Maine and Alaska compete to provide the highly prized lobster to the dinner tables of America. It is so popular that a leading restaurant chain claims the name “The Red Lobster.” Two centuries ago lobsters were so plentiful they could be picked up at low tide along Maine's rocky beaches. Early settlers ground them up and used them for fertilizer. Lobstermen catch the hardy crustaceans with box-shaped wire traps which they drop overboard and mark with painted buoys. Each color combination is registered with the state. Most lobsters are about 1½ pounds when caught and usually take seven years to reach that size. When caught, the lobster is a deep green or gray in color, and only turns bright red after being cooked. Eating lobster efficiently is a learned art I cannot describe in a few sentences. You really need a teacher. We were lucky enough to have our campground host and owner, Pat Stanley, take us to Ruth and Wimpy's Restaurant — and believe me, that's where the locals go. Go back into Ellsworth and take Hwy. 1 east to Hancock. The restaurant will be on your left.

Back to the Park

The out-of-doors is what really matters at Acadia National Park. Today the **Rockefeller carriage roads** are enjoyed by hikers, joggers, cyclists, carriage riders, horseback riders, and in the winter, cross-country skiers. From mid-June to early October, Wildwood Stables, located on Park Loop Road, offers six rides a day in open carriages drawn by Belgian and Percheron draft horses. The carriages are a totally relaxing way to see the sylvan forests, the placid ponds, and the bald granite mountains. Mr. Rockefeller knew why it was so important to build 45 miles of meandering roads. Reservations are strongly recommended for this popular attraction. Call (207) 276-3622.

Now, it's time to pull out your copy of the *Beaver Log* to find more ways to enjoy Mount Desert Island. Ranger-led programs include walks, talks, and hikes. Park rangers also interpret the park from four of the many commercial boats in the area. The

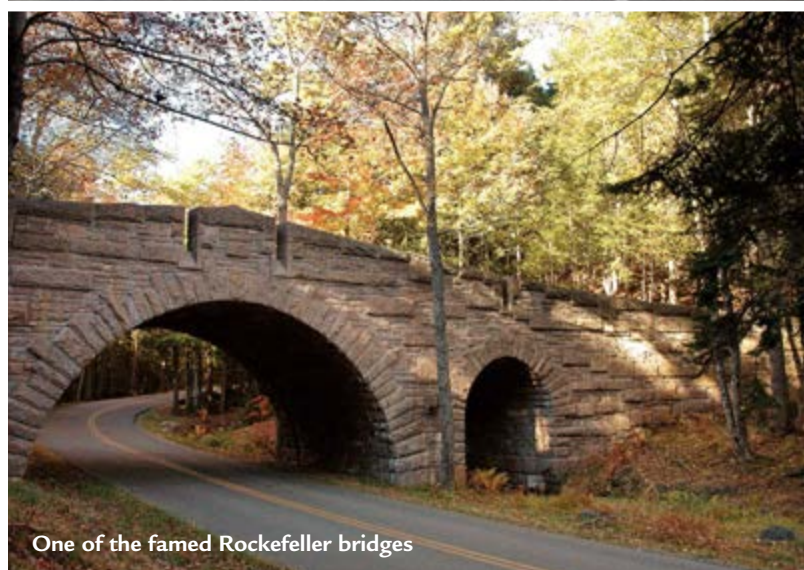
The many faces of Acadia



Somes Sound, the only fjord on the North American Atlantic coast



The village of Southwest Harbor



One of the famed Rockefeller bridges

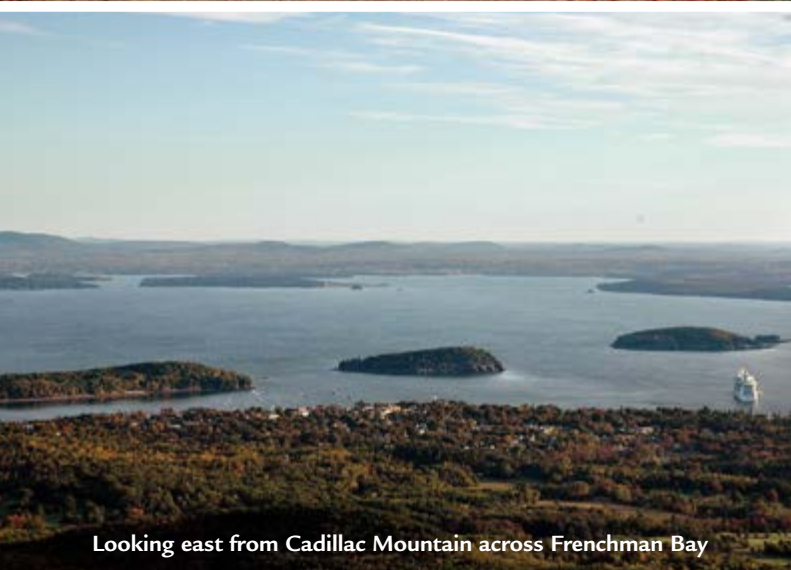
The many faces of Acadia



Riding on one of the many carriage trails



Bicycle riders are allowed to use most of the carriage trails



Looking east from Cadillac Mountain across Frenchman Bay

Islesford Historical Cruise takes you to Little Cranberry Island for a stop at the Historical Museum and explores the scenic fjord of Somes Sound. We took the Frenchman Bay Cruise at sunset on a four-masted schooner, encircling the famed Cunard liner as we sailed the calm waters. A wildlife cruise searches for seals, porpoises, and coastal birds. The Baker Island Cruise explores the remote island's natural and cultural history on a hike with a park ranger. For any trips over the water, dress warmly in layers that you can shed if necessary. A waterproof windbreaker with hood should always be the outer garment.


The evening programs usually take place at the amphitheaters in the Blackwoods and Seawall campgrounds. Daily programs are listed in the *Beaver Log*, with a different program and venue offered nearly every hour of the day.

For those of you who stay in shape by walking and biking, pick up two little booklets at the Hulls Cove Visitor Center. *Great Walks: Acadia National Park & Mount Desert Island* has color illustrations that will whet your appetite to see the beautiful and quiet landscapes away from the madding crowd. Its \$10 price tag may be a little steep, but it's worth it. If you have your bikes with you or wish to rent, buy a copy of *Biking on Mount Desert Island* by Audrey Minutolo. Along with the map I mentioned earlier, you can plan day trips into areas the majority of Acadia's visitors will miss. Pack a lunch and enjoy the day.

Side Trips

Although it is part of Acadia National Park, the **Schoodic Peninsula** is another park unto itself with features unlike Mount Desert Island. In 2000 the 27-mile Schoodic Byway (U.S. 1 and Rt. 186 as you leave Ellsworth) was designated a National Scenic Byway. You can hike in the Maine woods, kayak in bursting sea spray, see tidal falls that reverse direction every six hours, visit old country stores and antique shops, or just find a spot to spread your blanket and have lunch as you marvel at the ocean crashing against the granite bluffs as it has for millennia.

Depending on how long you can stay, side trips to nearby attractions are almost unlimited. We chose to travel two hours east to visit the easternmost point in the U.S., which is the **West Quoddy Head Light** and **Quoddy Head State Park**. The scenic lighthouse will reward you with its sweeping views of the channel and Grand Manan Island (Canada). There are several picnic sites and 4.5 miles of hiking trails. Bring your field glasses to scan the shore and channel for seals, porpoises, and whales. Bird watchers should have a good outing, too.

Our second destination was just a few miles away. At Lubec, the easternmost town in the U.S., we crossed into New Brunswick to visit President Roosevelt's summer home at **Campobello**. Today it is jointly maintained and operated as an International Park. Given to Franklin and Eleanor as a wedding gift by his mother, Campobello appears today just as it did over 70 years ago when FDR last visited his beloved retreat. The visitor center offers museum-quality presentations and video records of the Roosevelts' use of the home. 

Bar Harbor



Shopping in Bar Harbor



European dining



A more quaint dining experience

Campgrounds

The national park campgrounds at Blackwoods and Seawall offer no hook-ups and a max RV length of 35 feet. We opted for the full facilities at Mt. Desert Narrows on the northern tip of the island bordering Eastern Bay. Narrows Too opened on June 15 of this year, a brand new campground on the mainland which borders the saltwater Narrows separating it from the mainland.

Side trips near Acadia



Four-masted schooner cruise in Frenchman Bay



FDR's summer home at Campobello



West Quoddy Head Light, easternmost point in the U.S.



NEW FOR 2008

New Features for 2008

- White River center deco and bead board incorporated into slide-out fascia **1**
- Wainscot back wall in bedroom
- New lavatory faucet (Gerber)
- Full tile in living and galley area
- Ball bearing drawer slides with full extension **2**
- Solid surface edging on galley counter top and galley back splash **3**
- Tri-pod hook up
- Black step treads
- Black entrance door frame
- Flexsteel Air Coil Hide-A-Bed option
- Black driver's door frame
- Black awning hardware and black awning fabric
- Black slide topper hardware and fabric
- Stromberg black grab handle at main entrance door and driver's door
- Swivel chairs anchored to floor
- Oval porch light with black base
- Satin nickel kitchen sink faucet **4**
- Free-standing dinette option **5**
- Optional Winegard automatic satellite dish in place of semi-automatic
- Full body paint option **6**



Interiors

- Matisse
- Sunset
- Mirage

Paint Schemes

- PARTIAL BODY
 - Bordeaux
 - Driftwood
- FULL BODY
 - Champagne
 - Silver Sand
 - Sunlit Sand

Floorplans

- 28 DA
- 30 DA
- 32 BA
- 34 TGA
- 35 TSA
- 32 LA



Allegro Bay

NEW FOR 2008

New Features for 2008

- Full tile in galley and living area (standard) **1**
- New valance design with wood and diamond glass inserts **2**
- Updated slide-out fascia with crown mold and diamond glass inserts
- New wallboard **3**
- New headboard **3**
- Soap dispensers at galley and vanities
- All TVs and the surround sound system are connected with component cables which make possible HD input/output from satellite, cable, antenna, and DVD to Panasonic HDTVs and Surround Sound equipment. Manual switch boxes eliminated.
- Map light in ceiling (same as 2007 Bus)
- Hide-A-Bed with Air Coil
- Mullion hutch doors on 37 QDB and 35 TSB **4**
- 1800-watt stand-alone inverter with separate converter. Multiple plugs added to bedroom, bathroom, and kitchen area.
- Price Pfister kitchen faucet with pull-out spray **5**
- 26" HD-ready LCD bedroom TV
- Tri-pod hook up
- Black step treads
- Black ladder
- Black entrance door frame **6**
- Black driver's door frame
- Stromberg black grab handle at driver's door
- Oval porch light with black base on driver's side only, with clear round porch light on passenger side.
- Mid-ship TV on 37 QDB and 35 TSB **7**

Interiors

Barbados
Pewter
Lava

Paint Schemes

Silver Sand
Fire Red
Regal Blue

Floorplans

34 XB
35 TSB
37 DB
37 QDB



Phaeton

New Features for 2008

- Mullion doors on hutch
- Full water closet backsplash
- Updated headboard
- Wainscoting backfilled rail and stile with decorative iron overlay (refrigerator wall)
- Wainscoting wall vinyl in water closet with chair rail
- 30" wide entrance door, stepwell, and Kwikkee step
- Redesigned Carefree of Colorado door awning
- Stove and sink cover storage rack **1**
- 32" HD-ready LCD TV option in outside galley wall (option)
- 26" HD-ready LCD TV in bedroom
- Bedroom TV pre-wired for DVD
- All TVs and the surround sound system are connected with component cables which make possible HD input/output from satellite, cable, antenna, and DVD to Panasonic HDTVs and Surround
- Sound equipment. Manual switch boxes eliminated.
- Stack washer/dryer option on all floorplans **2**
- Slide-out fascias with crown and newly designed legs
- 5" more leg room in front of passenger seat
- Flexsteel Air Coil Hide-A-Bed **3**
- Contemporary style front and rear caps
- Fenders and docking lights **4**
- Two marker lights stay on continuously and one blinks with turn signal
- Price Pfister kitchen faucet **5**
- Large double bowl stainless steel kitchen sink
- Full height cabinet doors under sink
- Powered, full-length and width MCD windshield sun block and privacy shade **6**, plus driver and pass. manual sun visor and privacy shade **7**
- Lower DVD cabinet 5"

