

# Roughing It Smoothly<sup>®</sup>

## **SPECIAL**

**Tiffin Adds Two New Floorplans  
to the Allegro Family**



## **IN THIS ISSUE**

- Remembering Our National Heritage
- Almost Heaven, West Virginia
- Building the Powerglide Chassis



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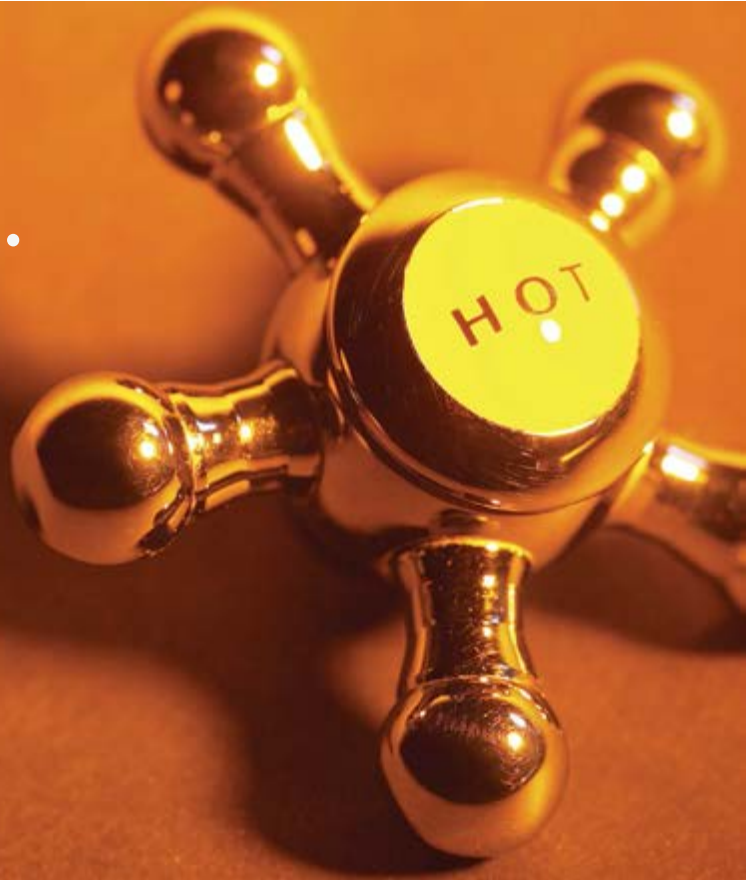
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## Roughing It Smoothly®

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### Editor's Note

Beginning with our January 2008 issue of *RIS*, each contributor to "From the Road" will receive a *Roughing It Smoothly* T-shirt. Please be sure to indicate on your card or letter your size: Medium, Large, or Extra Large. We are looking forward to receiving a landslide of responses. Space is limited, so mail early!

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. Send address changes to the above address or email them to fred@bookproduction.com. Subject line of email should say "RIS address change."

# Family Management

## GROWTH, TRANSITION, CHANGE

by Bob Tiffin with Tim Tiffin

**T**iffin Motorhomes has always been a family affair. My father, Alex Tiffin, started Tiffin Supply in 1940. As I grew up in the 1950s, I thought of his company almost as an extension of our family. It was just a part of my brother David's and my upbringing and training as we grew from boys, to teenagers, to young men. Daddy taught us the value of time, how to treat people with respect, and how to run a business that was built on service. After we got our on-the-job training in whatever area of the business he had placed us, he never tried to micro-manage. Yes, he kept an eye on how we were doing and coached us a little, but he always wanted us to take responsibility and grow into being managers of our assignments. His method built confidence and at 24 he put me in charge of running the company's cotton ginning business during the fall. During the rest of the year along with other responsibilities, I managed the material sales and collections to three RV manufacturers just over the state line in Mississippi. At the first of each month when I went to collect, I watched them build the motorhomes and got a pretty good idea of how the building process should operate for a small company.

In early 1972 we built a new cotton warehouse in preparation for the fall ginning season. The cotton crop failed that year. Coincidentally, the three RV companies all decided to close. That's when I wrote a proposal and simple business plan to start Tiffin Motorhomes. The production process was already in place thanks to quite a few key employees from Commodore, Sunliner, and Safari who decided to join our new company. I didn't see anything essentially wrong with their system— I think they failed because of poor business management and quality issues. I wanted Tiffin Motorhomes to start small and grow.

There are so many people to whom our success should be credited. From the beginning I found key management people, knowledgeable sales managers, capable supervisors, well organized office managers, and conscientious production employees. Red Bay is a small town. We knew the people we hired, and their daddies and granddaddies. Since 1940 when Tiffin Supply started, we had been trading with just about everybody in western Franklin County and the northeastern counties of Mississippi. We capitalized on the good work

DEAN DIXON PHOTOGRAPHY

ethic of these key men and were very fortunate to hire the fine people of this area.

In the beginning, Tim and Van were just little fellows. Judy and I didn't know for sure if they would be interested in the business that we were building. As time went on, they did develop an interest and motorhome manufacturing became a part of their life and future.

After we got through the first energy crisis and Lex came along in 1975, the idea of our sons working in the business became a stronger possibility, especially when I saw how dedicated they were to their school, extracurricular activities, and the summer jobs they had here in the plant.

So my plan then was to have them do training with my dad. Each summer they worked at Tiffin Supply, just like I did. Tim was 14 and Van was 12 when they started. Van thought he had to be wherever Tim was. They learned the building and supply trade and it proved to be a great training ground for them, especially the electrical and plumbing which is critical in motorhomes. Van also worked on appliances with Mickey Kennedy, learning about AC, washers, and dryers. Then Lex came along and learned those skills, too.

When Tim left for college at the University of Alabama in 1980, I was about 75 percent sure he would come back and join the business. He came back in 1985 and now holds the position of general manager—the job I filled when he left for college.

[*Editor's Note:* From this point, Tim is writing the story.]

At Tiffin Supply, we just *trained* to work. We sometimes rode our bicycles to work. We showed up for work and learned how to wait on the trade and interact with the customers. We unloaded boxcars with forklifts and put the inventory in the warehouses. Sometimes we had to beg Alex (that's what I called my grandfather) for something to do. But once we started driving, we did a lot more. We also absorbed a lot by just being there with him and seeing how he conducted business. On Saturdays, we ate lunch with Alex.

Tiffin Motorhomes was probably our biggest customer, and we brought supplies here almost daily from Tiffin Supply, learning what every item was for in the production process of building motorhomes. If I made a mistake in supplying the line, I learned how to correct it—and pretty quick, too!

After my freshman year at Alabama, I worked with Alex taking contractors' orders. After my sophomore year, I began working summers at TMH. In January 1985, I began sharing an office with Dad to learn purchasing from the ground up. I also made service appointments. It is hard to believe now, but at that time we only had two people in service. I also took parts orders from dealers and customers. I continued to do the purchasing until 2000. At that time I decided to delegate and launched a purchasing department which still reports to me today.

In 1997, I began to manage more people, with several supervisors reporting to me. By 2004 Tiffin Motorhomes employed 600. Now, just three years later we have nearly doubled. In the

mid-nineties I took over the responsibility of pricing our motorhomes — with no computers! We got into database management about five years ago. Ten years ago we had a rough formula that we used to set our prices. [*Editor's Note:* Bob, listening from across the room, spoke up: "Tim refined and streamlined the formula, making it much better than what I started out with."]

In 1998, I could put my hands on everything. At that time we had 13 or 14 departmental managers; now we have 30. Then we had one plant manager; now we have five. We did not have an HR department. Daddy and I did all of the employee insurance and workmen's comp. Today we have an HR director and a staff of three.

Our sales department is staffed by five outside regional sales managers and three inside sales people including our national sales manager Jerry Williamson.

From the 1998 models to the 2008 models, the complexity of motorhome technology has exploded. Some of the major leaps include:

- *More slide-outs:* All of the rear pushers have four slideouts. The front engine coaches have an average of 2.6 slide-outs per floorplan.

- *More sophisticated cabinetry:* Solid surface counter tops. Raised panel solid hardwood doors. Residential hardware.

- *Just-in-time manufacturing:* Thousands of parts and components are ordered and reach the assembly line just as they are needed, reducing inventories and overhead. Ten manufacturing facilities within 50 miles of Red Bay make this possible on a daily basis.

- *TMH-manufactured components:* The company took over the manufacture of fiberglass and wood doors to improve overall design. Those items were formerly standard, off-the-shelf components.

Other barometers of change include: (1) significant growth in the rear diesel market; (2) larger chassis; (3) satellite systems installed at the TMH plant; (4) residential-type appliances; (5) inverters; (6) solar panels; (7) one-piece fiberglass roof; (8) expansion of TMH fiberglass manufacturing capability to include the sidewalls.

Over the last decade, the company has spent over \$20 million to build plant facilities that didn't exist in 1998. Those expansions include: (1) the chassis plant; (2) the Belmont full-body paint plant; and (3) the 130,000 sq. ft. service center. The campground now has 120 full hook-up sites for owners who have come in for service and repairs.

The challenges have been great and our managers and employees have risen to the occasion every time. Major changes in our management and manufacturing include (1) the human resources department to better serve our employees; (2) creating the management structures to operate the Belmont plant; and (3) expanding the engineering department to dramatically increase our productive capacity.

When I step back and look, there is a lot of satisfaction in what TMH has accomplished in the last decade. It is wonderful to see all of the thoughts, ideas, and innovations from our owners, engineers, managers, and employees coming to fruition. But

*Continued on page 63*



## You've Been Packing!

You probably packed a little extra for whatever adventures you might encounter on your trip. If you're not sure of the axle end weight of your vehicle, your RV is most likely overloaded. The new Michelin® 305/70R22.5 XRV, with its expanded load capacity\*, is ready to take on more weight than ever.

\*The Michelin 305/70R22.5 XRV has a per-axle maximum load capacity of 15,660 lbs in singles and 27,760 lbs in duals at 120 psi cold pressure. You should always weigh each axle and check Michelin's Load and Inflation Tables to determine proper fitment and air pressure for your vehicle.





# Tiffin Boosts the Allegro's Popularity with the New 32 LA Floorplan

## L-Shaped Galley Proves an Immediate Success

Over Tiffin's thirty-five years of service to the RV industry, thousands of RVers have been introduced to motorhoming through the sturdy and well-designed Allegro. Aided by entry-level pricing and option-rich with features its competitors often could not match, the Allegro carried the ball for TMH for eight years in the seventies.

Then in 1980 Tiffin Motorhomes began to flex its muscle with the introduction of a new model: the Allegro Pusher – the company's first entrance into the diesel market. In 1990 the first Allegro Bay, an all fiberglass creation, was introduced. Just two years later, the company brought out the Allegro Bus at the Louisville Show with both gas and diesel versions. At the same show, Tiffin used the Allegro Bay to introduce its first slide-out.

Until 1999 the name "Allegro" had been a part of every Tiffin brand. When speaking of the Tiffin brands, buyers would say, "I want an Allegro." In the next two years, the company introduced the Zephyr and the Phaeton and the branding of the Tiffin products slowly began to change. Today, people are beginning to say, "I want a Tiffin."

In recounting this brief history, it is important to remember that TMH has never abandoned its roots. Tiffin engineers continue to review and upgrade the popular Allegro with new floorplans, now totaling seven—more than any of the other Tiffin brands. The company introduced the 32 LA in the middle of the 2007 model year, added several new features for 2008, and expects to build several hundred during the new model year.

So what has made the 32 LA so popular? Its L-shaped galley anchors the living-

dining section by facing into the activity area instead of positioning it along one wall. The overall floor space was increased by placing the refrigerator in the slide-out next to the dinette.

The 32 LA's large self-contained bath opens into the aisle to accommodate guests, but also offers a second door into the bedroom for complete privacy. We will discuss other features of both the galley and the bath later in the story.