Interiors

Kona
Patina
Laguna

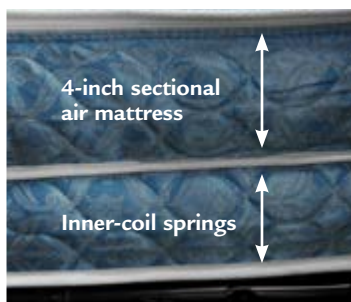
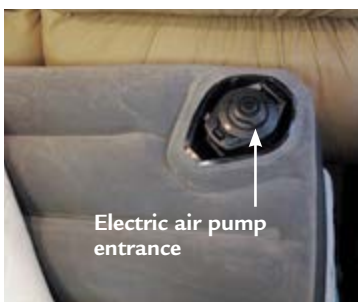
Paint Schemes

Silver Sand
NASA
Sunlit Sand

Floorplans

36 QSH
40 QDH
40 QSH
42 QRH

NEW FOR 2008



Allegro Bus

NEW FOR 2008

New Features for 2008

- Redesigned dinette chair **1**
- Valance design incorporating new millwork and medallion **2**
- Slide-out fascias with raised panel inserts on header and legs
- Galley faucet and large double-bowl kitchen sink **3**
- 30" wide entrance door, stepwell, and power entrance step
- 5" more leg room in front of passenger seat
- Double marker lights incorporated into rear fender
- 32" HD-ready LCD TV in outside galley wall (option)
- 26" HD-ready LCD TV in bedroom
- Bedroom TV pre-wired for DVD
- Porch lights activated with key fob
- Stove and sink cover storage rack
- Nite stands on 40 QSP with King bed option
- All TVs and the surround sound system are connected with component cables which make possible HD input/output from satellite, cable, antenna, and DVD to Panasonic HDTVs and Surround Sound equipment. Manual switch boxes eliminated.
- New hutch doors with curved mullions.
- Full-size water closet back-splashes **4**
- Round shower door with fluted glass from SEA (42 QRP and 40 QRP only) **5**
- Full height cabinet doors under sink
- All King bed mattresses 72" wide
- Black or Cocoa Glaze hutch (optional)
- Driver's power window (standard)
- MCD single piece power blackout windshield shade which also serves as sun visor. MCD manual driver and passenger side blackout shades with separate solar sun visors. Replaces windshield curtain.
- MCD manual roller shades (blackout and solar) in all valances except galley and water closet windows. Replaces pleated shades.
- Redesigned Dometic front door awning
- Standard patio awning with optional drop down sun shade. **6**



Interiors

Summer Wind
Oasis
Monte Carlo

Paint Schemes

Gold Coral
Maroon Coral
Nasa
Silver Sand
Sunlit Sand

Floorplans

40 QDP
40 QRP
40 QSP
42 QDP
42 QRP





New Features for 2008

- Valance design with incorporated millwork and medallion
- Vanity faucets
- Double frosted scrolled hutch doors (45 QSZ)
- Full tile backsplash in water closet
- Backsplash on hutch (45 QSZ)
- Backsplash inserts
- All TVs and the surround sound system are connected with component cables which make possible HD input/output from satellite, cable, antenna, and DVD to Panasonic HDTVs and Surround Sound equipment. Manual switch boxes eliminated.
- Key fob lock activates porch lights and blinks exterior lights to indicate coach is locked
- New recessed ceiling panel with millwork trim rings **1**
- Adjustable slide pantry in hutch
- V-Grooved mirror wall encased in millwork on 45 QEZ.
- Galley and vanity backsplashes
- Curved shower surround with clear glass door **2**
- Moen faucet and shower head on adjustable bar
- Integrated solid surface soap dish in shower surround
- Decorative lighting package
- Redesigned front cap, windshield, and headlights
- Redesigned rear cap and tail lights
- Marker lights incorporated into fenders. Two marker lights stay on continuously and one blinks with turn signal.
- Driver's power window (standard)
- Power MCD cockpit shades and MCD power valance shades in living area
- Manual roller shades in bedroom
- Side cameras built into Ramco mirrors **3**
- Diamond shield on front cap (standard)
- 3000 watt sine inverter (standard)
- "U" shape dinette/sofa sectional (optional) **4**
- 2-1/4" crown
- New floor tile pattern
- Roof mounted patio awning **5**
- Cocoa glaze or black hutch on 45 QSZ (optional)
- Cocoa Glaze or black entertainment center on 45 QEZ (optional) **6**
- Exterior step **7**

Interiors

Seville
Venetian

Paint Schemes

Silver Sand
NASA
Sunlit Sand

Floorplans

45 QEZ
45 QSZ

NEW FOR 2008



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RV



MARINE



COMMERCIAL



RESIDENTIAL



PORTABLE

Byerly RV Center

A Tiffin Dealer with Deep Roots in RVing America

by Fred Thompson

When Russ Patton joined the Marines in 1966 and left for Vietnam, he had no idea that he would come home to find his father, John Patton, had purchased an RV manufacturing company.

But the story really begins in 1943. Walter Byerly was a talented cabinet maker who usually chose birch to build his product. He finished them with stain and gloss varnish. Probably inspired by Wally Byam's early Airstreams or perhaps the teardrop camping trailer plans featured in *Popular Mechanics* and *Popular Home Craft* during the mid- to late-1930s, Byerly went to work in the basement of his Kirkwood, Missouri, home and came out with his "Byerly Mansion" in 1943. The rationing of construction materials during World War II, especially the aluminum exterior skin, must have stymied his production of camping trailers as well as the market demand.

With the veterans returning in 1945 and families flourishing, Byerly's market took on new life. In 1948 he incorporated as Byerly Trailer Manufacturing Company and built a new plant on the rural outskirts of Kirkwood. While the teardrop trailers had hatchback galleys and a sleeping compartment with a four-foot ceiling, Byerly brought the galley inside, raised the ceiling to 6' 6", and offered a floorplan with a double bed for the parents and bunks for the children. His camping trailer was a success.

In 1956 Will Warren's father-in-law told him about a Byerly

camping trailer he had seen, knowing that Will, his wife Gracia, and their three children enjoyed the outdoors. When 6' 4" Will stepped in, he said simply, "I can stand up in this one" and bought it.

Over the next 12 years when the plant where Will worked closed for three weeks for summer vacation, the Warrens traveled in their Byerly and visited 47 states. Will, Gracia, and their children, Adrienne, Joe, and Marguerite, built wonderful memories while visiting destinations such as Yellowstone, the Grand Canyon, the Seattle World's Fair, and the Everglades, to name just a few. After the children were grown, Will and Gracia continued to hook up the old Byerly and go traveling for a week or two.

When John Patton bought Byerly Trailer in 1967, he decided to stop manufacturing the travel trailer and transform the company into an RV dealership. Russ came home from service in 1969, joined the business, and eventually bought the company from his dad in 1987.

Now the story comes full circle. Twenty years after Will Warren bought his Byerly Mansion, another "Byerly" joined his family when Russ Patton married Adrienne Warren. And you guessed it — the Byerly Mansion came home to its birthplace and remains on display for all of the Pattons' friends to step inside and experience a real piece of RVing history.





it's about the journey

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Top: Russ Patton enjoys showing visitors the indoor showroom with its scenic murals of great American destinations. *Above:* Russ and Adrienne made a sentimental journey in this Byerly Mansion shortly after they married. A piece of American RVing history, Patton keeps it on permanent display.

But the Byerly didn't go on display immediately. Shortly after Russ and Adrienne married, they hooked it up behind Russ' 1951 Studebaker and spent three weeks RVing America, a trip that gave Russ a new perspective on camping and allowed Adrienne to relive her treasured family experiences. "That Byerly

is really built," Russ recalls, "but it's heavy."

After 24 years at its three-acre facility on Manchester Road in St. Louis County, Byerly Trailer Mfg. Co. moved 15 miles west to Eureka and became Byerly RV Center in 1999 with 12 acres to display a broad variety of RVs.

While the larger location was planned to increase the company's focus on motorhome sales, Byerly nevertheless has been the leader in travel trailer sales in the Greater St. Louis area for seven out of the last 10 years. Today motorhomes account for 40 percent of total RV sales revenue and 20 percent of the total units sold.

"Our motorhome sales doubled in the first quarter of this year over the first quarter of 2006," Patton said. "As you might guess, the Tiffin brands are our premier lines."

"The Phaeton is our most popular Tiffin brand. We literally can't keep them on the lot they sell so quickly," he explained. "The Bay is our second most popular seller. TMH is continuing to grow as an integral part of our business. The company's philosophy is consistent with our philosophy: 'Be deeper than sales.' Service has kept Tiffin growing and it's making our business grow, too," he confirmed.

"In 1974 at our Manchester Road location, Tiffin was the first Class A line we took on," Patton reminisced. "I was running parts and service. I remember calling down to the factory in the seventies and Bob would answer the phone. Back then and now, they have always been an outstanding company to deal with."

Byerly RV has always emphasized service. "I think that we are unique in that most RV companies get a dealership first and then work on bringing in parts and service as a necessity to growing their business. Because Byerly began as a manufacturer, we started out with a strong service facility," he recalled. The company lays claim to having the best parts and service facility in a 200-mile radius for both towables and motorhomes.

Since moving to the Eureka location, staffing in all departments has increased from 20 to 40. The company has 15 employees in the service division including seven certified technicians. "I wanted to set the pace, so I went to school and became a certified tech, too," he explained. "In the history of the company, I have done every job. Of course, I do the business planning and establish our annual goals, but I still like to be the 'lot boy' and make sure the place looks first class," he said.

Patton's management team includes sales manager Dean Voigt, who heads a staff of eight sales people; parts manager Steve Schermaul, who has been with the company over 20 years; service manager Mike Frese, and business manager Ed Prine.

To a great extent, Byerly RV Center is a family operation. Adrienne is the bookkeeper. Their son, Warren, is the company's rental manager. He has grown that division from four to 15 rental units in just two years. Warren offers trailers and both Class C and Class A motorhomes. Russ's two brothers joined the company, Guy in sales and Pete in parts. Pete's wife, Phyllis, handles warranty administration. His brother-in-law, Jay, works in parts. Russ begins to laugh as he continues to relate all of the family connections. "One of our salesmen is my brother's broth-

er-in-law. Our service manager is . . . well, it gets a little complicated. Instead of a family tree, I call it our family bush.”

“Lilly, my assistant, may be the only one here who isn’t kin to anyone in the company,” he smiled. “She keeps me informed and the company glued together.”

Patton earned a degree in business at Washington University as soon as he returned home from the Marines. After leading the company in 1999 to its new 12-acre site in Eureka, Missouri, bordering I-44, he has watched his organization triple its annual sales. In directing marketing and advertising, Patton has astutely used radio, television, and newspaper advertising.

Of particular note are Patton’s one-minute radio spots which feature a lilting song and stories about bringing families closer together that he tells in his calming, baritone voice. The lyrics are priceless: “For the rest of your life, Byerly Trailers, discover your family, show them you care; for the rest of your life, you’ve got to be there.” One story line tells about a postal van named “Rosinante” converted by Patton into a camper in which he and his younger brother Guy slipped off for two weeks to see the West and got back home two days after school started. Patton never mentions prices or inventory. The spots are so good that listeners call in to say how much they enjoy his ads. One lady commented, “Your voice is so convincing, I feel like I am right there with you. I loved your story about Rosinante and another about a father and son playing catch on a camping trip,” she exulted. After listening to ten spots, this writer agrees. Patton could have had a great career in radio advertising.

His marketing talent is also demonstrated in *Outpost*, the company’s quarterly magazine. While the magazine focuses primarily on showcasing inventory, Patton keeps it lively with stories about service and maintenance, personal family camping, and innovative vignettes about the manufacturers. When Freightliner introduced the front-end diesel as “FRED” and Tiffin used the new chassis and engine on the Allegro Bay, Patton cleverly renamed the gas version “ETHYL” and wrote a story to explain the differences – emphasizing, of course, FRED’s advantages.


Patton’s love of the outdoors led him to commission eleven 12-foot murals which grace the circumference of Byerly’s showroom. He reminds us in a brochure that we live in a world of man-made light and noise, and must learn how to block out the distractions in order to focus on our tasks.

“The exhibit,” he explains, “is an expression of the possible when we use the technology of an RV to retreat into the world of ‘Natural Light.’ This is the only world our ancestors knew and it’s still there!” The murals depict both the seasons and the regions of America.

Russ Patton has many facets. Having already discovered two unusual ones, I really wasn’t surprised to learn of his lifetime interest in Mayan anthropology. Graduation requirements at Washington University included several credit hours in a foreign language. To really learn the language, his grandmother counseled him to immerse himself in the culture. While in Mexico to learn Spanish, Russ took a course in anthropology

and was hooked. Since then he has returned to Central America several times to take seminars in Guatemala, Honduras, and Mexico. “Usually there are 50 in the whole seminar and then we do break-out sessions in small groups to tour and study the Mayan sites,” he explained.

The Pattons believe in giving back to their community. To help raise funds for an early learning center in Kirkwood, they auction off a week’s use of one of their rental units each year. The company supports the Opera Theatre of St. Louis and Russ serves as a trustee for MacMurray College in Jacksonville, Illinois, where he attended.

Russ and Adrienne still enjoy camping very much, usually preferring smaller trailers to get into rustic campgrounds. “We are very fortunate,” he said. “Adrienne and I can leave for three or four weeks at a time and not worry about a thing because we have such a great staff.” 

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New King-Dome® Systems Provide Access to All DISH Network HDTV Channels

Bloomington, MN – King Controls, a leading manufacturer of mobile satellite antenna systems for the recreational vehicle industry, announced today the new King-Dome Satellite Systems w/DVB technology (models 9704 & 9754) now have the ability to switch automatically between three DISH Network Satellites.

With this enhanced feature, DISH Network High-Definition subscribers have the ability to move between the 110°, 119° and 129° satellites simply by changing channels with their satellite receiver remote control. This breakthrough in satellite technology allows users to see a complete programming guide and change channels just as they would in their homes, even with HDTV programming.

“Until now, RV owners with a subscription to Dish 1000 programming from Dish Network could not receive the majority of the HD channels that are offered, since most are broadcast from the 129° satellite location” said Craig Bartyzal, Vice President – Sales and Marketing, King Controls. “With this advanced design for automatic satellite switching between 3 satellites, King-Dome customers can now enjoy up to 3 times more HD channels than before. We are especially pleased to have accomplished this without the need for any additional accessory components, so this will become a standard feature on these King-Dome models with no additional cost to our customers.”

For more information on the 9704 or 9754 systems, authorized King-Dome dealers or to learn more about King Controls and its entire product line, please call 800-982-9920 (toll-free) or visit www.kingcontrols.com.

Triple H Announces Leading Edge Technology for High Definition Television and Sound System

Guided by the technology team at Triple H Electronics, Tiffin Motorhomes for 2008 has made its entertainment centers an audio-visual experience with high definition television and 1000-watt sound systems.

David Humphries, president and CEO of Triple H Electronics in Red Bay, Alabama, released information in June describing the high-tech systems that his company custom designed for Tiffin coaches. Using component audio-video cables (which make HD transmission possible) to distribute input/output data from a central, easily serviced black box, the entertainment system receives HD-broadcast *input* from King Dome’s HD satellite receiver, a standard Winegard antenna to receive local programming broadcast in high definition, HD programming via cable service found in campgrounds, and a 5-disc DVD-CD player with high quality picture and digital sound technology. The system transmits *output* to HD-ready Panasonic televisions and sound equipment.

Oregon Coast and Columbia River Gorge Photography Workshop

September 22, Saturday, at noon, through breakfast on Friday, September 28, 2007.

On this photo tour we will divide our time between the rugged and spectacular Oregon coast and the Columbia River Gorge, one of the premier waterfall areas of our country. We will begin our journey with a quick stop at one of the local vineyards on our drive to Newport on the coast. From there we will take day trips north and south from Newport to the many scenic overlooks along the coast. Seastacks, beaches with shore birds, tidal pools and light houses will be just some of our subjects. We will also make a stop at the Newport Aquarium. Returning to Portland on Wednesday we will spend the remainder of our time concentrating on the various waterfalls in the Columbia River Gorge and possibly some other locations around Portland.

Fee: \$1795, deposit \$200. Limited to 8 participants (9 if the last to register is a couple).

Includes:

- 6 nights single occupancy lodging with breakfast
- Van transportation from and back to Portland and to our field sites
- Snacks and drinks in the field
- First night pizza/pasta party
- Instruction and instructional materials and more.

Does not include:

- Film, processing, airfare, meals, or other personal expenses.
- To register or request additional info. contact Tom or Pat Cory at (423) 886-1004 or tompatcory@aol.com.

Panasonic’s new 1000-watt Home Theater System includes “1080-pixel conversion” which takes standard definition (720 x 480 pixels) images from DVDs, which you may now own, and converts them to high definition (1920 x 1080 pixels) images, allowing you to get the highest viewing pleasure possible from your HD-equipped televisions. Combining this technology with the increasing frequency of high definition broadcasting from both cable and HD channels, the Home Theater System delivers an intensely rich and powerful audio-visual experience which one can see, hear, and feel.

The all new 32- and 26-inch wide screen Panasonic HD/LCD televisions with ATSC tuners offer a 178-degree viewing angle provided by the In Plane Switching (IPS) LCD panel, giving the RVer an extraordinary picture from any position in the room.

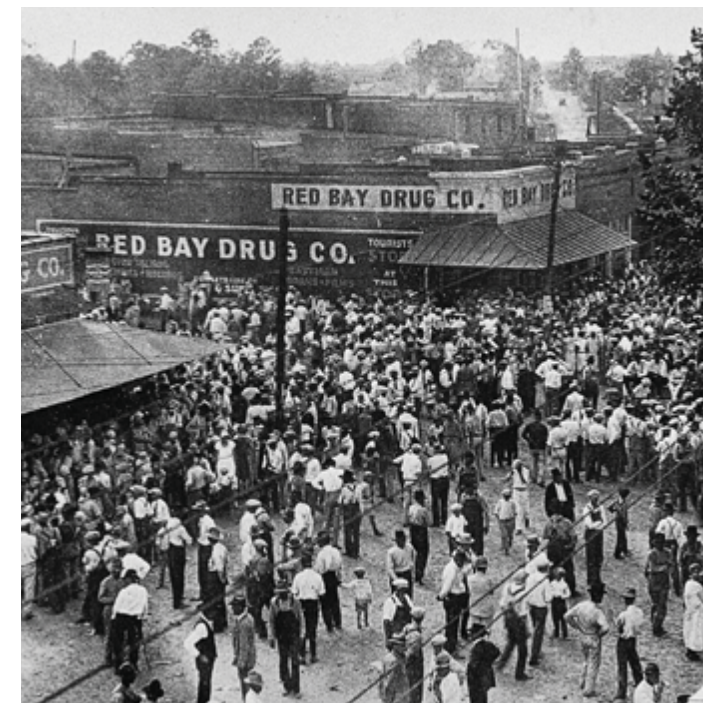
Tiffin and Triple H also offer a 42-inch Panasonic Plasma TV in certain models. Check with your local dealer for more information and availability. ➔

To make this technology easy to use with just the touch of a button, Humphries did away with the old black switching box and developed a new out-of-sight box containing several “Triplevision” HDTV switches and distribution amps, HDMI wiring, and component audio-visual cables. Now, as you turn on any of four possible televisions in a Tiffin coach, a pop-up screen asks you to use your hand-held control and click on one of four inputs: DVD, satellite, antenna, or cable. The feature-rich system is designed for trouble-free use by a non-technical person. For example, one person may watch a satellite broadcast in the living area, another can watch a DVD movie in the bedroom, and the guy grilling hamburgers can be watching a cable program on the outside TV.

For additional information, contact Humphries at (256) 356-9005 or davidhu@hiwaay.net. The company URL is www.tripleelectronics.com

Red Bay Celebrates 100th Anniversary Sept. 15

“Come Home to Red Bay” will be the theme of the city’s 100 th anniversary celebration on September 15. Those attending the event will be treated to an arts and crafts festival, live entertainment, fireworks, story telling, and historical re-enactments. The Tiffin family were among the first residents of Red Bay and early settlers in the Alabama-Mississippi area near the town. RVers in the campground are invited.



Red Bay citizens celebrated the city’s 40th Anniversary in 1947 with picnics, fireworks, and ballgames.

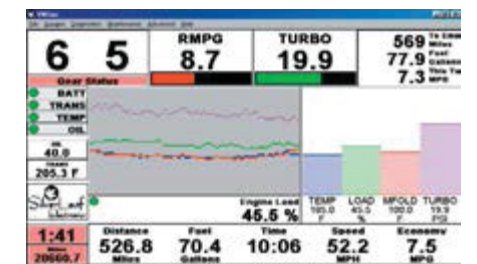


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My Town

How one small business owner rescued the town he loved

text by Emily McMackin • photography by John McWilliams and Fred Thompson

TUSCUMBIA is like many small towns in America. Steeped in history, blessed with friendly charm and full of unforgettable characters, this sleepy town of 8,000 in northwest Alabama captures the essence of what home should be. A booming railroad center for a century and a half, the town established one of the state's first commercial districts in the mid-1800s.

Despite its rich past and quaint appeal, Tuscumbia faced a fate five years ago shared by many small towns: It was dying. The railroad had left years before, and strip malls and big-box stores on highway bypasses lured shoppers away from downtown businesses. Main Street was empty night and day. Historic buildings that once housed booming dry goods stores and specialty shops rotted as merchants gradually abandoned them. With little sales tax revenue coming in, the town struggled to keep up its infrastructure. Tuscumbia was wasting away, and no one was willing to fight for it anymore—until entrepreneur Harvey Robbins came to town.