After Tiffin introduced Freightliner's front-end diesel on its 2006 Allegro Bay,

it offered the FRED in 2007 on all of the Allegro floorplans 32 feet and longer. The test coach for this story had the 300-hp Cummins 5.9L ISB FRED as well as full body paint offered for the first time on the Allegro brand for 2008. A 5-speed Allison transmission is mated with the 5.9L Cummins.

Now a standard feature for the first



Text and Photography by Fred Thompson

time this year, the Allegro brand offers full tile in the living-dining area which invites owners to select an area rug for greater personalization of the decor.

### From the Outside

Tiffin and Freightliner have done a masterful job of making all service points on the 300-hp FRED easily accessible. After opening



the front cowling, the owner can see at a glance the Freightliner Filter Minder; the coolant reservoir; the oil stick and add oil pipe; reservoirs for brake fluid, windshield washer fluid, and power steering fluid; and the transmission oil check stick.

Proceeding down the passenger side, storage compartments one and two are positioned between the front wheel well and the entry door. From the door to the rear, the 32 LA has three more storage compartments and the enclosure for the propane tank. The five compartments offer nearly 58 cubic feet of storage.

Beginning at the rear on the driver's side, the first compartment handles all of the major service except the sewer. Very concisely arranged and labeled, you will find the 50-amp heavy duty cable, water, TV cable and tripod dish satellite connections, outdoor shower, and land line phone connection.

Tiffin has made a 6000 Kw Onan Quiet Diesel standard equipment for the 32 LA which is located in the second compartment. The third compartment is dedicated to the sewer service.

The next four compartments including three in the slide-out offer 26 cubic feet of storage space, for a total of 84 cubic feet of outside storage.

As indicated in many coach reviews prior to this one, conveniently designed storage in the living area as well as the basement is extremely important in a motorhome. In order to carry supplies to cover all the variations necessary in clothing, food, and recreational equipment, well-designed storage is essential to keep your coach neat and uncluttered. This coach has a cargo carrying capacity of 3,625 pounds.

Perhaps the most noticeable difference between the 2007 and 2008 Allegros is full body paint. The company offers three paint schemes, all of which are stunning. Full body paint along with an annual wax job will keep a coach looking new for years to come.

### Getting Inside

The test coach featured Medium Alder cabinetry, complemented by the Matisse



interior. Fabrics used in the dinette and comforter offer light beige backgrounds with leaf and floral patterns. Tile with a brownstone pattern, firmly padded valances with fabric and felt borders, a subtly patterned wallpaper, and a handsome nubby fabric for the Flexsteel couch complete the decor.

The L-shaped galley facing into the living-dining area creates the primary architectural feature in the coach's floorplan. The slide-out housing the dinette and refrigerator opens up the living area with a generous amount of floor space that creates a very comfortable area in which six adults can visit or have lunch. Each owner will find special ways to personalize this coach.

The galley is an object lesson in good planning and design. The total counter surface area is over 15 square feet including the double sink and three-burner cooktop. Solid surface edging has been used on the galley countertops and back splashes.

The optional microwave-convection oven allowed the designers to eliminate the gas oven in favor of four 17-inch long drawers, each 7½-inches wide. Using ball bearing slides, each drawer opens to its full extension. To the right of the quad set of drawers are three 17-inch long drawers that are 13½-inches wide and 5¼-inches deep. Under the double sink, a surprised owner is going to find over eight cubic feet of storage. A 3-speed Fan-tastic fan is located immediately over the cooktop to remove heat and cooking odors quickly from the galley area. Two electrical outlets are conveniently positioned to service appliances.

The overhead cabinets offer nearly eight cubic feet of storage space. Tiffin upgraded the hardware for the galley sink and the lavatory to satin nickel.

To make it practical for four adults to enjoy the 32 LA floorplan, Tiffin added the optional Air Coil Hide-A-Bed sofa sleeper by Flexsteel. Detail of the sofa's design is shown on page 28 of *RIS 4:3* in the "New for 2008" section. When the sectional air mattress is inflated with its electric pump, it is a very comfortable bed for two adults. Of course, the dinette booth makes into a bed for two children.



Entertainment for the Allegro 32 LA includes an overhead dash-mounted 24-inch flat panel color television which is linked to a standard Winegard aerial and an optional Winegard Automatic Satellite receiver. Wiring is installed for a DVD player.

Both the driver's and passenger's chairs rotate to face into the living area to create a conversation pit for five, plus seating offered in the dinette.

### Heating and Cooling

The Allegro 32 LA is heated very comfortably with one 35,000 BTU ducted furnace. Although we did not use it during our summer test of this coach, I have found it to be more than adequate in past occasions of cold weather use. When we tested the 28 DA in 2004, we found that its 30,000 BTU ducted furnace kept the coach very comfortable when the temperature dipped to seven above zero in the Rockies in February. In the heat of a north Alabama summer with temperatures reaching 95 to 100 degrees, the two roof units on the test coach included the optional 15,000 BTU A/C with heat pump and a second 13,500 BTU A/C in the rear position. With intermittent operation, the two units kept the coach at a

very comfortable 73 degrees through the hottest part of the day. Tiffin's Quiet A/C roof ducted system reduces the return air noise to a level where normal conversation is engaged in with ease. The walls and roof systems feature insulation which is perfectly cut by computer-guided routers. The insulation and lamination technology used by Tiffin Motorhomes creates significant heating and cooling efficiencies.

### The Cockpit

The test coach had the optional powered driver's seat with full six-way movement, a must for long-distance driving. The key items to the right of the steering column are the dash-mounted gear shift, the automotive HVAC, and the backup monitor. A standard Panasonic radio farther to the right should be tuned by the passenger for safe operation while in transit. The Atwood Level Legs is mounted on the far right side of the dash and, of course, is only used when the coach is stopped. To the left of the column in the dash, the driver will find the following controls within easy reach: L/R fan switches, exhaust brake, genset start, map light, rheostat for lights in the dash, and automatic

mirror controls with mirror heat.

In the Freightliner dash, lighted gauges include MPG, RPM, oil, water, and fuel. An LED display presents speed in kilometers or miles, engine hours, and a trip meter in both hours and miles traveled.

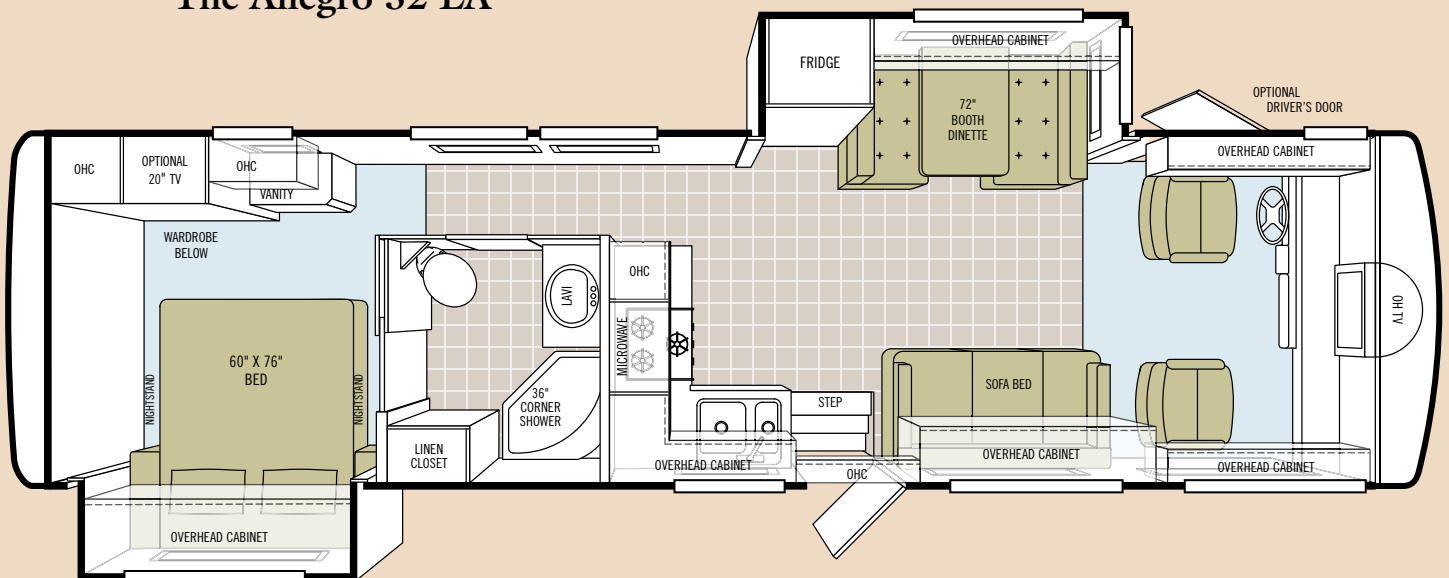
### The Bath

With an interior footprint of 4' 10" x 6' 8", Tiffin engineers designed an amazingly spacious bathroom which has a convenient door opening into the side aisle for guests and a second door opening directly into the bedroom. Of course, another sliding door closes the bedroom to the aisle.

In the bath, a floor-to-ceiling storage system offers a huge three-shelf cabinet which measures 42-inches high, 21 inches wide, and 17 inches deep. It can double as a wardrobe if the shelves are removed. Under the cabinet are three full extension drawers which are 16½ inches wide, 17 inches deep, and vary in depth from 3½ to 9¼ inches. The vanity also offers an unusual amount of storage with nearly four cubic feet directly under the sink, plus three drawers that are 7½ inches wide, 15 inches long, and 5¼ inches in depth. A double-door mirrored medicine

*Continued on page 60*

## The Allegro 32 LA



# SPECIFICATIONS: Model tested 2008 Allegro 32LA, Two Slides, with FRED

Base MSRP\* – \$120,890 MSRP as tested with options – \$132,290

## STANDARD FEATURES

### Structural

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

### Automotive

Allison 5-speed transmission  
Cummins 5.9L, 300-hp engine  
600 lb-ft torque @ 1600 rpm  
Atwood automatic electric leveling system  
55° wheel cut  
Exhaust brake  
18-inch steering wheel  
Cruise control  
Fog lights  
Daytime running lights  
Emergency start switch

### Exterior

Fiberglass front & rear caps  
Tinted one-piece windshield  
6.0 Onan® diesel generator  
One 13,500 BTU high profile roof Coleman AC (high efficiency)  
Quiet AC roof-ducted system  
Double electric step  
¼-inch single pane windows  
Horizontal mounted wipers  
Heated power mirrors  
Gel-coat fiberglass walls  
Exterior graphics and paint  
Exterior patio light  
Manual patio awning  
Slide-out awnings  
Exterior storage doors with gas shocks  
Ridged long-life storage boxes  
Single handle lockable storage door latches  
Heated water and holding tank compartments  
Two 6v auxiliary batteries  
Park ready telephone  
TV antenna  
Cable ready TV  
Black holding tank flush system  
Exterior rinse hose/shower  
Back-up monitor  
110v exterior receptacle  
110v / 12v converter  
Undercoating  
Roof ladder  
Wheel liners  
External tripod satellite hook-up

### Driver's Compartment

Entry floor light  
Step switch and 12v disconnect switch  
Snack / beverage tray  
Non-powered cloth passenger & driver seats (Flexsteel®)  
Lighted instrument panel  
Single CD player & stereo AM/FM radio

Passenger slide tray / computer drawer

12v dash receptacle  
Tilt steering wheel  
Dual dash fans  
Windshield privacy curtain  
Color TV (front)  
Fire extinguisher

### Living Area / Dinette

Large pull-out storage drawers in booth dinette  
Booth dinette  
Cloth swivel chair  
Cloth sofa bed  
Decorative wall hanging

### Kitchen

Single lever satin nickel sink faucet  
Double bowl kitchen sink  
Solid surface countertop accent edging  
Solid surface backsplashes  
3-burner cooktop with oven  
Microwave  
8 cubic foot refrigerator