Robbins, 74, grew up in Tuscumbia and began his career at his father's tire and rubber business downtown. He had been away for years, making his fortune in the plastics industry and building National Floor Products, a vinyl floor tile business that he sold in 1995 for \$120 million. Though he lived and worked

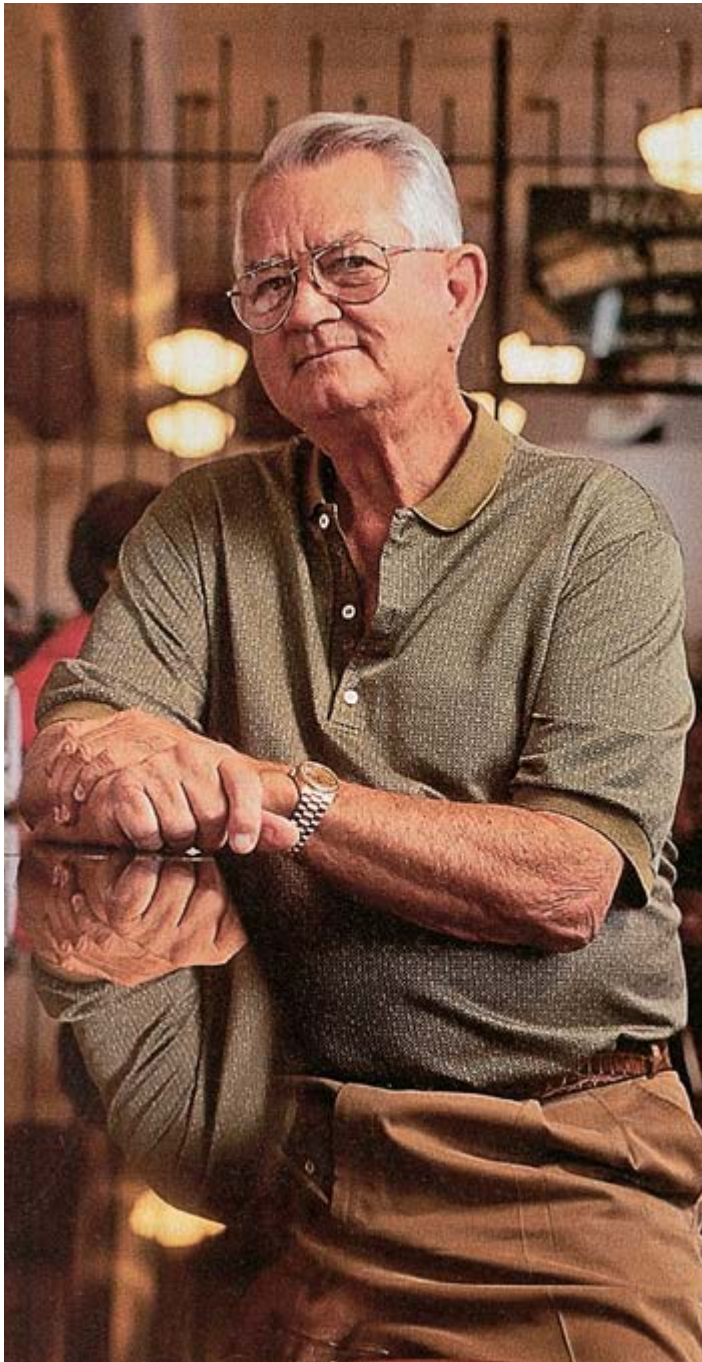
elsewhere, Tuscumbia was always a part of his heart. When he returned decades later, he was shocked by the deterioration of the vibrant railroad town he remembered as a boy.

"It was pathetic, really, what had happened to our town," Robbins recalls. "You could obviously see that the place was drying up, and I didn't see any reason for it to."

So he decided to pour his time, resources and money into restoring Tuscumbia. What started out as a simple plan to renovate a few buildings and beautify the city park soon grew into a grand vision—to spur business downtown and create a tourist destination that would generate enough dollars to put the town back on firm financial footing. Locals had long discussed the need for revitalization, but it took a savvy small-businessman like Robbins to make it happen. He devoted the energy, expertise and ingenuity that he used to make his business a success to saving the town he loved, leading a renaissance that drew people and publicity to Main Street, boosted sales tax revenue and encouraged other entrepreneurs to take risks.

"His efforts have revived the spirit of business in Tuscumbia," Mayor Bill Shoemaker says. "We hope that it continues to grow, and that it attracts new businesses, because that is our salvation—convincing other folks to come and invest in Tuscumbia."





In early 2000, Tuscumbia looked like a ghost town with most buildings and parking spaces empty, and merchants who remained downtown, closing on a whim.

“People ran their businesses like it was their hobby,” recalls former Mayor Wade Gann. “They would run errands and leave a note scrawled on a napkin in the door that said, ‘Be back soon’—without saying when they left.”

The town was so desperate for revenue that Gann considered merging Tuscumbia with another small town nearby, so the two could recruit businesses. The mayor hoped to draw retailers to a nearby highway, but never considered downtown a viable option “because it was so distressed.”

Enter Harvey Robbins. Driving through town one afternoon, he and his wife, Joyce Ann, were saddened by the deterioration of The Palace, a drugstore soda shop where they went on dates in high school. Robbins saw something worth saving in the rotted timbers and caving walls of the shuttered building. “It challenged me to see if bringing that corner back to its original look would spark some interest in bringing Tuscumbia back,” he says.

Already involved in property development, Robbins had a multi-talented construction team in place. His crew used old pictures to replicate the turn-of-the-century era in which the drugstore was established. Robbins found a pharmacist to move in and put the soda fountain back, complete with thick chocolate milkshakes made in steel cups—like the ones he and his wife used to share. The Palace’s grand opening in 2001 drew customers of all ages who bought 10,000 milkshakes that first year.

But Robbins wasn’t finished. Next, he turned his focus to Spring Park—the town’s biggest natural asset. With shade trees and a picturesque creek, the park had potential, but “it looked

At left: Harvey Rollins in a reflective moment at The Palace, where he and Joyce Ann often shared a milkshake in the forties. *Below, L to R:* Rollins transformed this large brick building with verandas and New Orleans-style ironwork. He anchored it with Cold Water Books and the Pilot House Restaurant. • Entrance to Cold Water Books and its relaxed interior. • The veranda accented with ferns is a quiet place to read and enjoy a morning cup of coffee.



like a cesspool,” Robbins recalls, with weeds hiding the water and broken asphalt dumped on its grounds.

In addition to landscaping the park, Robbins came up with an idea to put a waterfall at the end of the creek—not just any waterfall, but a natural waterfall crafted from rock excavated from the region. People began flocking to the park to see the 48-foot creation gush millions of gallons of water a day. To keep them coming back after dark, Robbins added a water show with lighted fountains that shot 150 feet in the sky and were choreographed to music. The spectacle started drawing thousands on the weekends.

Robbins also stocked the creek with rainbow trout, which lured fishermen, and installed a miniature train where for \$1 children could loop the park as many times as they wanted. He helped the city snag more than \$3 million in grants to restore its old train depot and beautify the streets, paying the required matching funds out of his pocket.

Still, Robbins knew that his philanthropy wasn’t enough to revitalize Tuscumbia. He needed the help of other small-business owners, many of whom couldn’t afford to relocate downtown to buildings so dilapidated. So Robbins bought the worst buildings and fixed them up. After opening a nice seafood restaurant and an inviting bookstore with a coffee shop, Robbins opened the rest of the space to merchants for reasonable rents. An embroidery shop, a boutique, a seed store, an insurance agency, a frame shop, antique stores and art galleries emerged in empty storefronts.

All Robbins expected initially was a one percent annual return on his property investment. He hasn’t always reached that goal, but doesn’t see that as a loss because “every little store that opens up adds some money to the bottom line for the city.”

“If merchants are going to come to town, I encourage them to sell something special, something a cut above, something Wal-Mart can’t furnish,” he says. Robbins offers to help newcomers

Today a younger generation enjoys the treats of The Palace’s soda fountain, but a banana split like this one costs a little more than it did in 1950.

with their renovation costs and even has financed some of the businesses himself.

“I couldn’t have done it without the faith he had in me,” says Leslie Cassady, who owns Audie Mescal, an upscale women’s boutique, which she named for her chic grandmother. “This always felt like a pipe dream—one that I didn’t think would ever come true.”

Cassady quit her job as a college recruiter after Robbins encouraged her to pursue her dream in Tuscumbia. Though she believed in the location, the banks didn’t. Several rejected her loan request. “The banks said that they had seen dress shops come and go—mostly they just went,” Cassady recalls.

Audie Mescal finally opened in July 2002 after Robbins co-signed a loan for the store and spruced it up with a new floor, track lighting and spacious dressing rooms. The gamble paid off. “Sales have been great, in fact, they’ve been right on target,” says Cassady, whose shop offers a trendy, eclectic mix of clothes, shoes, handbags and jewelry. “The traffic is good and has gotten even better as more businesses have opened.”

Other merchants who have arrived since share similar stories. Brandon Romans, 25, owner of Romans Piano, never expected to live in his hometown, much less start a business here until he heard about the resurgence downtown and decided he wanted to be a part of it. “Before, the town had no energy, and that has changed,” Romans says. “Now you can bring someone to Tuscumbia and spend several hours sightseeing here.”

That’s exactly the impression that Robbins hopes to create “because the big picture here is tourism,” he says. He is building an antebellum hotel to draw more visitors to Tuscumbia, regularly purchases billboards and sponsors events to publicize the town and buys space in the Sunday newspaper so merchants can advertise together for a discounted rate.

“This town, in particular, has a lot of history and a lot of reasons to preserve it,” Robbins says. “Maybe some towns don’t. But if anyone cares about the past or even the future at all, they don’t want to see their hometown deteriorate.”

Though revenue, residency and retail business are rising for the first time in 30 years, Robbins, who has many more ideas



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for his hometown, sees his work here as only half done. Coldwater Seed & Supply owner Dwight James sees a legacy that he and other small-business owners feel obligated to live up to.

“You’ve got people here taking more pride in their businesses, for a change; you have people cleaning up their buildings, for a change,” James says. “People take risks now that they never would have taken without Harvey’s insight and vision into what Tuscumbia could become.”

“Most people, if they had that kind of money, would spend it on themselves. Few would do all this for a town. Every small town in America would like to have a Harvey Robbins. People don’t invest in towns anymore like he has.” RIS



Cold Water Falls, on the cover of this magazine, may be the world’s largest man-made natural stone waterfall in existence. At 80 feet wide and 48 feet tall, its construction required 1,780 tons of sandstone. 4,320,000 gallons of water flow daily over the falls.

The falls and water display at Spring Park create an exciting panorama during daytime and evening. • The miniature steam-powered engine hauls passengers throughout the park. • Harvey Rollins cuts the ribbon at the opening of the authentic railroad station.



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The Rally in Wine Country— Paso Robles

Tiffin/Allegro Club Western Roundup

by Jimmy Johnson

Sunshine, high temperatures and a constant brisk breeze provided the early May backdrop for the Western Roundup Rally at Wine Country RV Resort in Paso Robles, California. One hundred twenty-five Tiffin-built motorhomes convened for three days of enlightening seminars, delicious food, fun games, and entertaining activities.

Tiffin Regional Sales Representative Dan Blanke and his wife Lynn teamed up to plan and host this delightful event. Members of Chapter 156 Route 66 Allegros provided the manpower for registration and activities coordination. Outdoor activities included golf, horseshoes and washers. Craft and exercise classes were available for those who wished to participate. An afternoon tea provided a venue for attendees to exhibit and discuss their RV-friendly hobbies and crafts.

Sky River RV located in Paso Robles displayed a variety of factory fresh Tiffin-built motor homes at the RV resort for the participants to examine, inspect and acquire. Sky River RV also provided major financial support for the rally.


Educational information and hands-on help were provided by OEM suppliers. Harold Kimbrough represented Onan Generators, Ron Anders came for Freightliner, Jim Kaskey represented ShurFlo, and David Humphries and Marty Vanderforth came from Triple H Electronics. Jan Sadlack provided instruction on the effective operation of the Sharp Convection Microwave Oven.



The music was good, but the dancin' was even better!

Charles Suniga entertained on the keyboard Monday evening and Tuesday morning. "The California Cowboys" provided Tuesday evening's show. Wednesday night after dinner we were treated to a hosted game show with audience participation.

One of the highlights of every Tiffin/Allegro Club rally is the service provided by technicians from Tiffin and the sponsoring dealership. The six techs worked long hours in order to get to all the coaches there. And, as always, they answered a myriad of questions as they worked.

We hope you will join the fun at a Tiffin/Allegro Club rally sometime soon. Until then, travel safely. 

Northwest Tiffin/Allegro Club Rally

by Gail Johnson

June 5th through 9th marked the dates of this year's Allegro Club Rally in the beautiful Northwest. Our rally site was Maple Grove RV Park in tiny Randle, Washington. The park is nestled by the Cowlitz River almost equal distance between Mt. Ranier and Mt. St. Helens. While our glimpses of the several glacier-covered peaks around us were few because of mist and low clouds, the weather conditions did not dampen the spirit of fun and friendship that rally participants experienced being together in such a beautiful place!

Tiffin Northwest Sales Representative Brian Granlund and Allegro Club President Jimmy Johnson coordinated their efforts to come up with a week full of seminars, games, entertainment, and delicious food. Their enthusiastic partner in this three-day effort was Poulsbo RV, which has 6 locations in the state of Washington. Not only did Poulsbo sponsor all eight meals provided, but their employees cooked and served them, as well! The cheerful hands-on participation by Poulsbo management and staff at this rally was positively received by all who attended.

Tuesday was primarily filled with registration and getting the 100 coaches parked and settled in. Registration was handled by David and Rhonda Cotton from Chapter 54 Puget Sound Allegros. Tuesday evening's sumptuous "Hoe-Down" feast of barbeque ribs, pulled pork, and chicken (all cooked outdoors on site) set the pace for what was to come.

Continued on page 60



Judy Tiffin (right), an avid craftsperson herself, chats with an Allegro friend about hobbies easily adapted to RV living.

ALLEGRO CLUB 2007-2008 RALLY SCHEDULE

ALLEGRO CLUB JELLYSTONE JUBILEE

Yogi Bear's Jellystone Park Camp Resort, Warrens, WI
August 20-24, 2007 (Checkout Aug. 25)

ALLEGRO CLUB FALL GULF GETAWAY

Gulf Breeze Resort, Gulf Shores, AL
Oct. 1-5, 2007 (Checkout Oct. 6)

ALLEGRO CLUB FLORIDA FALL FESTIVAL

Rally Park, Seffner, FL
Nov. 5-9, 2007 (Checkout Nov. 10)

ALLEGRO CLUB NIAGARA FALLS FLING

Four Mile Creek Campsite, Youngstown, NY
June 16-18, 2008 (Checkout June 19)

TIFFIN/ALLEGRO CLUB BAY BASH

TBA, Bay Area, CA
June 24-26, 2008 (Checkout June 27)

ALLEGRO CLUB BRANSON OR BUST

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THE OREGON COAST

Stormy, Wild, Wonderful and Beautiful

Text and photography by Norman Spray

Dear Editor,

You said, “Go West. Experience it, then tell readers what there is to see and do in a motorhome on the Oregon Coast.”

Turns out, two weeks just isn’t enough time to explore the attractions here. Nor can “telling about it” capture the grandeur, the excitement, or the feel of this coast, its scenic wonders and its quaint seaside towns and villages. This is a region perfect for high motorhoming adventure but words fail me. There aren’t enough superlatives to picture the incredibly lovely, breathtaking views you get of the blue Pacific as your coach emerges from a green forest and climbs to the apex of a cliff-side summit hundreds of feet above a pounding surf or glistening beach. Nor can words convey the relaxing sound of a rolling surf, a rippling river, or the thrill of hooking a 40-pound salmon.

This is a place you have to experience. It is a coast like no other, sometimes stormy one day, peacefully calm the next, teeming with birds and wildlife, keeping people engaged in everything from kite flying to golf to water sports of all kinds to theater to shopping for serious art or the work of chain-saw artists.

In our two weeks, we’ve driven the 353 miles of All American Highway 101 starting at Astoria on the mighty Columbia River (which separates Oregon and Washington state) up north and ending at Brookings Harbor near Oregon’s southern border with California, passing through the north, central, and south coast regions. We’ve kicked up sand wading along calm beaches, crossed 26 rivers and innumerable “creeks” large enough to call rivers, wound through forests and been enthralled by the

vivid colors of blooming rhododendron flashing brilliantly in gardens and even hillsides where they grow wild. And:

◆ We've sighted a mother otter swimming with a baby in her mouth and a bald eagle perched high above as we skimmed over the indescribably picturesque Rogue River on a 64-mile trip in a jet boat operated by Jerry's Rogue Jets out of Gold Beach.

◆ We've gulped for air and held on for dear life as we zoomed to the blue-sky apex of a mountainous 200 feet high sand dune before "falling off" the other side in a customized dune buggy driven by Rich Burkholder, one of the owners of Spinreel Dune Buggy and ATV Rental between Reedsport and North Bend. His is one of several similar businesses helping people have fun on the dunes of the Oregon Dunes National Recreation Area, the biggest expanse of coastal sand in the U.S. It stretches 50 miles between Florence and Coos Bay. Some of these ever-changing dunes pile up to 500 feet high.

◆ Visiting Fort Clatsop and its exhibits near Astoria has given us new appreciation for the accomplishment and hardships endured by Lewis and Clark and their Corps of Discovery. The fort, a copy of the original where the Corps spent the winter of 1805-06 after arriving on Pacific shores, has been rebuilt after it burned in 2005. It is part of the Lewis and Clark National and State Historical Parks made up of 12 sites in Oregon and Washington. A six-and-a-half mile hiking trail takes hikers from the Fort to the Pacific at Sunset Beach. It is a route members of the expedition used for hunting, fishing, and getting salt from the sea.

◆ At a viewing area just outside Reedsport, we've admired a herd of grazing elk. Magnificent animals.

◆ At the Wayfarer Restaurant in Cannon Beach, we've enjoyed fine fresh seafood, excellent clam chowder, and a picture window view of Haystack Rock, a remarkable geological landmark that rises 235 feet above the shoreline. At the water's edge, it stands guard over one of the best of the coast's great sandy beaches. Bird watching here is exceptional with over 2,000 birds nesting and using the rock. Thousands of tufted puffins hang out on Haystack from early spring to early summer. Western gulls, pigeon guillemot, cormorants, bald eagles, harlequin ducks, and black oystercatchers are among other birds that nest, feed, or otherwise use the rock.

◆ Any visit to Astoria, the oldest American settlement west of the Rockies, should include a stop at the 125 foot high Astoria Column, a historical, artistic structure patterned after Trajan's Column in Rome. A mural spiraling up the outside has 14 scenes and over 20 text messages relating to the history of the area. We chickened out on climbing the 164 steps to the top and the reputedly marvelous views one gets of the ocean, the Columbia river where it meets the sea, the 4.1 mile long bridge that connects Oregon and Washington, Saddle Mountain, and the Clatsop Plain. Nor did we find time to ride Astoria's 1913 trolley that runs along the town's Riverwalk.



Yaquina Head Lighthouse, tallest on the Oregon Coast, stands 93' tall. Built in 1873, the lighthouse continues to mark the coastline nightly using the original lens. • Beach-combers work in shadow of Haystack Rock, a 235-foot high geological formation millions of years old.





Tillamook Cheese Visitor Center is one of the most popular tourist attractions in Oregon, hosting over a million visitors each year. • This ornate bridge crosses Yaquina Bay at Newport.

OREGON COAST

BY THE NUMBERS

- 363 miles of coast line between historic Astoria on the north and Brookings Harbor near the southern border.
- 26 river crossings.
- 50 miles of beach front sand dunes, some 200' to 500' high.
- 27 museums, including Fort Clatsop, part of the the Lewis and Clark National and State Historical Parks. It was at this fort that the Lewis and Clark Corps of Discovery spent the winter of 1805-06.
- 140 RV sites, camps, resorts and parks, some exceptional.
- 17 state parks, dozens of state recreation sites and scenic waysides.
- Dozens of walking trails ranging from easy to challenging to downright difficult, including the Oregon Coast trail that takes hikers across capes, beaches, dunes, mountains and forests as it winds down the entire coastline.
- 25 golf courses, some world-class.
- 173 birding hot spots for viewing 450 bird species.
- 27 “Whale Watching Spoke Here” sites manned by trained volunteers to help visitors spot the gray whale during peak migrating periods: last week of December and Spring Break in March.
- River and/or deep sea fishing available at virtually all of over 30 harbors.

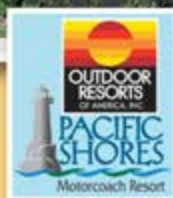
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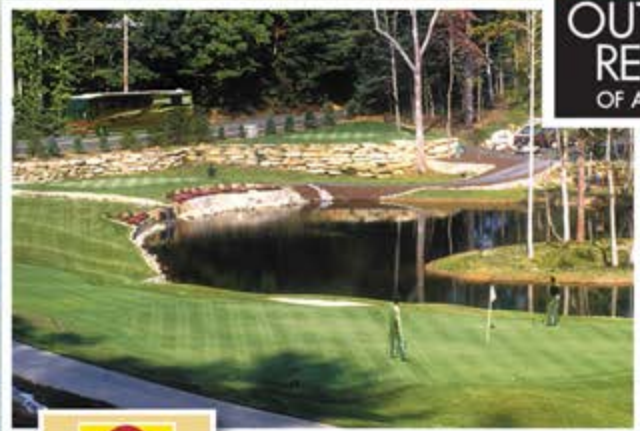
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◆ Just east of Cannon Beach at Klootchey Creek Park, we saw Oregon's largest tree that also claims title as the world's tallest Sitka spruce tree. Though injured (hit by lightning years ago), diseased, infested and maybe tragically on its last century or so despite heroic efforts to save it, this 700-year-old giant is 216 feet tall with a trunk that is 52 feet around. Close-up viewing was prohibited when we visited because of possible danger from falling limbs.



◆ Sea Lion Caves 11 miles north of Florence on Highway 101 are said to feature the world's largest sea cave. With other tourists, we rode an elevator 208 feet down a shaft cut through natural basalt and arrived at a grotto thought to be the only mainland rookery of the huge Stellar's sea lion in the lower 48 states. Sea lions were visible lying on rocks at water's edge and within the cave but photography was difficult since camera flashes are prohibited. An entrance fee is required, but the experience is more than worth the time and money.

◆ Highway 101 makes a 30-mile inland loop (the only time it leaves the shoreline for any distance) through dairy pastures and farms between the towns of Garibaldi and Cloverdale. The biggest attraction on this loop is Tillamook where some of the country's most popular cheeses are made at the Tillamook Cheese Factory and the Blue Heron Cheese and Wine Company. At the Tillamook Cheese Visitor's Cen-



From top: Author Norman Spray (right) visits with Rita and George Serban of Bakersfield, Calif., in front of their 2007 Allegro Bus at the Mill RV Resort on Coos Bay in North Bend, Oregon. The Serbans purchased their bus, powered by a 400 Cummins diesel engine, in August, 2006. "We just love it," says Rita, who has taken RV driving lessons. George claims, "She does as much driving as I do." • Jet boat rides up the Rogue River from Gold Beach thrill passengers. • AT drivers experience thrills and chills as they climb and "dive" on the massive sand dunes that stretch for 50 miles between Highway 101 and the Pacific shorelines. These dunes make up the Oregon Dunes National Recreation Area, the largest expanse of coastal sand in the U.S.

ter, we took a self-guided tour and observed cheese packaging “assembly lines” through second-floor viewing windows. The tour ended with delicious (free) samples of cheeses sold under the well-known Tillamook brand. This center, said to be one of the 10 most popular tourist attractions in Oregon, hosts over a million visitors each year. Of course it’s touristy, but you gotta do it. Fortunately, there’s plenty of parking space for your motorhome. Just south of Tillamook is an attraction we saw only from afar. It is the Tillamook Air Museum, a collection of World War II aircraft and blimps housed in an enormous building acclaimed by Guinness as the world’s largest clear span wooden structure. It is one of two hangars that housed blimps used for anti-submarine patrol and warfare in World War II. The other building burned in 1992.