### Bath

Medicine cabinet  
Skylight in shower  
Satin nickel vanity faucet  
Toilet  
Fiberglass molded shower

### Bedroom

Wardrobe  
Mirrored vanity  
Bed comforter  
Innerspring mattress  
Carbon monoxide detector  
LP / carbon monoxide leak detector  
Bed pillows  
Phone jack

### General Interior

Raised panel cabinet doors  
Vinyl headliner  
Medium alderwood solid cabinet doors & drawer fronts  
Wall-to-wall vinyl tile flooring in living room, kitchen, & bath  
Ball bearing drawer slides  
Carpeting in bedroom  
Scotchgard® treated carpet & fabrics  
Day / night pleated shades in living room  
Power roof vents  
Tank level monitor system  
Smoke detector  
6-gallon DSI gas / electric water heater (electric not available on units with a 4.0 kw generator)  
Compartment door with single point latch  
One 35,000 BTU ducted furnace

## OPTIONAL FEATURES ON THIS COACH

Full body paint  
Driver's door with power window  
Winegard automatic satellite receiver  
2nd 13,500 BTU air conditioner (rear)  
15,000 BTU AC w/heat pump (front) IPO 13,500 BTU unit  
CB antenna  
Powered driver seat  
Convection / microwave  
Air coil hide-a-bed Flexsteel® sofa sleeper  
Ice maker in refrigerator  
Bedroom TV  
Two bedroom day / night shades

## OTHER OPTIONAL FEATURES AVAILABLE

Side view cameras activated with turn signal  
DVD player  
Free standing dinette  
Solid wood refrigerator panels  
Additional Fan-Tastic® fan in water closet  
Vacuum cleaner system  
Natural maple solid wood cabinet doors & drawer fronts  
Cherry bark solid wood cabinet doors & drawer fronts

## MEASUREMENTS

Wheelbase – 228"  
Overall length – 33' 5"  
Overall height with roof air – 12' 5"  
Interior height – 78"  
Overall width – 101"  
Interior width – 96"

## WEIGHTS & CAPACITIES

GVWR – 24,000 lbs.  
Front GAWR – 9,000 lbs.  
Rear GAWR – 15,000 lbs.  
GCWR – 26,000 lbs.  
UVW – 18,780 lbs.  
CCC – 3,625 lbs.  
Trailer hitch capacity – 5,000 lbs.

## POWER TRAIN

Engine – 300 hp Cummins 5.9 L, electronic, turbocharged diesel  
Torque – 600 lb-ft @ 1600 rpm  
Transmission – Allison 5 speed  
Tire size – 235/80R 22.5  
Alternator – 160 amps

## CHASSIS

Frame – Freightliner MC Series  
Frame design – Ladder frame construction

Anti-locking braking system – Bosch hydraulic pin slide disc with ABS  
Suspension (front and rear) – Hendrickson Softek  
Shock absorbers – Tuned Sachs  
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

## ACCOMMODATIONS

Sleeps – Four adults  
Fuel tank – 80 gallons  
Fresh water – 53 gallons  
Black water – 35 gallons  
Grey water – 70 gallons  
LPG tank – 24 gallons (can be filled to 80% capacity)

## 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](http://www.tiffinmotorhomes.com) and click on "dealer locator." If internet access is not available, call 813-356-8661 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.

# Harold Kimbrough

## An Adaptable Businessman

by Fred Thompson

As an independent businessman, Harold Kimbrough has become a very integral part of the Tiffin Management Team. Motorhomes are non-functional without generators and Harold Kimbrough and his team know how to maintain and repair them and keep Tiffin coach owners happy.

In business for 54 years, Kimbrough's Automotive & Power Services was started by Harold's father. Farmers used generators for irrigation, hospitals used them for standby power, and poultry farms ran cooling fans in hot weather. Selling and servicing generators in motorhomes was not in Bill Kimbrough's business plan when he opened his doors for business in 1953.

As technology changed, Bill and Harold adapted to serve new markets. They affiliated with Onan in the 1960s and became a dealer in the 1970s. In the early 1980s Bob Tiffin learned that the Kimbroughs could service the generators being installed in every motorhome built by TMH. On a regular basis, Allegro owners began visiting the Tuscumbia shop for service and repair. Kimbrough also began sending techs to Red Bay to make it more convenient for Tiffin's customers to get service.

"Bob realized the great potential for our business that the motorhome trade offered and asked us to attend a rally at the plant to provide complementary generator oil changes," Harold recalled. That event quickly expanded into Harold and one of his employees attending Tiffin rallies throughout the country to provide service free of charge.

Customers remembered Harold Kimbrough when they came to Red Bay for

service and usually made a stop in Tuscumbia to be sure their Onan generator was in top notch condition. "I have developed so many friendships with motorhome customers over the years. They are a great group of people and it's a pleasure to serve them," he said.

Knowing that many customers attend Saturday football games in their Allegro motorhomes, Bob invited Harold to be a part of Tiffin's weekend customer service in Tuscaloosa. "I took a grill and two new motorhomes to an Alabama game. We fixed generators and other equipment," he remembered. "The whole idea kept expanding. Now the company takes four to six coaches to Alabama games across the Southeast. Terry Elliott takes a big grill

and does the cooking. David Sparks and Robert Gober from Red Bay bring a service trailer and fix generators, gas furnaces, air conditioners, whatever. We are there for our Tiffin owners. But if a guy with Brand X has a problem, we take care of him, too. He'll buy a Tiffin next time," he laughed.

"Over the years we have had a lot of fun. But there have been sad times and trying times, too," Harold continued. "Several years ago we had a rally in McFarland Park along the Tennessee River at Florence. Rain flooded the area and made the ground in our events tent pretty soggy. I ordered a load of plywood and fixed up a temporary floor so the show could go on. I didn't even ask Bob if I could. We're just in the habit of doing whatever it takes to



make our customers happy,” he said.

“We were having a great rally in Renfro Valley, Kentucky, when the power service for the whole county went out. But with all of the generators in the park, we didn’t miss a stroke,” Harold recalled. “I really enjoy these rallies. I stay on the phone all of the time when I am in the office. The rallies give me a chance to get my hands dirty again.”

“Six years ago I was doing an Onan seminar when a man in the audience had a heart attack and died. As soon as I could, I went to his wife and offered my condolences. Her response really made me choke up. She said, ‘He enjoyed being here with friends and people like you. We just appreciate all the good people we have met over the years in RVing.’”

Harold’s wife Debra serves as the company’s accountant. Whenever possible she travels to the rallies with Harold. “Several years ago I drove a motorhome to a rally in Oregon. I stopped at the top

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*Left:* Harold Kimbrough checks the oil on an Onan generator. For several years, he has enjoyed traveling to rallies with Tiffin technicians David Sparks and Robert Gober. *Below:* Harold thoroughly enjoys restoring antique cars, and takes great pride in his 1935 five-window coupe with its roll-down back window.

of a mountain to get a good signal to call the office. While I was making the call, Debra got the two dogs out for a quick walk. Thinking she was in the back of the motorhome, I took off. Several miles down the road I called out to her and she didn’t answer. Then I realized what had happened. I turned that coach around and scooted back to find her standing on the side of the road with two dogs waiting for me,” he smiled. “She told Judy Tiffin what happened and learned that Bob had done the same thing with her.” MORAL TO THE STORY: Ladies, leave a big note on the steering wheel if you leave the coach while your husband is distracted with business!

In 1980 Harold bought the business from his dad. Since then, his son Phillip has joined the company. The Kimbrough’s other son, Trey, previously worked for Cummins-Onan in Kenner, Louisiana. With Tiffin Motorhomes celebrating its 35th anniversary this year, Onan wanted to do something special for the company and its employees. It was also the 35th year that Tiffin had been installing Onan generators. If you’ve ever been to Red Bay, you’ve probably eaten the best plate of catfish and hush puppies in the South at Swamp John’s. The little restaurant

*Continued on page 60*



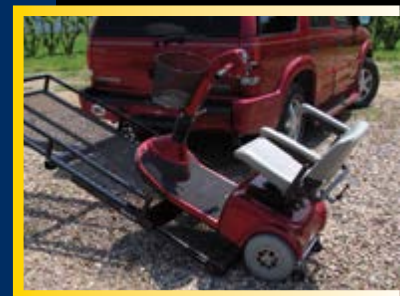
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# WASHINGTON

## *Remembering Our National Heritage*

by Fred Thompson

Most of you have visited Washington, D.C., our nation's capital. It is a fascinating and complicated city that has always been accessible to visitors. Its museums, art galleries, and memorials; the White House and the Capitol; the beautiful landscaping of the Mall, the Tidal Basin, and the city's avenues — they all combine to make Washington a primary vacation destination, especially for those who are hungry for knowledge about this great country.

The *first part* of the Washington story focuses on the memorials to the veterans of the wars in the 20th century—memorials representing the great sacrifices that have kept America free and defended the rights and freedom of our allies. A visit to these nine sites will instill in each of us a greater appreciation for our military.

The *second part* focuses on two presidential memorials and two museums which have been added in the last decade. Of course, George Washington's Mount Vernon has been open for tours since the mid-1800s, but two large foundation grants and a private gift have created a new experience for visitors, unprecedented in the home's history. The Donald W. Reynolds Museum and Education Center and the Ford Orientation Center have immeasurably improved the opportunity to really know our first president.

Opened in May 1997, the memorial to Franklin D. Roosevelt is organized in four open-air rooms covering seven-and-a-half acres. President Roosevelt's leadership to lift us out of the dark years of the Great Depression and lead us through most of World War II

is marvelously illustrated with bronze statuary and massive outdoor rooms formed with Carnelian red granite.

Opened in 2004, the National Museum of the American Indian, the eighteenth of the Smithsonian Institution's world-renowned museums, features the lifeways, history, and art of Native Americans throughout the Western Hemisphere.

On July 1 of this year, after a \$283 million renovation, the old U.S. Patent Office Building was reborn as the Donald W. Reynolds Center for American Art and Portraiture. It houses Smithsonian's National Portrait Gallery and the Smithsonian American Art Museum. The gallery and the museum make the Smithsonian's treasured collections, which have been in storage for years, available to the public.





## *A Humbling Visit to Our Nation's Capital*

WASHINGTON, D.C. – PART I

It is truly a humbling experience to visit the impressive military memorials in our nation's capital and come to a realization of the hundreds of thousands of men and women who made the ultimate sacrifice to sustain our freedom and to recover and protect the freedom of our allies. My family and I traveled to Washington several times as our children were growing up so they could gain an appreciation for the sacrifices made by our armed forces and absorb our nation's military and political history.

Reading the names on the wall at the Vietnam Memorial, one can only imagine the feelings of those making tracings of a loved one's name. In every war, for each life that was lost, a

---

An American soldier, one of 19 bronze figures in a patrol shielded from the bitter cold by their ponchos, moves carefully through the scrubby Korean terrain looking for the enemy. Behind the statue is a polished granite wall etched with pictures representing the thousands who defended South Korea against communist aggression.



surviving spouse wept and struggled to press on, children lost a parent, parents lost a son or daughter, brothers and sisters lost a sibling, a girlfriend cried because her loved one would never come home.

It has been that way for the 231 years since this country claimed its independence. In at least ten wars or significant military actions, we have painfully learned that “FREEDOM IS NOT FREE,” words inscribed in a polished granite slab facing the reflecting pool of the **Korean War Memorial**.

The fact that freedom is not free, but that it is sustained at a tragic price, is seen in the grim records of the Korean War—engraved on the granite borders of the reflecting pool: 54,246 dead; 8,177 missing in action; 7,140 captured; and 103,284 wounded. Of those who served, 131 received the Congressional Medal of Honor. Many of those wounded could never again enjoy the full experience of living.

Over 1.5 million American men and women left their stations in life to help stop the communist government of North Korea from overpowering the imperiled democracy of South Korea. Twenty-two countries of the United Nations sent troops to fight side-by-side with the Americans. Those countries suffered a loss of 628,833 dead and over 1 million wounded. Another half million were MIAs or captured.

The Korean memorial is a circle intersected by a triangle. In the triangular Field of Service, a group of 19 stainless steel statues—a squad on patrol—moves carefully across the rugged terrain, depicted by granite strips and scrubby bushes. Their windblown ponchos reflect the freezing cold they endured through three harsh winters. To the south of the patrol, a polished black granite wall—etched with a mural based on actual photographs of unidentified American soldiers, sailors, airmen, and marines—often reflects in the bright sunlight the images of the 19 soldiers on patrol. An inscription near the patrol reads:

*Our nation honors her sons and daughters who answered the call  
to defend a country they never knew and a people they never met.*  
1950 – Korea – 1953

The memorial is staffed by national park rangers from 8 a.m. until midnight every day except Christmas.

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The **Vietnam Memorial** has a very clean and elegant design: two walls of black granite coming together at an angle of 125° 12'. The memorial is simply a wall of names: 58,245 men and women whose names begin at the vertex of the walls below the date of the first casualty and continue to the end of the east wall. The names resume at the tip of the west wall, ending at the vertex above the date of the last death. With the meeting of the beginning and the ending, the design makes a poignant conclusion to this epoch in American history. A jury of eight internationally recognized artists and designers met in May 1981 to choose the design for the Vietnam Memorial. The jury unanimously selected from a field of 1,421 entries the design submitted by Maya Ying Lin of Athens, Ohio, then a 21-year-old student at Yale

TOM WACHS PHOTOGRAPHY



University. The memorial was dedicated November 13, 1982.

In January 1982 Washington sculptor Frederick Hart was selected to create a figurative sculpture of three fighting men. Hart's goal was "to create a moving evocation of the experience and service of the Vietnam veteran." The life-sized sculpture took its place in the trees across the lawn from the memorial wall. Just a few steps away, also as a part of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial, the Vietnam Women's Memorial honors the women of the U.S. Armed Forces who served in the war. Sculpted by Glenna Goodacre, the statue presents three women taking care of a fallen soldier. Planted around the memorial are eight yellowwood trees—a living tribute to the eight service women who were killed in action in the Vietnam War. A memorial plaque honors the personal sacrifice made during an unfortunately controversial war:

*In honor of the men and women of the armed forces of the United States who served in the Vietnam War. The names of those who gave their lives and of those who remain missing are inscribed in the order they were taken from us.*

The Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund, Inc., was the idea of Jan Scruggs, a former infantry corporal who served in the war. The non-profit charitable organization wanted Vietnam veterans to have a tangible symbol of recognition from a broad section of American society.

The **World War II Memorial**, dedicated on May 29, 2004, is the country's most recent commemoration to its military. Situated on the great mall between the Washington Monument and the Lincoln Memorial, it reflects the importance of World War II in preserving and internationalizing democratic ideals won under George Washington and defended under Abraham Lincoln. The inscription in the primary monument will grip your heart:

*Here in the presence of Washington and Lincoln, one the 18th century father and the other the 19th century preserver of our nation, we honor those 20th century Americans who took up the struggle during the second world war and made the sacrifices to perpetuate the gift our forefathers entrusted to us: a nation conceived in liberty and justice.*

*ate the gift our forefathers entrusted to us: a nation conceived in liberty and justice.*

Certainly the largest of all of Washington's war memorials, the expansive granite structure is anchored on its northern and southern perimeters by twin 43-foot Atlantic and Pacific pavilions to symbolize a war fought across two oceans. Flanked by 56 pillars (14 on either side of each pavilion) representing the 48 states in the union at the time of the war, plus eight dependencies, the memorial opens on 17th Street facing the Washington Monument. The entrance is bordered with 12 bas-relief sculptures depicting scenes of America at war. In one scene, a family gathers around its radio to hear President Roosevelt ask Congress for a declaration of war after Japan bombed Pearl Harbor. On the western side of the elliptical pool, the Freedom Wall faces the Lincoln Memorial which frames a blue field containing 4,048 gold stars, each representing approximately 100 American deaths incurred during the war. Wreaths of oak and wheat on each of the memorial's pillars symbolize the nation's agricultural and industrial strength, both essential to the success of the war effort.

The floor of each pavilion is inscribed with "Victory on Land, Victory at Sea, Victory in the Air, 1941-1945" encircling a brass inlaid Victory Medal. Each serviceman received a Victory Medal at the end of the war.

The plaza occupies an area the size of a football field, is sunk six feet below grade, and contains a 247-foot elliptical pool with fountains. It appropriately honors the "greatest generation" and reminds future generations that we must sometimes sacrifice for causes greater than ourselves. World War II changed the world as it was "fought across six of the world's seven continents and all of its oceans," wrote British historian John Keegan. "It killed 50 million human beings, left hundreds of millions of others wounded in mind and body . . . and devastated vast sections of the earth." Other memorials in the Washington area honoring individual branches of the military include the **U.S. Navy Memorial** and the Naval Heritage Center at 701 Pennsylvania Ave., NW. In addition to the impressive granite plaza featuring a map of the entire



globe, flag displays and the statue of “The Lone Sailor” with his duffel bag grace the area. Occasional concerts by the U.S. Navy Band (during the summer months) are usually scheduled at dusk. On the northeast corner, The Naval Heritage Center presents a host of interesting displays about the Navy’s role in defending our nation. If you are a current or former Navy serviceman, be sure to visit The Navy Log. Bring a picture of yourself in uniform along with your dates of service and other pertinent information. Being a part of the registry is free and may help you link up with an old buddy. Other features of the Heritage Center include the Ship’s Store (gifts for sailors past or present), the Burke Theater (movies about the U.S. Navy), the President’s Room (U.S. presidents who served in the Navy), the Media Resource Room (historical videos, photos, and reference material), the Commemorative Plaque Wall (honoring our ships, sailors, and supporters), and several displays in the Historical Exhibits area.

The **U.S. Marine Corps Memorial** just across the Potomac in Arlington is probably the most dramatic of all the military memorials because it freezes the action of six soldiers raising the American flag on Mt. Suribachi during the battle to remove the Japanese forces from Iwo Jima. That flag, flying from the highest point on the island, was raised after four days of intense fighting, although the battle continued for 36 days. One-third of all Marine losses during World War II happened at Iwo Jima. It was the only large engagement of the war in which Allied forces suffered more casualties (dead plus wounded) than their Japanese counterparts.

The Japanese were using Iwo Jima to intercept our long-range B-29 bombers attacking the Home Islands. Capturing the island would cut in half the distance the bombers would have to fly. Many thought the island would be used as a staging site for the inevitable invasion of Japan. The Allied command expected the battle to be over in two days, but the Japanese were holed up in hundreds of caves and prepared to fight to the death. Of the 110,000 U.S. forces involved in the attack, the Marines had 5,598 killed, 19,197 wounded, and 494 missing. Of the estimated 22,000 Japanese defenders, 20,703 were killed and 216 captured.

*Clockwise from left:* One of the two Vietnam Memorial’s polished granite walls mirrors the visitors who come to find a loved one’s name honored for his sacrifice. • The World War II Memorial is divided into two theaters. Pictured here is the Atlantic theater flanked by 14 granite pillars on each side, representing half of the 48 states and the U.S. dependencies who sent troops into battle. The Pacific theater is on the southern side of the memorial. • Five Marines and a Navy corpsman raised the American flag on the top of Mt. Suribachi, where it could be seen by all of the American troops fighting throughout the island. • “The Lone Sailor” immortalized in bronze reminds us of the thousands of sailors traveling with their duffel bags to their duty stations.





The invasion began on February 19, 1945, with the landing of the 4th and 5th Marine Divisions. Two days later, the 28th Regiment, 5th Division, reached the base of Mt. Suribachi. By nightfall the next day, they had surrounded the base of the extinct volcano. At 10:30 a.m., February 23rd, Company E, 2nd Battalion, completed an extremely difficult climb up the rough terrain to the top and planted a small American flag atop Suribachi. That afternoon after the slopes had been cleared of all enemy resistance, a larger American flag was raised by five Marines and a Navy hospital corpsman: Sgt. Michael Strank, Cpl. Harlong H. Block, Pfc. Franklin R. Sousley, Pfc. Rene A. Gagnon, Pfc. Ira Hayes, and PhM. 2/c John H. Bradley, USN.

A 33-year-old AP news photographer, Joe Rosenthal, who had been rejected from military service because of very poor eyesight, took the picture, which was later used by the government as the driving force to raise \$26.3 billion in a 1945 War Bond drive. Rosenthal won the 1945 Pulitzer Prize for his photograph. Gagnon, Hayes, and Bradley survived the battle and later posed for sculptor Felix W. de Weldon, who molded their faces in clay and created a life-sized model from Rosenthal's photograph.

The base of the memorial is made of Swedish granite, burnished in gold with the names and dates of every principal Marine Corps engagement since the founding of the Corps in November 1775. The 32-foot-high figures cast in bronze are shown raising a 60-foot flagpole from which a cloth flag flies 24 hours a day in accordance with the presidential proclamation of June 12, 1961. The memorial was dedicated on November 10, 1954, by President Eisenhower, to all Marines who have given their lives in defense of the United States since 1775.

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The **Navy-Marine Memorial** is located in Lady Bird Johnson Park on Columbia Island in Washington. The monument honors sailors of the U.S. Navy and the U.S. Merchant Marines who died at sea during World War I. It was dedicated on October 18, 1934.

Nicknamed "Waves and Gulls," the memorial depicts seven seagulls above the crest of a wave. It is made from cast aluminum and rests on a base of green granite which was installed by the WPA in 1940. Standing 35 feet high, the memorial is dedicated "to the thousands of Americans who have perished in the sea and to those whose destiny still is linked with our naval and maritime services."

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The **United States Air Force Memorial** honors the service and sacrifices of the men and women of the United States Air Force and its predecessor organizations, including the Army Air Service, the U.S. Army Air Corps, and the U.S. Army Air Forces. More than 54,000 airmen have died in combat while serving in the

"Lost at sea" is a chilling description of those who died as their ships went down. The seven gulls flying on the crest of a wave reflect the serenity of the ocean after the battle is over. God alone knows their resting places.

- The U.S. Air Force and its related service arms have suffered the second highest losses of any of America's four armed services.



Air Force and its historically related service arms. Its losses are the second highest of any of America's four armed services.

James Ingo Freed's signature design features three stainless steel spires that soar skyward, the tallest reaching a height of 270 feet. They impart a sense of accomplishment in command of the sky, and demonstrate the image of the precision "bomb burst" maneuver performed by the U.S. Air Force Thunderbird Demonstration Team. The memorial's design is truly representative of flight and the flying spirit of the Air Force.

The three spires also represent the three core values of the Air Force: integrity first, service before self, and excellence in all that is done. The spires also signify the Air Force's total force: active, guard, and reserve.

Beneath the three spires, the Air Force "star" is embedded in granite. For more than 50 years the star has been emblazoned on Air Force aircraft and serves as the rank insignia of every enlisted member of the Air Force. Other key elements include a Runway to Glory at the site's entrance, a bronze honor guard statue, two granite inscription walls, and a Glass Contemplation Wall that honors fallen airmen.

Located on a promontory in Arlington which overlooks the Pentagon and nearby Arlington Cemetery, the Memorial is easily seen on the skyline of Washington and Northern Virginia.

The **Tomb of the Unknowns** at Arlington National Cemetery stands atop a hill overlooking Washington. On March 4, 1921, Congress approved the burial of an unidentified American soldier from World War I in the plaza adjacent to the Memorial Amphitheater.