◆ The idea of rainfall averaging over 6.5 feet each year is almost inconceivable to this Texan used to having annual rainfall measured in inches, but there are some localized pockets along the Oregon Coast where real rain forests thrive. Midway between Port Orford and Gold Beach, one such rain forest provides a setting for The Prehistoric Gardens, where sculptor E.V. Nelson has created lifelike replicas of dinosaurs and other prehistoric animals. Based on extensive research at this country’s larger natural history museums, these replicas are said to be scientifically accurate. As we toured this “lost world,” we were equally impressed with gigantic ferns and the size of trees that have lived for hundreds of years in this protected valley where up to 10 feet of rain has fallen in some years. It’s educational, unusual, and a must-see.

◆ In Lincoln City, we found an entire block full of riotous flowering color when we visited the Connie Hansen Garden Conservancy in the middle of town. Created by the work of one woman over 20 years, the garden’s collection of rhododendron, azaleas, Japanese and Siberian iris, and geraniums draw garden enthusiasts from the world over.

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CORY PHOTOGRAPHY

Wildlife viewing on the Oregon Coast



Upper left: Inquisitive puffins are seen frequently along the Oregon coast. • Above: We photo-captured a herd of Roosevelt Elk along Dean Creek Elk Viewing Area on Hwy. 38 about 3.5 miles east of Reedsport. • Upper Right: An otter swims unconcerned before a viewing station near Newport.



CORY PHOTOGRAPHY

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Continued from page 51

◆ The Oregon Coast Aquarium, located on Yaquina Bay in Newport, proved a pleasant stop. This 29-acre facility exhibits nearly 200 animal species including seals, sea lions, otters, and a giant octopus. At one point, you can view many of these through glass walls as you walk through a sea cave.

There's more we need to do. For instance, we have yet to try our luck fishing either the rivers or the ocean. Snorkeling, surfboarding, wind surfing, kite flying (there are summer and fall kite festivals at the Devil's River wayside in Lincoln City), beach combing, antique hunting, whale watching, and birding all are good here.

We've yet to stroll the two-mile boardwalk promenade at Sea-

side or colorful Old Town Florence. Or hunt for the over 2,000 blown glass floats Lincoln City "plants" each year on its seven miles of sandy beaches. Art galleries abound in many of the towns.

There are trails untaken, tide pools unexplored, storms yet to come, gray whales yet to be spotted, and fresh seafood yet to be sampled. We need more time. Besides, it's summer but temperatures seldom reach the 80s here. So you see, dear editor, we're not over-enthused about coming home to a broiling Texas sun. **RIS**

OREGON COAST INFORMATION

Nearly every town on the coast has a Visitor Center and/or Chamber of Commerce which provides information covering attractions and camping in their area.

Best overall: Oregon Coast Visitor's Association: 888-628-2101 or 541-574-2679 info@visittheoregoncoast.com and/or www.visittheoregoncoast.com

For state parks: Oregon State Parks: 1-800-551-6949 or 800-452-5687 www.oregonstateparks.org



Check the weather frequently and reward yourself with a beautiful Oregon coast sunset.

CORY PHOTOGRAPHY

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Interviews from Phoenix, Arizona

by Harold Breuninger



Jim and Eleanor Cartnal

Home: Covina, California
Interviewed at Voyager RV Resort,
Phoenix, Arizona

- They love their 2006 Allegro.
- Jim is a retired computer specialist from Boeing.
- Eleanor retired as a system analyst from a California utility company.
- Their only previous motorhoming experience was renting a Class C for five days in 1996.
- Immediately upon acquiring their Allegro, they departed for a trip east, through Red Bay, then north to New England before heading west and south back to California. Their first venture covered 8,951 miles.
- Their Red Bay experience was extremely pleasant and impressive.
- They particularly like the fact that Bob Tiffin stands fully behind his product. Whatever they wanted or their coach needed was promptly taken care of.
- They have two sons and four grandkids. The grandkids range in age from five down to nine months.
- Jim does all of the driving averaging between 225 to 300 miles per day.
- Eleanor's hobbies include needlework, history, and travel.
- When home, Jim enjoys being a docent at the Southwest Museums in Los Angeles.
- The Cartnals are out-going people who appreciate the friendliness of their fellow campers.
- When asked about their most interesting experience, they reply "learning to live 24/7 with each other in close quarters (this author's impression was they manage that very well).



Mike & Lynn Wascak

Former Hometown: Great Falls, Virginia
Interviewed at Voyager RV Resort,
Phoenix, Arizona

- They became full-timers in October 2004.
- After studious and prolonged research, the Wascaks chose a new 2004 Allegro Bus.
- After 35 years Mike retired as a communications specialist for one of the federal government's "alphabet" agencies.
- Lynn retired as a coordinating editor for USA Today.
- They have five children and one grandchild living in Florida, Maryland, and Northern Virginia, giving them ample reason to travel east.
- Before becoming motorhomers, they conducted motorcycle tours throughout the Mid-Atlantic States.
- Although they both drive the Bus, Mike does the majority of the driving.
- Their usual schedule is to work-camp for three months, tour for three months, and then work-camp again as they cover the country.
- When in touring mode, they usually travel 200 – 250 miles in a day.
- They have been to Red Bay (and the Coon Dog Cemetery) but missed Swamp John's.
- Their overall impression of Red Bay and its people was very positive.
- A harrowing experience was taking NC Rt. 64, (running from Rosman to Cashiers) toward Lake Toxaway. The road, although marked "scenic" by AAA, became extremely narrow with sharp blind turns. They made it safely, but with some anxious moments!
- They maintain a website of their experiences at www.lifeonthebus.com.



Rick & Teri Walker

Home: Seabrook, South Carolina
Interviewed at Desert's Edge RV Village,
Phoenix, Arizona

- The Walkers have a 2001 Allegro Bus named the *Gator Victory Express*.
- This is their first motorhome.
- Before retirement as a Marine, Rick flew F4s and F18s, and now he is an F18 simulator instructor.
- Teri is a Mary Kay consultant.
- They have one son in Delray Beach, Florida, and a daughter at Duke Medical School.
- At home they have been adopted by two feral cats who do not travel with them.
- They attend every Florida Gator football game at home or away, including the 2007 BCS National Championship where their beloved Gators defeated the Ohio State Buckeyes.
- They also attend as many NASCAR events as possible.
- To date they have over 93,000 miles on their Bus.
- They are "on the road" somewhere almost every weekend.
- Teri does some of the driving because Rick gets "grumpy" after 400 miles.
- They have been to Red Bay two or three times and are impressed with the service.
- Their favorite activities are watching the Gators and meeting other RVers.
- Rick met up with an old Marine buddy while here in Phoenix that he had not seen in 10 years.
- His hobby, besides the Gators, is playing golf.
- Teri's hobby, besides the Gators, is gardening and doing needle-point.

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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Home Office Is Where the Allegro Bus Is

‘Mud Logging’ Firm Converts Motorhome into Traveling Executive Office



It's probably safe to say that most Allegro Bus owners purchase their motorhomes for vacation travel or even full-time occupancy after retiring from the business world. For Ron and Charlotte Riley, it's different. Very much **in** business, they've converted their 2007 42-ft. QDP into 24-hour executive offices to help them meet the always exacting and some-

times immediate service requirements of customers who drill oil and gas wells in West Texas, New Mexico, and Oklahoma.

Ron is president and Charlotte is comptroller of Riley Geological Consultants, Inc., a firm specializing in hydrocarbon well logging, commonly known as "mud logging" in the petroleum industry. The company operates 18 specially-

Above: Ron Riley, president of Riley Geological Consultants, discusses an incoming report with wife and comptroller Charlotte at her work station occupying a driver-side slide-out.

Text and Photography by Norman Spray



Ron and Charlotte Riley outside their Allegro Bus. The Bus (note satellite atop) is equipped with three different means of internet access, allowing the Rileys to manage their company without interruption while on the road. That's also their truck beside the Bus. They tow it behind the 2007 Allegro Bus.

equipped “mobile laboratories” manned by geologists on location at drilling sites across their service area. The geologists analyze underground formation cuttings “captured” in returned drilling mud. They are the first to detect the probability of success at a drilling location.

With these units working over hundreds of miles away from the home base in Slaton, TX, the technical and financial management of their service requires on-demand response at any hour. “Drilling is a round-the-clock operation,” Ron says.

“We have to be available, no matter what time it is or where we are.”

To do this and yet travel either for business or pleasure, the Rileys have placed two computerized workstations in the living area of their 42-ft Bus. Their communication systems access from any location the internet and the company’s computer network, often while the Allegro office rolls down the highway at 70 mph.

“Without this capability, we’d be as home bound as a dairyman who has to milk his cows twice a day,” Ron says. “As it is, we’re in the office wherever we go.”

There have been times when that has been a very good thing. There was the call Ron got at his desk while Charlotte was driving them toward their ranch near Mora, New Mexico, for instance. It came from a geologist employed by an oil company who had contracted Riley Geological for mud logging. “What are you doing?” the geologist asked.

“That’s bad news for me,” he complained when Ron told him the Allegro Bus was on the road to New Mexico. “I’m unable to get on your web site to check the log on the well we are drilling in Garza County, Texas. It’s critical and I was hoping you’d be in the office to help me out.”

Logs routinely are posted on the Riley Geo web site in separate mailboxes for each drilling location, but access is restricted to authorized persons using specific passwords. Ron suspected the geologist’s password had not been “set.” Using Internet in Motion, a cellular system that connects even when rolling, Ron set the password and had the log in the geologist’s hands in about two minutes. “How’d you do that and you out there on the highway?” the geologist wanted to know.

What Is Mud Logging?

Mud logging is one of hundreds of technological improvements made in the oil and gas drilling industry over the past half century or so.

“In the long-ago old days,” says Ron Riley, president, “drillers simply bored or pounded a bit through sub-surface formations until they hit hydrocarbons or gave up. Sometimes oil and/or gas exploded to the surface, sending thousands of gallons up in a classic gusher. This precipitated joyous shouts of ‘Eureka!’ but was also hazardous and wasted huge amounts of oil and/or gas before wells could be brought under control.”

“Today’s drillers pump heavy viscous ‘mud’ into the hole with and behind the bit to stem or choke the flow of oil or gas reservoirs encountered. As the bit cuts through underground strata, pieces of the rock, shale, sand or other formations are

brought to the surface in returning ‘mud.’ Analyzing these fragments at 10’ intervals is the work of mud loggers like us. With our specialized TRU-GAS® detection equipment, experience, and expertise, we can determine the following: (1) the relative porosity and other characteristics of a given strata; whether it is or is not likely to yield hydrocarbons; and (3) confirm whether it is in fact a pay zone. TRU-GAS® Detection Systems designed by our own Bob Thrasher and manufactured in our Research and Development Center combine with MainLog® computer software to deliver the industry’s most precise oil and gas detection.”

“We are always the first to detect hydrocarbons,” Riley said. “At that point, we mud loggers get to be the ones to yell ‘Eureka!’ It makes no difference how long you’ve been in the profession, it’s that moment that makes mud logging an exciting profession.”

That geologist has since become a drilling operator who contracts Riley Geological for every well he drills where mud logging is specified.

On another occasion, Ron got a call from a driller wanting to get into computer archives for historical logging data. This time the call came when the Allegro was in an area with poor cell signals. Ron asked the customer to give him five minutes. Charlotte pulled the bus to a stop beside the road, Ron ran up the self-acquiring Hughes Direcway® satellite dish on the roof, and in two minutes the Ground Control® positioning system had locked onto a satellite signal. Ron pulled up the requested data from network archives and had it in the hands of the customer within 10 minutes.


Much of the modification needed to build an office in their Allegro Bus was done by Ron and/or technicians in the home shop where the company's fifth-wheel mobile labs are fitted with the equipment—much of it proprietary—that Riley geologists use to analyze “cuttings” brought to the surface in drilling mud. Both office desks and flooring were fabricated in this shop.

Ron's work station uses space originally occupied by a couch on the passenger-side slide-out in the living area. Charlotte's desk across the room replaced the dinette on the driver-side slide-out. On his side, Ron installed tongue-in-groove oak flooring that makes it easy to roll his office chair about the space. When it's time to eat, they bring out the TV trays.

Ron and Charlotte are impressed with how their diesel-powered Allegro Bus performs both on the plains and in the mountains. Charlotte, who does much of the driving, is particularly impressed with handling characteristics. “It's even smoother and easier than the 2003 model 38-ft. Allegro Bus we had previously,” she says. “It's a dream to drive. And we're very comfortable and at home in it anywhere.”

For a couple growing a business rather than retiring from one, always being in the office removes much of the pressure and stress that can result when events demand time away from home base. Recently, for example, payday for all Riley field people came while Ron, Charlotte, and some of their technical people were manning a company exhibition booth at a convention of the American Association of Petroleum Geologists in Wichita Falls, some 200 miles from Slaton.

“Before we built the mobile office, payroll would have put us in a tizzy to get home to an office to accumulate and process data,” Ron says. “As it was, no sweat. We just stayed on the parking lot where we camped, ran up the satellite dish, accessed the web and pulled in all the payroll data. We reviewed and processed it, then emailed information for each employee's pay to a payroll company we employ. In minutes, they'd made arrangements for direct deposits to each employee's bank account.”

Always being in the office may sound like a little too much work and too little play for some but, says Ron: “For us, it works. We can do what we have to do and play some, too. Obviously, since it is our second one, we think it would be hard to find a vehicle more adaptable for our use than the Allegro Bus.” 

Effective Communications Make Office on Wheels Work

Rapid transfer, processing and handling of data from far-flung well drilling sites is a must for Riley Geological Consultants, Inc. Mobile labs housing geologists at 18 drilling sites constantly record drilling activity every hour of the day. Mud logging information is transmitted via satellite to the company's web site and stored in separate “mail boxes” for each well.

Customers anywhere in the world can use computers to retrieve this information and monitor drilling activity at their particular wells in “Real Time” as long as they have access to the internet.

The management “nerve center” for all this activity and more, including payroll and financial data, is Riley Geological President Ron Riley's desk in the 42-ft Allegro Bus. He and his wife Charlotte, who is company comptroller, manage to stay in complete control and are instantly responsive to customer needs even when their “executive offices” are speeding down Oil Patch highways.

Riley has installed three separate systems in the Bus to access the internet and, through it, Riley's computer network. These include:

- Use of a cell phone card which is plugged into a computer to connect to the cellway internet. In the Riley Allegro Bus, the computer is a small Sony Vaio. It rides in drawer space in front of the passenger seat. Least expensive of internet access systems installed on the Bus, it works while the Bus is rolling so long as a good signal is available. Riley uses an Alltel Passport 1xEVDO PC connection card by KYOCERA.

- An Internet in Motion® digital cellular system with a cellular antenna that is installed on the bus' roof; a processing modem only about 5"×5" in size; and a Parker Vision Wireless Router that makes a WiFi signal available at both work stations and allows laptops to stay on the internet while being used anywhere in the Bus. Manufacturer's suggested retail price for this system is around \$2500, Riley says.

- The fastest internet service by far is via a Direcway® self-acquiring satellite disk mounted atop the Allegro Bus. It can be raised or lowered at the touch of a button. A linked positioning system made by Ground Control® automatically seeks out a strong satellite signal and locks the disk onto it in minutes, Riley says.

Alltel provides Riley's cell phone service. Strong (nearly three watt) Telular cell phones are used in the “executive office” Bus and at each mobile lab on drilling sites. The mobile labs at drilling locations also use Direcway® satellite dishes for internet access but economics demands these be manually positioned for signal reception.

Continued from page 45

Wednesday was a day set aside for seminars, and an additional treat for all was the attendance at the rally of TMH President Bob Tiffin and his wife Judy. They made themselves available over the three-day period to all who wished to talk to them, whether it was to simply greet them, discuss a problem, or even share a recipe! It was a common sight to see Bob moving about the big tent shaking hands, or to see Judy chatting with someone over a cup of tea.


Seminar presenters included David Humphries from Triple H Electronics, Harold Kimbrough from Onan Generators, Janet Sadlack for Sharp Microwave Convection Cooking and Lori Neely, who taught a fun class of jewelry-making. Our entertainment for Wednesday evening during and after dinner was singer-pianist and old friend Charles Suniga, with a special guest appearance by Jessica Johnson, Jimmy and Gail's 17-year old daughter, who sang and played a Billy Joel number.

Thursday's schedule included seminars by Ron Anders from Freightliner and a Q & A session by Tiffin representative Tom Webber. Additionally, Bob Tiffin was available to offer a few remarks and to answer questions.

Thursday afternoon two fun events were scheduled which had great participation—an on-site golf tournament sponsored by Poulsbo and a craft/hobby “show and tell” session and tea party. Gail and Jessica were hostesses for the tea, in which participants were invited to bring a favorite teacup and

share information about it. One rally-goer brought an heirloom cup that was over 200 years old! A lovely tea table was set, and attendees enjoyed visiting and getting to know each other better. We all enjoyed a laugh or two over a tea trivia quiz, and several door prizes were given away. After the tea party, those who also brought craft or hobby items took turns sharing information about the variety of activities which keep our travelers busy on the road.

Thursday evening's festivities capped off a busy day with a steak and chicken feast. Allegro Club President Jimmy Johnson wrapped up the final evening of the rally with recognition of the winners of the golf tournament and checks awarded to the chapters with 4 or more coaches from individual chapters in attendance. This rally was a great success, largely because of the enthusiastic cooperation between Tiffin Motorhomes, Poulsbo RV, and Maple Grove RV Resort. While it would be difficult to mention every person who contributed to the success of the rally, special thanks also goes to Allegro Club Membership Coordinator Cynthia Skinner, Poulsbo VP Steve Perry and GM Thomas Chelone, Sue & Dennis at Maple Grove RV Resort, and Gaylon Homestead (who coordinated the golf tournament).

We hope that you will join us at a rally soon. We feel that we offer great “bang for your buck”! In this rally, the meals alone were worth the cost of registration! Travel safely, and we hope to see you soon . . . “roughing it smoothly”! 



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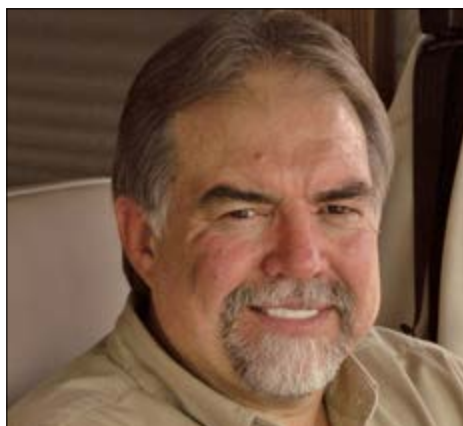
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Inman's Answers

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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 1994 Allegro in which we have made many trips and enjoyed every one. The paint has faded some and the stripes are in bad shape. Should we have new ones applied or can we paint the original stripes? We are seniors and plan to keep our Allegro a few more years.

William M. Hand
 Newton, Mississippi

Dear William,
 The most difficult part of the job will be removing the old decals and sanding the fiberglass

down to a smooth surface again. You can do the removal yourself. Since the decals for 1994 are no longer available, any good automotive paint shop can repaint the decals in any color(s) you choose. This is not high tech painting, so if you have a friend in the business you can probably get the job done inexpensively.

I have recently upgraded from my 1998 Allegro Bus to a 2003 Phaeton. I have searched for the TV antenna power-booster switch. It is not located in the front left cabinet next to the TV (as suggested on page 4-5, Owner's Manual). We often dry camp and use overflow sites, so this feature is important to us. Thanks for your help.

James Hapgood
 Turlock, California

Dear James,
 The booster for the TV antenna is located in the selector box where you choose TV 1 or TV 2. Once you turn the power button on and the red light is on, it automatically turns the booster on for the TV antenna.

I have a 2001 Allegro Bus which I have enjoyed very much. The decals on the side are cracking badly. I tried to shine them, but that did not improve their appearance. What can I do? If there is nothing that can be done, how do you take them off? My wife and I are ministers and travel to different churches. Lately, we have become very self-conscious about the coach's tattered appearance. Another problem is that the tile around the toilet has raised up about 1/16-inch. How do I solve this problem? Thanks.

Barney Barnett
 Barnett Ministries

Dear Barney,
 For your decals, please see the solution suggested above for Mr. Hand. However, decals for 2001 are still available if you decide not to make the repair by painting. As for the toilet, the first thing you must do is pull the toilet to see what caused the problem. If the problem was caused by a leak in the seal, then repair the flooring first and replace the seal.

I have a 2003 Allegro on a Workhorse chassis. I had problems with the engine vapor lock and this was resolved with the fuel pump recall in September 2004. Since then, the engine jerks when running at around 2000 rpm under a load (accelerating or slight grade). It does the

same thing when accelerating from a stop. Could there still be problems with the fuel system? The fuel filter was replaced March 2005 at routine 18,000 mile maintenance. There is now 26,000 miles on the unit. Thanks.

James W. McCarver
 Prescott, Arizona

Dear James,
 This could be a fuel filter problem, but it could also be a line that got kinked or restricted when they dropped the fuel tank to replace the pump. You will need to go to a Workhorse service center to check the pressure on the fuel pump.

We are the original owners of a 2005 Phaeton. We have never been to a service center since we bought it. The Phaeton is a great coach! Our question concerns the heating units. When switched to "Electric Heat," both gas and electric heat come on. Is it operating correctly or could it be wired wrong?

Kent & Grace Pintus
 Ivins, Utah

Dear Kent and Grace,
 We are glad to hear that your coach has been nearly troublefree. When you first turn on the heat in your 2005 Phaeton with a Coleman air conditioner and heat pump, both the furnace and the heat pump will come on simultaneously to bring the room temperature up to your desired setting as quickly as possible. After that temperature is reached, the gas furnace cuts off and the electric heat pump maintains the temperature to your setting. Of course, this saves you fuel and uses the electricity supplied by the campground.

Does Tiffin Motorhomes have any plans to make a Class C on the Chevrolet Kodiak chassis? Some floor plans using that chassis have garage space in the rear for four wheelers.

Charles R. Breckenridge
 Moriarty, New Mexico

Dear Charles,
 Not in the foreseeable future.

I have a 1998 31-ft. Class A with a Chevy P-30 chassis. I am really disappointed with the 454's poor gas mileage and its overall performance. With regard to power, economy, and overall operation, can you tell me about the performance of the older Dodge 440 engine with a 727

transmission that was used in earlier Allegro motorhomes. The change-over isn't that difficult. The engine will set back farther than the 454 and the drive line will need to be cut and the motor mount holes elongated down a couple of inches. With new cables for the 727 and E-brake, it won't be a difficult swap-out. Your insight would be helpful and appreciated.

Hank Wice
Glendale, Oregon

Dear Hank,
I have not heard of anyone making such a conversion. You seem to be confident that it is do-able, but the engine and the transmission would likely cost more than the current value of the coach. Most mechanic shops could not handle the project competently. If you decide to go ahead with the conversion, I would like to hear about the results and the performance you get after the conversion.

I have a 2003 Allegro 31-ft., but yet it contains fixtures (plumbing, lighting, etc.) that were used in the 1990s coaches that Tiffin built. Is it possible to upgrade and modernize my coach using easy to obtain parts? Do you have a catalog of parts from which I can order?

Pam Wilson
Austin, Texas

Dear Pam,
It is common for TMH to use lighting and plumbing fixtures for several years when we have a very dependable product. A lot of the parts we use today can be found in home supply stores. However, we do not have a catalog of bathroom and galley fixtures that are in current use.

We love our 2002 Phaeton and *Roughing It Smoothly*. The first article we read each quarter is the "Dear Danny" section. A common difficulty with parking most motorhomes is correctly positioning your coach at the water-electric pylon in close proximity to the bays where your hook-ups are located. **Solution:** Mount a video camera between the two bays and run coax to the "B" input of the video monitor in the dash. I would be happy to purchase such a "kit" if TMH could provide it.