The marble for the white sarcophagus was mined in Marble, Colorado. The flat-faced block is relieved at the corners and along the sides by neo-classic pilasters set into the surface. Sculpted into the east panel are three Greek figures representing peace, victory, and valor. The original sarcophagus was placed above the grave of the unknown from World War I. West

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The first unknown soldier was selected from four unknowns from World War I exhumed from American cemeteries in France. • The symmetry

of the headstones at Arlington National Cemetery bespeaks the military order and earned honor of those who sacrificed so much.

of the sarcophagus are the crypts of the unknowns from World War II, Korea, and Vietnam. Each is marked with a white marble slab flush with the plaza.

The selections of the unknowns each time has been done with great solemnity. After World War I four unknowns were exhumed from American cemeteries in France. U.S. Army Sgt. Edward F. Younger, who was wounded in combat and highly decorated, was asked to select the Unknown Soldier of World War I from four identical caskets by placing a spray of white roses on one of the caskets. He selected the third casket from the left, which was then transported to the U.S. by the USS *Olympia*. The remaining unknowns were interred in the Meuse Argonne Cemetery, France. The Unknown Soldier lay in state in the Capitol Rotunda from his arrival in the United States until Armistice Day 1921. In November 1921, President Warren G. Harding officiated at the interment ceremonies at the Memorial Amphitheater.

In 1956 President Eisenhower signed a bill to select and pay tribute to the unknowns of World War II and the Korean War. Two unknowns from World War II, one from the European Theater and one from the Pacific Theater, were placed in identical caskets and transported aboard the USS *Canberra* to an anchorage off the Virginia capes. Navy Hospitalman 1st Class William R. Charette, then the Navy's only active-duty Medal of Honor recipient, was asked to select the Unknown Soldier of World War II. The remaining casket received a solemn burial at sea.

Four unknowns who died in the Korean War were disinterred from the National Cemetery of the Pacific in Hawaii. Army Master Sgt. Ned Lyle made the final selection of two caskets. After lying in state for two days in May 1958, each unknown was awarded the Medal of Honor by President Eisenhower, who presided over the interment ceremonies.

The unknown soldier from the Vietnam War was designated by Medal of Honor recipient U.S. Marine Corps Sgt. Maj. Allan Jay Kellogg, Jr., during a ceremony at Pearl Harbor on May 17, 1984. The remains were transported aboard the USS *Brewton* to

California and then lay in state in the Capitol Rotunda. Many Vietnam veterans visited the unknown along with President and Mrs. Reagan. The President presided over the interment ceremony on May 28, 1984.

Fourteen years later the Vietnam unknown was exhumed. Based on mitochondrial DNA testing, scientists identified the remains as those of Air Force 1st Lt. Michael Joseph Blassie. The remains were returned to his family for burial. It has been decided that the crypt prepared for the Vietnam Unknown will remain vacant.

**Arlington National Cemetery**, in Arlington, Virginia, is located directly across the Potomac River from Washington. The sheer numbers and the absolute symmetry of the granite headstones is awe inspiring. More than 300,000 persons are buried on 624 acres. The cemetery was established during the Civil War on the grounds of Arlington House, formerly the estate of the family of Robert E. Lee's wife Mary Anna Custis Lee, a descendant of Martha Washington. Veterans from all of the nation's wars are interred in the cemetery, from the American Revolution through the military actions in Afghanistan and Iraq. Pre-Civil War dead were reinterred after 1900.

Traditionally, American military cemeteries developed from the responsibility of commanders in battle to care for their casualties. When the Civil War casualties overflowed hospitals and burial grounds near Washington, Quartermaster General Montgomery C. Meigs proposed in 1864 that 200 acres of the Robert E. Lee family property at Arlington be taken for a cemetery. "The grounds about the mansion," Meigs wrote, "are admirably adapted to such a use." Burials began at Arlington before the ink was dry on Meigs's proposal. By war's end, 16,000 graves filled the spaces close to the house. The heir to the property, Custis Lee, sued the government claiming that he owned the land. After the Supreme Court ruled in his favor, Congress paid him \$150,000 for title to the land. Arlington is not the largest national cemetery, but surely is the most well-known.

# Two New Presidential Memorials and Two New Museums

WASHINGTON, D.C. – PART II

## Mount Vernon

Although Mount Vernon has been open to the American people for nearly 150 years and has received approximately 100 million visitors, the experience was enhanced immeasurably on October 27, 2006, with the opening of the Ford Orientation Center and the Donald W. Reynolds Museum and Education Center.

Prior to touring the estate, the **Ford Orientation Center** offers the visitor an 18-minute mini-epic film designed to dispel the traditional elder statesman icon and introduce the *real* George Washington—a dynamic, fascinating leader whose character and courage led our forefathers through the grave challenges of the Revolutionary War, the outcome of which determined the fate of this country. Filmed primarily at Mount Vernon, the large-format movie serves as an important vehicle for visitors transitioning from the present day into the eighteenth century.

*Mount Vernon in Miniature* is a half million dollar exact replica of the mansion scaled at one-twelfth actual size. The working model prepares visitors for what they will experience in the real mansion nearby. The doorknobs turn, windows open and close, candles light, drawers open, fireplaces work, and latches latch. Incredible!

The lobby of the center allows visitors to view through huge windows a picturesque pasture populated with sheep. Life-sized bronze sculptures of George and Martha Washington and two of her grandchildren, Nelly and Washy, greet visitors who come to have a brief experience with life in the late 1700s.

The **Donald W. Reynolds Museum and Education Center** features 23 galleries and theaters where visitors learn about Washington through interactive displays, an adventure movie, short films produced by The History Channel, and a rich collection



George Washington's Mount Vernon is beautifully sited on a knoll overlooking the Potomac, a point passed by early Europeans as they searched for land to settle.

of more than 700 objects which allow an insightful look at the personal effects of the Washington family. The building also serves as Washington's presidential library, with computer access to more than 20,000 letters written by the president.

The Center's 23 galleries reflect nearly

every aspect of George and Martha Washington's lives at a personal level, in war, in her support of the man as general and president, in his transition from soldier to statesman, and in their intellectual pursuits. The galleries are organized as museums, exhibits, and theaters which

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FDR saw a nation in despair during his first term, and a nation facing fear in his third. With large cloaks, he covered his paralyzed legs and demonstrated the strength of a great leader.

take the visitor through a learning curve – beginning with the mere knowledge that Washington was a general and our first president and emerging with an understanding of his seminal role in taking the British colonies from a dependency to an independent democracy. It is a fascinating journey.

Washington had intellectual interests in broad areas of detail and endeavor. As a farmer, he rose at 5 a.m. and made an early inspection of his farm; breakfast at 7, and then a more thorough inspection from 8 until 10; detail, paperwork, meeting with his farm managers; dinner at 3 p.m. and tea between 6 and 7; reading and conversation; retired at 9.

The president loved his gardens, studied horticulture, and hired an architect to design and build a brick greenhouse with exquisite detail. Semi-tropical plants graced the property in the warmer months and were protected in winter in the greenhouse heated with underground ducted air, a system supported by a wood fire. He studied John Abercrombie's 1789 treatise, *The Hot-House Gardener*. Widely read on many topics, he had an extensive personal library.

Washington was an avid outdoorsman: an accomplished hunter, equestrian, and breeder who developed the American Foxhound. He commissioned architect Joseph Rakestraw to design and fabricate a weathervane made of copper, iron, and lead, with a bird holding an olive branch in its beak. He enjoyed chamber music and encouraged the musical education of his extended family. He presented his step-granddaughter, Eleanor Parke Custis, with an expensive English guitar.

A visit to Mount Vernon should include a tour of the mansion, the greenhouse, the gardens, the farming exhibits, and the tomb. Try to save time for a visit to the general's whiskey distillery and gristmill just three miles from the estate on SR 235 South.

Mount Vernon is located 16 miles south of Washington, D.C., at the southern end of the George Washington Memorial Parkway. For additional help in planning your visit, go to [www.MountVernon.com](http://www.MountVernon.com) Hours: Apr–Aug: 8 – 5; Mar, Sep, & Oct: 9 – 5; Nov–Feb, 9 – 4. Tickets: Adults, \$13; Seniors (62+), \$12; ages 6–11, \$6; under five, Free.

### ***The Franklin Delano Roosevelt Memorial***

In May 1997 the memorial honoring the thirty-second president of the United States was completed. Scholarly surveys have consistently ranked Franklin Delano Roosevelt as one of the three greatest U.S. presidents. Elected to the presidency in the depths of the Great Depression, he created the New Deal to provide relief for the unemployed, recovery of the economy, and reform of the economic and banking systems. Many programs initiated during his three terms of office include the FDIC, TVA, CCC, WPA, and the SEC. Of course, one of his most important legacies is Social Security.

After 1938, Roosevelt pushed for re-armament as the Axis powers invaded eastern Europe and the Pacific Rim countries. After the attack on Pearl Harbor, FDR along with Winston Churchill provided the leadership the world needed to defeat Nazi Germany and the Japanese.

The four rooms of the memorial lead the visitor through FDR's presidency with evocative bronze statuary and quotations from his speeches. Room One introduces FDR's early presidency as he launches the New Deal. A bas relief sculpture depicts his first inauguration. Room Two presents sculptural groups: an urban breadline, a rural couple, a man listening to a fireside chat. In Room Three, Roosevelt appears seated, cloaked to nearly hide his wheelchair. His beloved Fala is sitting nearby. Room Four honors the life and legacy of FDR. A bas relief of his funeral cortege hangs in a red granite alcove.

The memorial is located in West Potomac Park between the Tidal Basin and the Potomac River. Park rangers are available daily to answer questions except December 25.

### ***The National Museum of the American Indian (NMAI)***

Opened in 2004, the Smithsonian's National Museum of the American Indian is founded on the collections and work of George Gustave Heye, who was born in New York into a wealthy German family in 1874. He entered Columbia College's School of Mines and at 23 found himself in Arizona working on a bridge project. Fascinated with Navajo culture, Heye began collecting artifacts which he sent home.

In 1901 Heye gave up engineering and went to work on Wall Street where he and two colleagues founded an investment bank. Their success was significant and permitted Heye to continue with his interest in Native American culture. Heye's collections are distinguished by more than 800,000 works of aesthetic, cultural, historical, and spiritual significance. These objects span more than 10,000 years of Native heritage in the U.S.

The building housing the NMAI was designed by Douglas Cardinal (Blackfoot) and a team of Native architects and consultants, including Johnpaul Jones (Cherokee/Choctaw) and artist/designer Ramona Sakiestewa (Hopi). The Mall Museum is veneered in irregular sizes of Kasota stone, bringing nature's rough beauty and architecture's creative elegance together in perfect harmony.

When you first arrive at the NMAI, purchase a copy of the





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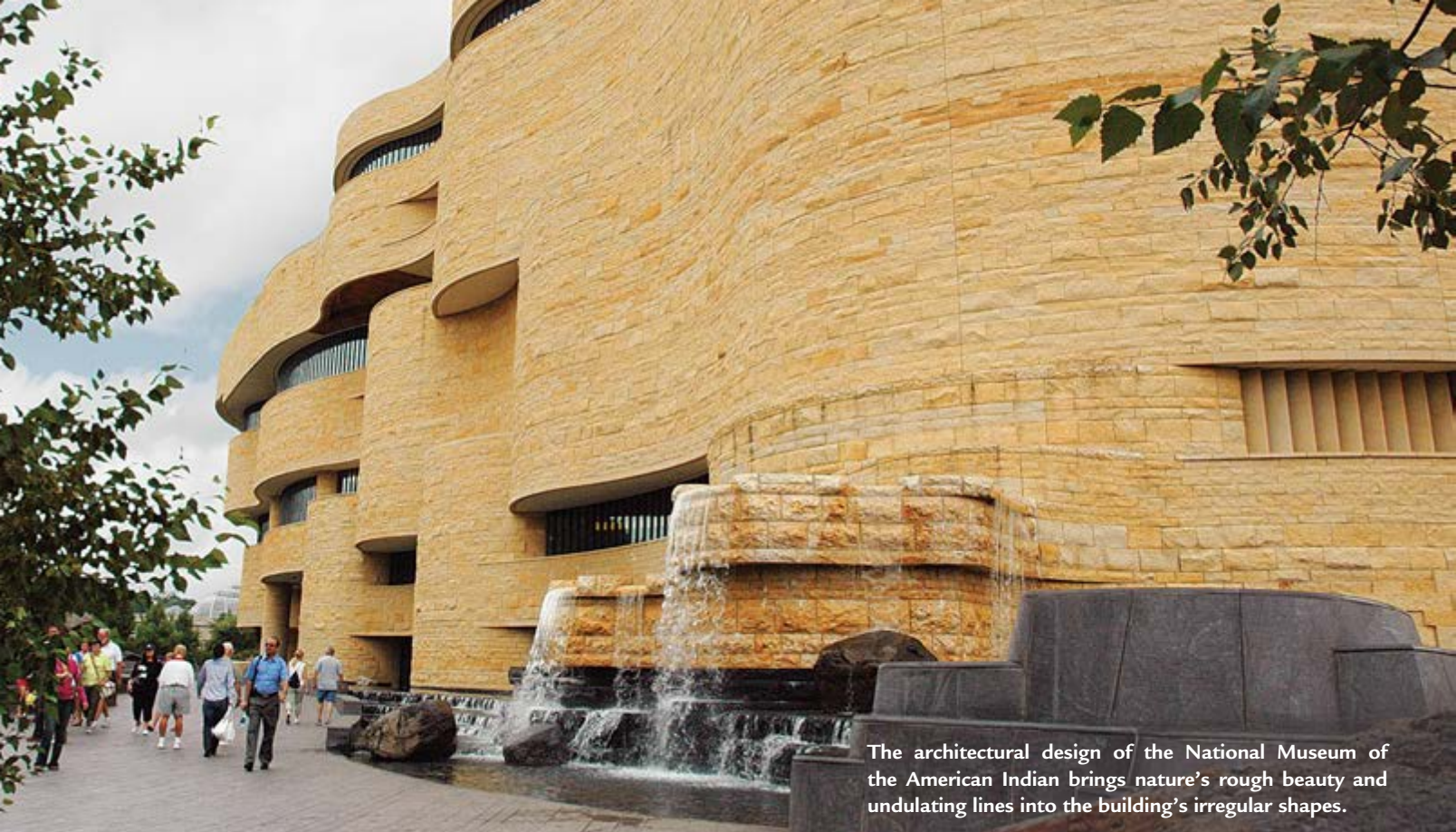
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The architectural design of the National Museum of the American Indian brings nature's rough beauty and undulating lines into the building's irregular shapes.

*Map and Guide* to the museum for \$6.95. There are several seating areas where you can relax for 30 minutes and fully acquaint yourself with this extensive facility. Ask at the information desk about the scheduled tours led by cultural interpreters. We especially enjoyed the tour led by a member of the Lakota tribe.

From the impressive four-story atrium, take the elevator to the fourth floor Lelawi Theater for an orientation. Native Americans have created two displays which offer a better understanding of their Universe (beliefs) and their Peoples (Native history). The Seven Teachings explain the Anishinaabe's spiritual beliefs.

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### Key members of North American tribes who appear in NMAI exhibits to reveal their culture and history:

*Wilson Scott* is an Anishinaabe elder from Hollow Water, First Nation, in Manitoba, Canada. He is a trapper and has extensive knowledge of Anishinaabe history. *Tessie Naranjo* is a community historian and potter. She is a member of the Review Committee of the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act, and vice president of the Indigenous Languages Institute in Sante Fe, New Mexico.

*Edwin Tafoya* is lieutenant governor and former governor of the Pueblo of Santa Clara. He has been a member of the tribal council for more than 25 years. *John D. Garcia* is a potter and an artist whose creations include drums, dance costumes, and traditional weapons of the Pueblo Indians. He worked for 18 years as a mechanical design engineer at the Los Alamos National Laboratory.

Wilson Scott



Tessie Naranjo



Edwin Tafoya



John D. Garcia



*The gifts of the Seven Grandfathers were the Seven Teachings—honesty, love, courage, truth, wisdom, humility, and respect. Each teaching is represented by a different animal. The Anishinaabe who study and live the Seven Teachings follow a path to physical, emotional, and spiritual well-being.* – Garry Raven, 2000

*The animals that represent the Seven Teachings are spiritual animals. We can look on the Earth at the habits of the wolf or the bear and get our teachings and learn from them. But when we talk about the wolf giving us humility, it's not really the animal, the wolf. It's the spirit animal, the wolf.* – Wilson Scott, 2000

The *Window on Collections* exhibits on the third and fourth floors demonstrate how modern technology enhances the Smithsonian's amazing ability to present artifacts. Each artifact displayed behind glass can be viewed on a computer monitor from any angle with 360° rotational software activated by touching the screen. With the additional capability to zoom in and out for close-ups, it's almost like holding the artifact in your hands, exactly the effect the curators wanted to create.

You should allow a full day for the NMAI. *Hours:* 10 – 5, daily except Dec. 25. *Admission:* Free. *Location:* 4th Street and Independence Ave. between the Air and Space Museum and the U.S. Capitol. For more information, visit [www.AmericanIndian.si.edu](http://www.AmericanIndian.si.edu) *Transportation:* Exit the Metro at L'Enfant Plaza and ascend to street level via the Maryland Avenue exit. Walk two blocks east to the NMAI. *Meals:* At reasonable prices, the Mitsitam Café on the first level offers a wide variety of Native American entrées including buffalo.

***The Donald W. Reynolds Center for American Art and Portraiture including Smithsonian's National Portrait Gallery and Smithsonian's American Art Museum***

The National Portrait Gallery tells the stories of America through the individuals who have built our national culture. Through the visual arts, the performing arts, and the new media, the Gallery portrays poets and presidents, visionaries and villains, actors and activists who speak our history. Perhaps the most interesting gallery is the "America's Presidents" exhibition. It lies at the heart of the Portrait Gallery's mission to tell the country's history through the individuals who have shaped it. Gilbert Stuart's "Lansdowne" portrait of George Washington is the grand introductory image of this exhibition. With the owner's decision to sell in 2000, the Gallery was in danger of losing this painting which had been on loan since the museum's opening in 1968. A generous gift from the Donald W. Reynolds foundation allowed the "Lansdowne" painting to be purchased as a gift to the nation.

The American Art Museum tells the stories of America through the visual arts. The works of more than 7,000 artists span three centuries of artistic achievement paralleling our country's cultural development. The Museum captures the extraordinary creativity of U.S. artists such as Winslow Homer, Mary Cassatt and Georgia O'Keeffe whose works offer insight into the American experience. Thomas Hart Benton, John

Sloan, and Andrew Wyeth represent the realist impulse of the 20th century. Everyone can discover his or her own story on the walls of this museum.

Both museums are housed in one of Washington's oldest public buildings—the U.S. Patent Office which began operation at this site in 1836. A \$283 million renovation was completed in the summer of 2006, the gift of the Donald W. Reynolds Foundation. An extensive article on the Grand Reopening can be found in *Smithsonian*, July 2006, pages 40–55.

Depending on your interests, you may want to allow a full day for the museum and gallery. *Hours:* 11:30 – 7, daily except Dec. 25. *Admission:* Free. *Location:* 8th and F Streets, NW. For more information, visit [www.ReynoldsCenter.org](http://www.ReynoldsCenter.org) *Transportation:* Exit the Metro at Gallery Place–Chinatown. *Food:* Upper West Side Café on the third floor or the Portico Café on the second floor (weather permitting); 11:30 – 7. **RIS**

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Gilbert Stuart's "Lansdowne" portrait of George Washington has for two centuries been the most recognized image of our nation's first president.



# Innovation and Service Make Horizon-Lussier One of Tiffin's Top Ten Dealers

by Fred Thompson

Thirteen years ago the Montreal winter had slowed sales at Horizon-Lussier to a crawl. "Our sales team contacted our customers—most of them retired—to see if they would like to participate in a caravan into Louisiana and south Texas," Jean-François Lussier, the company president and owner, recalled. Ten customers had a "let's do it!" response and the trip quickly turned into a much-anticipated annual event. The 2007-08 caravan will leave Marieville, a village 30 miles southeast of Montreal, on October 27 for the three-and-a-half month excursion with at least 30 rigs participating.

The departure from the Horizon-Lussier location on Highway 10 has in recent years become a media event covered by the local newspapers and television stations. "The families of the coach owners come to wish their loved ones a 'bon voyage.' There is often a lot of emotion as children watch their parents and grandparents depart," Lussier said.

The trip is leisurely and relaxed. "Some stops last up to three days," Philippe Fréchette, the company's general sales manager pointed out. The caravan will arrive in Harlingen, Texas, in early December. "We organize paperwork for entry into Mexico," Jean-François said, "which makes the experience trouble-free. Some elect to join the caravan in Texas. We try to be very flexible."

The RVers pay about \$400 for the trip which covers a few

common meals shared at various points along the way. The company also pays the expenses of the caravan's chief, who is a medical doctor retired from full-time practice. When necessary he will see participants as patients—certainly another added benefit. "He is so willing to share his RV knowledge and experience with caravan members throughout the trip," Phillippe said.

After the winter holiday break, the sojourners head for Puerto Vallarta for two-and-a-half months. The popular town of approximately 300,000 is located on Banderas Bay and the Pacific Ocean. "They have elected to stay in the same campground each year which has allowed the group to develop valuable relationships with the locals," Jean-François said. "The caravan's chief and tailgunner know all of the good restaurants and boutiques that first-time visitors would probably overlook."

"Last year the caravaners took me over a bush road that led to an awesome beach with palm trees and an azure blue ocean," he continued. "I told them it was a privilege to travel in such luxury and share these great experiences."

French Canadians are a very pro-active people and most of the caravaners have made serious efforts to learn conversational Spanish. "It makes the cultural experience much more enjoyable," Philippe observed. "Some have learned Spanish dances

*Continued on page 30*





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*Continued from page 28*

and studied the cultural history of the area. It is really a thrill to see people from so many different backgrounds sharing life experiences throughout the trip.”

As you might expect, when the caravaners return in March, they have a reservoir of memories to share with family, friends, and neighbors. Lussier is reluctant to guess how many new coaches have been sold by members sharing their experiences over and over. While there are several repeaters each year, the contagious camaraderie continues to draw new members.

By mid-April the company’s service department is booked with the returning caravaners coming in for regular service and the summer travelers getting their rigs ready to enjoy the incredibly beautiful scenery and culture of their native Canada.

Jean-François’s parents, Jean and Pierrette, started the company in 1962. “My father’s brother owned a Pontiac-Buick franchise and offered my dad a place to sell snowmobiles. In 1964 boats were added to provide a year-round business. In ’67 the Lussiers added travel trailers to their product line which necessitated a move to a larger location two years later.

In 1984 Jean-François got involved in the family business as a full-time sales representative. Of the three brothers working there, he was the oldest. After the company began carrying Class A coaches in the mid-eighties, it became necessary to find an even larger location. “We were fortunate to acquire this property here on Highway 10 right at the interchange. This road system is similar to Interstate highways in the U.S.,” Jean-François said.

In 1992 one of the brothers launched a new campground business, and in 2005 Jean-François bought his other brother’s interest to become the sole owner of Horizon-Lussier.

Today Jean-François has focused his role in the company to overall business management and customer service. “I like to be a problem solver for my customers. I can usually give my owners a good comfort level as they learn to use their coaches and permit us to service them. I am really customer focused,” he said. “In the short run, customer service may not seem cost effective. But in the long run, it is always cost effective,” he smiled.