Bruce & Marlene Berry
Longview, Washington

Dear Bruce and Marlene,
On some of the monitors that we have used, you could make that connection. However, we

would have to check your particular coach to see if that is possible.

We own a 2005 40QDP Allegro Bus (V62171). I would like to know if you could make the following three changes to the 12-volt DC wiring:

(1) Make it possible to operate the outside cameras from either chassis power or house power. This would allow operation of the cameras for security while parked.

(2) Change the power supply for the inside rear view mirror to house power to allow the continuous display of the temperature and the coach's direction

(3) Separate the air horn and chassis horn circuits so that each one can be operated independently.

Wiley M. Cowell
Sioux Falls, South Dakota

Dear Wiley,
Q1 and Q2. Changing the cameras and the inside rear view mirror over to house batteries is not a difficult job. But you will have to remember to turn them off to prevent running down the house battery.

Q3. Separating the circuits for the horns will be more difficult. You will have to add a switch and a relay to the air horn to make it independent of the chassis horn.

Where is the best spot to place a level in the coach when you are leveling the motorhome with jacks? Thanks.

Garry Richards
Spokane, Washington

Dear Garry,
The first time you check it, place the level on the floor in the mid-section of the coach. After you get it level, then check to see if the countertops are level as well as the refrigerator. If they are, then you know that floor and countertops are in sync. The next time you can just place the level on your countertop.

We have a 1989 33-ft Allegro bought used. The motor was replaced around 48,000 and it now has 60,000 miles on the odometer. Problems:

(1) The trumpet horns do not work. Could it be a wire that was disconnected when the engine was changed?

(2) When tank is filled, gauge will show "Full" but never registers below 1/2 tank mark even when it is nearly empty. If it is the sending unit in the fuel tank, can the unit be re-

placed without removing the tank? Any guess on what this would cost?

(3) Should this unit with GMC 454, 7.4L V8 4BBL LE8 engine get better than 5 mpg?

Bill & Fran Dunn
Houlton, Maine

Dear Bill and Fran,
There could be many answers to Q1 and Q2 that would have to be traced on any given unit. As for Q3, the variables causing you to get 5 mpg are nearly endless. The same model engine can get varying mpg in different motorhomes. There are many additives and after-market hardware that you can try. But trial and error testing is the only way to improve your mpg.

I have a 1988 Allegro with the carbureted Chevy 454 engine. Problem 1: Do you have any suggestions to improve the 5 mpg we are getting on this coach? Problem 2: When driving on an uphill climb, my motorhome burns the spark plug wires, not the whole wire but the end connecting to the plugs. Any suggestions to eliminate this problem. Thanks.

Ron Ruskauf
Farmington, Utah

Dear Ron,
The spark plug wires used on racing cars will withstand the heat although they are more expensive. As for your mileage, please see the answer to Bill Dunn. There are just too many variables to give you a valid answer in this column.

I would like to see a 37- or 38-ft coach that has a bed you can walk around without having to put out the slides. We often park next to the 18-wheelers in the rest areas along the interstates as we travel from Maine to Florida. By the way, we like gas-powered motorhomes.

Gil Marriner
Deerfield Beach, Florida

Dear Gil,
The customer demand for bedroom slideouts is so great that we have discontinued making motorhomes without them.

I recently purchased a 37QDB Allegro Bay front-end diesel. Upon inspection I found a hose trapped between the coach body and the frame in the driver's side wheel well (see enclosed picture). I have not experienced any problems with the coach's systems so far. I would appreciate your recommendation. I an-

ticipate a trip to Red Bay soon for correcting this construction abnormality.

Wayne L. Vincent, Sr.
Sebring, Florida

Dear Wayne,
It is probably a piece of scrap hose that got caught in that place during assembly. However, you should get it checked when you visit the plant in Red Bay.

We have a 2004 Allegro Bay that does not have full-body paint. What can we do to keep the striping decals looking good and not coming loose in the future?

Lee Ann Dasher
Birmingham, Alabama

Dear Lee Ann,
Wash your coach regularly and wax it once a year. If you find any loose edges on the decals then re-glue them immediately with a clear, fast-drying glue that does not interact with fiberglass.

I am replacing tires on my 2001 Allegro with the same type Goodyear G670 245/70/R19.5. The info sheet that came with the motorhome shows a tire pressure of 80 psi. I understand the pressure for the new tires has been increased to 90 psi. Your thoughts?

What do you think of the powder put in tires for balance. I hear many trucks are using it?

Tom Tully
Baton Rouge, Louisiana

Dear Tom,
Use the pressure rating that is stamped on the tire by the manufacturer. We have had good and bad reports on the benefits of powder in the tires. For the best ride in a motorhome, I cannot recommend it one way or the other.

In Vol. 4, No. 2 issue of *RIS*, you told Edward Polash there was a new charging device that would trickle charge the chassis batteries while you are plugged into shore power. I have had the same problem in my 2005 Bus. What is the device and where do I obtain one?

In the same issue you told Pat Bumgardner to add alcohol to the LP system to prevent freeze-ups in the regulator. What is the procedure to add alcohol? How much?

E.B. Thompson
Weatherford, Texas

Dear E. B.,
We are now using "Battery Keeper," a 12-volt battery charger and maintainer, on new coaches to take care of this problem. You can call Tiffin

Parts and Service and order one for \$72.27. The service center charges \$65 for installation.

Most LP providers can introduce alcohol into the system when filling the tank. Do not attempt to do this yourself.

I saw your comments concerning the end caps on a 1990 unit. I have a 2000 Allegro Bay with white end caps and the same problem. Wax does not help the chalking. Could your R&D department come up with a better solution?

Buddy Herring
The Villages, Florida

Dear Buddy,
We have tried many solutions over the last 25 years, but at this time we have not discovered a permanent one.

On my 2000 Zephyr, if the thermostat is in AC mode for unit #2 and the switch is in "off" position, why does it take 30 to 60 seconds for it to come on after moving the switch to the "on" position?

As a Zephyr owner, I seldom see any Zephyr news in *Roughing It Smoothly*. Why? I enjoy the Zephyr and the magazine. I have been a Tiffin owner since 1989, and now on my third motorhome — never owned any other brand.

Willis Eadens
Somerset, Kentucky

Dear Willis,
The thermostat has a time delay from the time you turn on the AC until the time the compressor kicks in. However, 30 to 60 seconds does seem like a longer than normal period of time. If you are coming to the plant, we will be glad to check it out.

We ran a feature on the Zephyr in the Summer 2006 issue. Since the Zephyr represents approximately three percent of our total production, we have focused more on our four brands that account for the 97 percent. However, in the future we will try to get more information in the magazine about the Zephyr. We appreciate very much your loyalty to the Tiffin brands.

I have a 2007 Phaeton which I really like a lot. It has a passenger side hide-a-bed which is very comfortable, but the pedestal portion of the inflatable bed completely blocks the heating ducts that are routed through the sofa. This means I can't use the gas furnace and bed at the same time since it blocks most of the air flow from the furnace. I use an electric heater

instead, which is okay except when the temperature drops below 32°. Do you have a suggestion for correcting this problem?

Tom Rothwein
San Jose, California

Dear Tom,
The best solution is to pull the inflated bed out about three inches from the couch. Two benefits: the warm air will distribute through the room and at the same time warm the air in the bed.

We are on our second Tiffin motorhome, a 2004 Allegro Bus. This has been a trouble-free coach except for the outside storage bay doors. The doors move from side-to-side, damaging the doors by overlapping.

I have ordered spacers from the Tiffin parts department and had a body shop try to stop the side-to-side movement. It stopped the side-to-side, but the doors would no longer open or close correctly. So they had to take them out. Do you have any suggestions? We do enjoy reading *Roughing It Smoothly*, so keep up the good work.

Larry H. Miller
Page, Arizona

Dear Larry,
The spacers between the doors have to be adjusted for each door, that is cut and gapped exactly. This is the correct way to repair the problem. Please have your service provider call the TMH service department before you attempt the repair a second time.

CORRECT ADDRESSES

If you are receiving more than one copy of *Roughing It Smoothly*, please call us toll-free at 877-538-7467 or email fred@bookproduction.com.

Three ways to change your address:

(1) Use the USPS standard change of address postcard. (2) Email us and put "RIS address change" in the subject line. (3) Call our toll-free number and select option 4. Speak slowly and clearly stating your old address first and then your new one.

Reader Response

Please consider adding an outside vent for the microwave stove-top fan instead of exhausting the cooking fumes and moisture back into the motorhome. I had one installed in our 2005 Allegro Bus and it has made a significant difference in the amount of moisture collecting inside the Bus.

Richard C. Olson
Maple Valley, Washington

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 proud of it.

Kenneth Hunt
Clinton, Missouri

Because most of the service centers are below standard, please slow down production and keep the quality as you had it before. It is just better to do it right in the first place. Attention to faults and quality in the final

inspection should be #1 on your list.

Jim & Betty Nelson
Stevenson, Washington

We own a 2004 Phaeton which we love very much. Tiffin coaches are the nicest on the market. Just a couple of changes we would like to suggest: · On the driver's side window, sun shades should be standard in all coaches. Also on the entrance door, a sun shade is a must. · The strings used to control the day-night shades as you push them up and down break too often. Please get the manufacturer to use a stronger cord.

Bette Andersen
Circle Pines, Minnesota

I read with interest about the 35-ft. Phaeton. But it is too high to fit in my garage where my 1997 fit with the airbags depleted. I still can't see the reason for the full frontal windshield...The 60° wheelcut on the Freightliner chassis is a great improvement.

I'm very glad you are still with the company. I could always get to see you and get help each time. Thanks.

LeRoy M. Frederick
Mulberry, Tennessee

Wow! Our 2007 Phaeton is a fantastic coach. It was such a joy to take delivery and begin our personalization process. I just want to know where you hid the bottle of special cleaning liquid that will clean the tile and grout throughout the RV? What a surprise to find out that the tile flooring was not

covered during the manufacturing process. I have had some success with "Mr. Clean's Magic Sponge." Thanks for correcting this problem for future owners.

Susan Baker
Boca Raton, Florida

Regarding Mr. Meeks' inquiry in the April issue concerning the hood release.

We have a 1999 Allegro Bay and the same thing happened to me. I pulled the hood release lever and it came away in my hand. My hood did open, but luckily I did not try to close it because it could not have been reopened without serious damage.

On examining the mechanism, I saw that the cable tied into *plastic* parts.

I ordered the replacement part and after several agonizing hours did manage to re-install it. The holes in the new part did not match the permanent plates on the coach and all had to be redrilled. Running the cable through the firewall was made easier because I was able to "fish" it using the old cable.

Now Tiffin does make the entire assembly out of metal, so hopefully this will be a "lifetime" installment. I trust the new units have a "non-break" assembly which is factory installed.

I must close by saying we certainly do enjoy our motorhome, but we wish we were a little closer to "home base" so we could take it in for an occasional upgrade.

C. C. Laborde, Jr.
Lake Charles, Louisiana

LET US HEAR FROM YOU

"Serious Tech Talk" is a very important section of *Roughing It Smoothly* in which information sharing flows in both directions. Please continue to send your questions to Danny Inman on the enclosed postcard. A separate postcard is enclosed for "From the Road," a fun part of the magazine for readers to share their motorhoming experiences. If you choose to email us at: fred@bookproduction.com, be sure to put "Roughing It Smoothly" in the subject line of your email. If your communication requires an entire letter, mail it to us at: PO Box 292912, Tampa, FL 33687-2912. Tell us about the interesting places you've been, an unusual experience, a great destination, or just a good place to camp and hang out. Please share.

—Fred Thompson, editor

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