*L-R: Philippe Fréchette and Jean-François Lussier found a successful synergy in managing sales and administration. • Sylvie Lussier works closely with Jean-François in managing Horizon, especially in quality assurance. • Philippe’s sales success at the Western Festival in St-Tite required an urgent order to Dorothy Gober at TMH in Red Bay.*

“I get great satisfaction from seeing a happy customer. Of course, I can’t accomplish that all by myself. We have a great staff here at Horizon and the ‘service and share’ philosophy has become a part of our company’s culture,” the 48-year-old entrepreneur said. “There are so many families whose income depends on our success, and that, of course, gives me another major reason to come to work and make Horizon-Lussier successful.”

Philippe Fréchette is a major reason Jean-François can narrow his focus to management and customer service. Now in his fifth season with Horizon-Lussier, Philippe had been a seasoned professional manager in the transport freight business, specializing in chemical hauling across North America. One day a head hunter called and asked if he might be interested in the sales manager’s position at Horizon. “The company is located near where my grandfather had been in business in the early 1920s. I went to the interview and spoke with Gregoire Lussier, Jean-François’s brother. I feel sure that my knowledge of chassis and diesel engines was a factor in their offering me the job,” Philippe recalled. “We have grown and learned from each other. I knew nothing about retail sales, but I visited a lot of RV manufacturers, attended seminars, and it all began to come together for me.” This year the company tie for the number seven position of Tiffin’s Top Ten Dealers.

Horizon-Lussier is a member of the Spader’s 20 Group, a business management consulting company which brings 20 recreational vehicle dealerships together several times each year to share information regarding sales, business operation, and management.

Situated on 13 acres, the company’s attractive architecture provides office and service facilities for 85–90 employees during the peak of the company’s season. Jean-François oversees the administrative staff which covers accounting, reception, and RV

financing and insurance. Philippe and his assistant sales manager, Mario Picard, manage a staff of 11 sales people. “We split our sales staff to specialize in motorized and towables,” Philippe said. “Our average experience in motorized is 20 years, while our sales personnel in towables have an average of 15 years of experience.” Fréchette believes the specialization gives Horizon’s customers the best service and information about the company’s product lines. “We often have sales meetings where we do a ‘features and benefits’ sharing of our collective knowledge,” he said. “It increases each person’s overall product knowledge tremendously.”

Service Manager Martin Lemoine oversees the company’s parts and service division. The department has four internal and four external service advisors to meet with clients and owners. The internal advisors work with customers who are in the process of acquiring their recreational vehicles. They bridge the gap between sales and service to make certain that the new owner fully understands the service requirements regarding every component of his coach. “Understanding service and maintenance is a major key to the long-term enjoyment of a recreational vehicle,” Jean-François pointed out.

The external service advisors personally work with each owner to help them maintain correct periodic service and solve specific problems. The service advice given plus good record keeping gives Horizon’s customers a great confidence level in their personal ability to own and maintain RV equipment.

In addition, Horizon employs a special advisor who receives calls from owners who may be at home or camped at a location anywhere in North America. The advisor will find a reliable subcontractor to take care of the customer’s problem and then follow up with both the customer and the service company to assure an agreeable outcome.

Horizon offers in its rental division 25 Class A coaches for those who wish to have an RV experience without purchasing equipment. Over half of the coaches are Tiffin’s popular 32-ft. Allegro. The special service advisor provides the same travel support to the rental customers. “Many of our renters eventually

become owners,” Philippe said.

The company offers engine and transmission work that can be completed in a day. More extensive work is outsourced. With 18 service bays, plus three bays dedicated to cleaning and prep, Horizon can perform nearly all of the maintenance and repair that might be necessary on a Tiffin coach including fiberglass repair and the replacement of front and back caps (see President’s Corner, 4:1, for major service items that should be done at the Tiffin Service Center in Red Bay). The company maintains a \$600,000 parts inventory.

The department employs 15 service techs, each of whom has specialized training to maintain and repair the wide variety of RV equipment in Horizon’s inventory. In addition, this department does the pre-delivery inspections. “Our service technicians are factory trained, but are not RVIA certified,” Jean-François noted. “Most of our techs are French speakers and the RVIA online training material is in English. We remedy that problem by sending our own translator with our techs who go periodically to our various manufacturers to receive training,” he continued.

Horizon has created a significant new owner orientation and training program which lasts a minimum of four hours and generally all day for first-time owners. The company has four covered stalls in its delivery area, plus four full hook-up sites for new owners to stay overnight.

Sylvie Lussier, Jean-François’s wife of 23 years, plays a major role in pre-delivery inspection. She oversees the evaluation of the manufacturer’s quality control and signs off on the delivery and the coach’s acceptance into inventory. “We starting dating in 1979,” Jean-François related, “and Sylvie began work here in 1980. She makes sure the cleaning staff puts each coach in top condition.”

“While we expect every manufacturer to have an occasional problem in QC or production, what I like best about Tiffin Motorhomes is the fact that I can talk to an *owner* to reach a solution. I consider it a privilege to be able to call Bob or Tim and work directly with them. With other companies, I have to talk to an employee,” Jean-François said.

Marketing techniques at Horizon-Lussier are not unique, but they are persistent and vigorous. “We are in the so-called baby boomer phase, and that has a lot to do with our marketing,” Philippe said, as Jean-François agreed. “We have accumulated a large database of statistics over the last three years. The average age of our buyers is 54. We target our advertising with a certain spread to that segment of our population. We know where they live geographically—what we call the population pockets,” they explained. Over 3.5 million of the province’s 7.5 million population live in the greater Montreal area, all of which is within 150 kilometers of the dealership.

The company uses television, radio, and newspapers in its advertising, although they have found that television brings the best results. Emailing has also begun to play a significant role in Horizon’s marketing. “We have quite a bank of email addresses,” Jean-François said. “We can also credit the *Go RVing*

*Continued on page 63*

## Tiffin introduces 'bunkhouse' floor plan

Tiffin Motorhomes had children and grandchildren in mind when its new "bunkhouse" floor plan took shape. Then along came NASCAR fans, football tailgaters plus hunting and fishing buddies.

Bunk beds are more attractive than hide-a-beds for many youngsters, but their parents and grandparents may have to arm-wrestle other adults for the 150-160 moderately-priced 35-ft. Allegro QBAs Tiffin expects to produce during the 2008 model year.

With base prices beginning at about \$110,000 and ranging upward depending on chassis and options, as the Allegro QBAs begin rolling off the production line, Tiffin is very optimistic about sales at its 78 dealerships throughout the U.S. and Canada.

"Like that kitchen where people migrate in a party, this floor-plan is going to attract a crowd at tailgating events, including football and motorsports," says Tiffin National Sales Manager Jerry Williamson.

An optional 32-in. LCD TV mounted within the midsection wall of the coach enables eight adults, comfortably seated, to watch the screen. The spacious quad-slide handles another half-dozen standing occupants. A tiled living room, galley and bathroom floor makes cleanup quick and easy.

The bunk beds are tucked across from the spacious bathroom with a 36-in. shower, with a wall separating the 30-in. by 72-in. bunks from the master bedroom. Each bunk can have an optional pull-down 15-in. multimedia screen with wireless headphones for TV, video games or DVDs. With full use of the master quarters' queen bed, the bunks, the living area hide-a-bed sofa and dinette, the Allegro 35QBA comfortably sleeps seven.

A 30-in. entry door, previously offered only on higher-priced diesel pushers, makes easy work of carrying in supplies and other necessities for a camping, hunting, fishing or tailgating adventure.

Williamson predicts 90 percent of Allegro orders will have the optional full-body paint in Champagne, Silver Sand or Sunlit Sand, offered for the first year on the entry-level Allegro. The new Allegro also features upgraded plumbing fixtures, full slideout ball-bearing galley drawers, an automatic satellite dish as well as a satellite dish tripod and optional Air Coil hide-a-bed sofa sleeper and free-standing dinette.

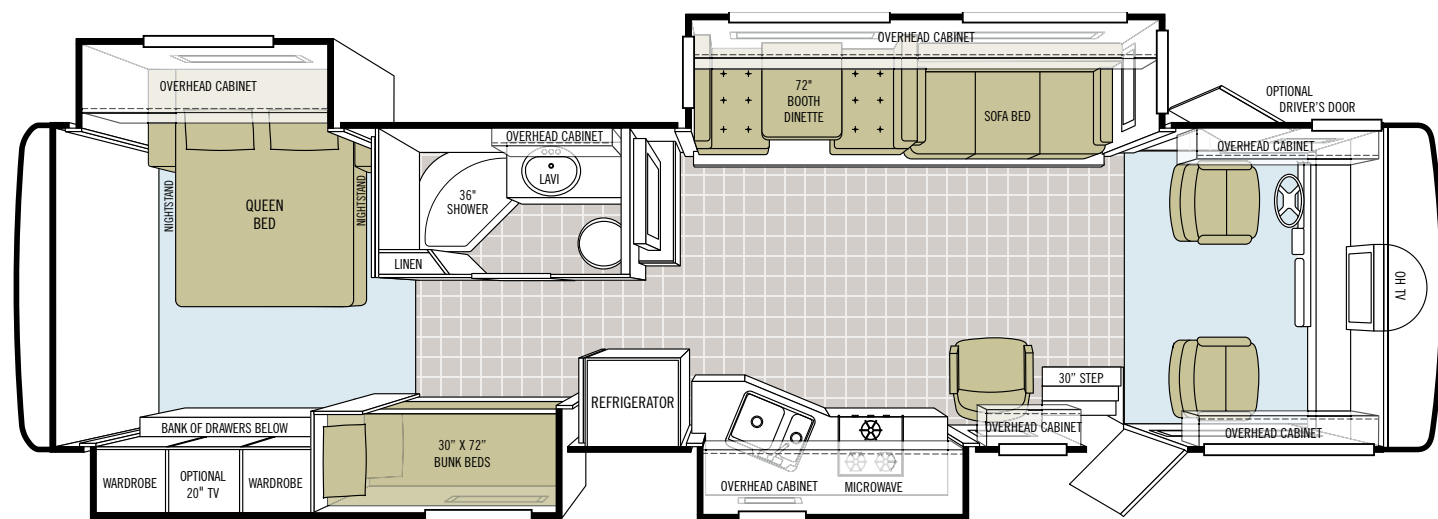
"At dealerships, the Allegro 35QBA is going to jump out at many RV shoppers who just never did find that perfect fit before," Williamson says.

For the eighth year in a decade, Tiffin Motorhomes earned the nation's highest honor for dealer satisfaction, the 2006 Quality Circle Award from the Recreational Vehicle Dealers Association for its performance on the RVDA's annual Dealer Satisfaction Index (DSI). The DSI rates dealer feedback in 24 specific criteria.

In the 2006 dealer survey, Tiffin ranked first in the nation in 18 of the criteria, including product support that promotes customer satisfaction and loyalty, competitive and innovative product design, accessibility of top management, and product value for dealer success. Tiffin finished second or third in five other categories in the survey of 577 dealers.

Tiffin produces gas- and diesel-powered Allegro Class A motorhomes in five model lines: Allegro, Allegro Bay, Phaeton, Allegro Bus and Zephyr. For more information, visit [www.tiffinmotorhomes.com](http://www.tiffinmotorhomes.com) —Pete Pepinsky

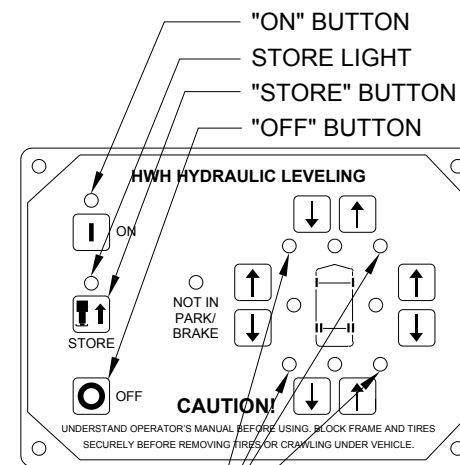
### The Allegro 35 QBA



## HWH Issues Service Bulletin for "Jacks-Down" Warning Light and Buzzer

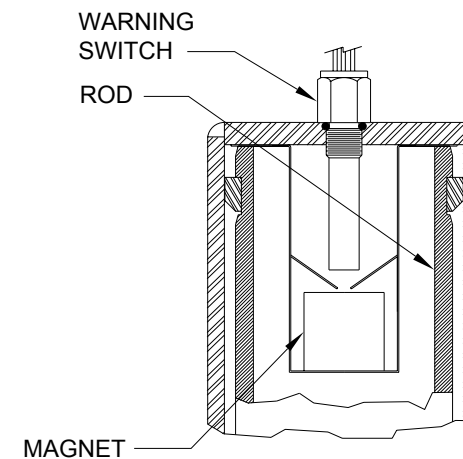
A complaint received by many service people is that the "JACKS DOWN" warning light and buzzer will come ON while traveling. This seems to happen more often in the first hour of traveling. This is very often misdiagnosed as an electrical problem with the CONTROL BOX or WARNING SWITCH on the jack. Sometimes the jack cylinder is changed. The most common cause of this problem is OPERATOR ERROR. The LEVELING SYSTEM is turned OFF while the "STORE" light on the touch panel is still ON. This happens with any 310 or 610 series leveling systems. The jacks are then left partially extended even though the warning lights have gone out.

The 310 systems will automatically turn OFF two minutes after the last red WARNING light on the touch panel goes out. The 610 systems will automatically turn OFF six minutes after the last red WARNING light on the touch panel goes out.



When a jack is retracting its red WARNING light will go out when a magnet in the jack opens the warning switch as it gets close to the switch. A jack will be extended at least 1 inch when the warning light goes out and will continue to retract until the solenoid valve closes. When the system is turned OFF, the solenoid valves for the jacks close. This locks the fluid in the jacks and the hoses. As a vehicle travels the temperature under the vehicle will increase, this can cause THERMAL EXPANSION of the fluid in the leveling system making one or more jacks extend slightly. If the jack is not fully retracted, thermal expansion of the fluid can extend the jack far enough to turn the MASTER WARNING light and buzzer ON.

The leveling system must be allowed to complete the STORE cycle to keep this from happening. Pushing the "OFF" button or turning the ignition key while the STORE light is ON will interrupt the STORE cycle closing the solenoid valves. This will usually result in the MASTER WARNING light and buzzer coming ON.



If a customer complains of this problem, level the vehicle then have him/her show you how he/she operates the system to store the jacks. Explain the importance of not interrupting the STORE cycle. Review the owners manual with the customer. It explains how to properly STORE the jacks and points out that the system should not be interrupted during the STORE cycle.

If it is evident that the operator is using the correct procedures for storing the jacks, then the system should be checked for a possible problem. Take an ACCURATE measurement of each jack to see how far it extends before the WARNING light comes on. A problem with the jack may not let it fully retract. If a jack will not fully retract, the cylinder should be replaced. If the jack fully retracts, but extends less than one inch before the WARNING light comes on, replace the warning switch. If the jack is retracting fully and the warning switch is working properly, there may be an excessive heat problem somewhere on the system. Make sure hoses are not routed near heat sources, between frame rails on front engine vehicles, over transmission cross members or anywhere excessive heat may build up. Make sure a jack is not in an enclosed area where lack of air movement may allow excessive heat build up.

**200 Series Joystick:** This should never be a problem as long as the STORE LEVERS are in the STORE position, pulled to the center with the Joystick lever.

Please contact HWH CORPORATION at 1-800-321-3494 for technical advice or assistance.

## Tiffin Motorhomes Appoints La Mesa RV as Atlanta Dealer

Tiffin Motorhomes recently appointed La Mesa RV Center in Austell, Georgia, as its full-line dealer for the greater Atlanta area. Headquartered in San Diego, La Mesa RV is Tiffin's second largest dealer with eight locations selling Tiffin products in Davis, San Bernardino, and San Diego, California; Tucson, Mesa, Yuma, and Quartzsite, Arizona; and now Austell, Georgia.

La Mesa RV Center in Austell will inventory all of the Tiffin brands: Zephyr, Allegro Bus, Phaeton, Allegro Bay, and Allegro.

Bob Tiffin, CEO and president of Tiffin Motorhomes, Inc., noted that "La Mesa RV has been an integral part of our dealer network for many years. We value them as a partner and look forward to serving the Atlanta market through their Austell dealership."

La Mesa RV invites RVers in the Atlanta area as well as the thousands of RVers who travel the interstates through Georgia to stop by their three-acre air-conditioned showroom located at 150 Riverside Parkway in Austell to see and test drive the entire Tiffin product line. Traveling west from downtown Atlanta on I-20, take exit 46 (Riverside Parkway) and head toward Six Flags Over Georgia. For more information, call Steve Love at 858-874-8095. —Steve Love

## Make Your Coach Look Brand New Again

While traveling America's highways, and especially its Interstates, your coach can acquire a lot of residues and films that dull its beautiful factory finish. When you visit Red Bay for service, call Ricky Johnson at (256) 668-0211 and ask him to restore the luster and beauty of your coach's paint. As an independent contractor, Johnson began his cleaning service 13 years ago and makes it his personal mission to have satisfied customers. For the last 17 years, he has worked in Tiffin's parts and service department. Johnson offers a (1) full wash, (2) wash/wax, (3) all interior cleaning, and (4) carpet cleaning.

—Fred Thompson, Editor

## Editor's Choice Birmingham South Campground

When we typeset and print the *Roughing It Smoothly* magazine, we stay at the Birmingham South Campground (BSC) on I-65 just eight miles south of the I-459 and I-65 intersection. A well-established facility that formerly ran under the KOA label, BSC gets a 5-star Woodall's rating in both Facilities and Recreation. The office staff is very friendly and accommodating, looking after your interests and needs while camping at BSC. Full hook-

ups include 50 amps and cable. Several pull-thru sites can serve coaches up to 45 feet. The park has excellent WiFi service at no charge. BSC's heated pool and spa is open from March 15 to October 15. Your children and grandchildren will enjoy the well-designed, enclosed playground. If several coaches are traveling together, you can reserve the pavilion for outdoor dining. The camp store has a good selection of consumable RV products and small equipment items often needed for operating your coach. Most campsites are tree-shaded but still have plenty of room for slide-outs. Extended stay sites are available if you are planning a long-term visit or need a location near the UAB Medical Center. There are many shopping and dining opportunities within five miles, including a new Publix that should be opening in Spring 2008. Major malls with all of the brand-name stores are within 20 minutes. **DISCOUNT:** Bring a copy of *Roughing It Smoothly* and receive an automatic 10 percent discount off the cost of your stay at BSC. With discount, approx. \$35/night.

## Editor's Choice Cherry Hill Park, Washington, DC

Cherry Hill Park has been serving RVers for eight decades. Mike Gurevich, a third generation owner, knows how to take care of his campers!

Located in Maryland and almost due north of the District, Cherry Hill is a regular bus stop on the Metrobus line from early morning to late evening (full schedules are available at the office). The Metrobus takes you to the Metrorail's nearest station for fast service into all of the prime museum and memorial locations.

The friendly and knowledgeable staff in the Park's office can help you plan each day's visit to the District with regard to operating times of each site and entry tickets. All of the memorials and Smithsonian museums are free. Grey Line Tours offers day and evening tours leaving from the Park.

When you arrive, you may want a staff member to show you your assignment prior to occupying the site. Cherry Hill has 400 choices. The staff wants to provide you with the location most suitable to your needs. Each site includes 30-50 amp service, water, sewer, and cable.

The centrally located Conference Center provides two swimming pools, hot tub, sauna, and exercise room. On the lower level you will find a 19-unit laundry room, fireplace, game room, and Star Café which serves full meals every day. Two playgrounds, a basketball court, minigolf, and a nature trail address your athletic needs. Evening activities include tractor rides, marshmallow roasts, and outdoor movies at the Park's Starlight Theatre.

Rates: \$52 back-in; \$57 pull-thru; \$62 premium. Discounts: AAA, AARP, FMCA, Good Sam, and military. Call 866-313-9308 for reservations.



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## Interviews from Phoenix, Arizona

by Harold Breuninger



### Bill Cooper

Home: Deming, New Mexico  
Interviewed at Desert's Edge RV Village  
Phoenix, Arizona

- Bill travels in a 2003 Allegro Bus.
- He started the part-time RV lifestyle about 10 years ago.
- Bill has owned several 5th wheels and three motor homes.
- This is his first Tiffin coach.
- He has been to Red Bay and is "enamored" (his word) with the whole Red Bay experience.
- Bill travels with Raisin and Zack, two very affectionate Shih Tzus
- He has two sons, one daughter, five grandchildren, and two great-grandchildren
- Bill retired from producing topographical maps with an aerial photography company he founded in 1966.
- During the company's 40th anniversary open house, they arranged for one of their mapping planes to land on a near-by city street (with governmental permission) and taxi to the company's parking lot to give customers the opportunity to view the sophisticated survey equipment used in flight.
- Currently Bill travels about a month at a time before returning home, but after a week or ten days he becomes restless and heads out again.
- He is a ham radio operator whose call sign is KB7JEY.
- An ardent cyclist in his younger days, Bill peddled cross country 10 times, usually traveling 50 to 60 miles per day.
- His longest peddling day was 100 miles (I got tired just thinking about it).



### Chuck & Marilyn Kruse

Home: Las Vegas, Nevada  
Interviewed at Desert's Edge RV Village  
Phoenix, Arizona

- They are the proud owners of a 2006 Phaeton.
- They are brand new to the RV lifestyle.
- They travel with Tiffany, an 11-year-old "mal-tipoo," a combination Maltese and Poodle.
- Chuck is a roofing contractor.
- They have one daughter living in Las Vegas.
- They usually travel every other month or so spending seven to 10 days on the road.
- Their longest trip so far has been 32 days exploring Canada.
- They love the RV lifestyle and plan on doing it for years to come.
- Boating is another of their activities; they have a 44-ft. Silverton motor yacht on Lake Mead.
- They plan on acquiring another boat suitable to take on their motorhome trips.
- They have not been to Red Bay, but they are confirmed Tiffin owners right out of the gate.
- They find their Las Vegas dealer service superb and the quality, value, and floorplan of their coach exceptional.
- They are NASCAR fans and plan to use their coach to travel to many of those events.
- One harrowing experience occurred while driving near Mammoth Lakes, California, in the Sierra Nevada Mountains. The road narrowed to a "goat path" according to Chuck, when they saw a Road Narrows sign. This was followed by a tunnel that was no more than 6 inches per side wider than their coach mirrors. The road then became a narrow one way, one lane road for the next several miles. Fortunately, they made it without mishap.



### Jim and Mary Seay

Home: Pasco, Washington  
Interviewed at Desert's Edge RV Village  
Phoenix, Arizona

- The Seays are enjoying their 2006 Allegro.
- Previously, they have owned a 1999 truck and travel trailer, a 2000 gas-driven motorhome, and 2001 diesel pusher.
- This is their first Tiffin product which they bought based upon the recommendations of other owners.
- According to Jim, none of the above come close to comparing favorably with their Allegro.
- They frequently serve as hosts at National Park campgrounds.
- They have three grown children living in Bento City, Washington, Phoenix, Arizona, and Anchorage, Alaska, plus two grandchildren.
- Jim is a retired mechanical engineer and Mary is a retired environmental engineer.
- Jim does most of the driving; however, Mary took a driving course and helps out.
- No longer full-timers, they now travel five to six months a year.
- They both enjoy golfing and hiking.
- Mary does quilting work and Jim likes trap shooting.
- Jim and Mary have been married 10 years having originally met through an ad Mary posted looking for a golfing partner. Jim, hoping to impress her, arrived in a 1923 T-Bucket Roadster with a Chevy V8 engine. Mary took one look at the hot-rod and asked where is the hood, the top and the fenders? Needless to say, she was not impressed and mentioned to a friend later that Jim was a "PhD nerd in a mid-life crisis." They were married three months later.

**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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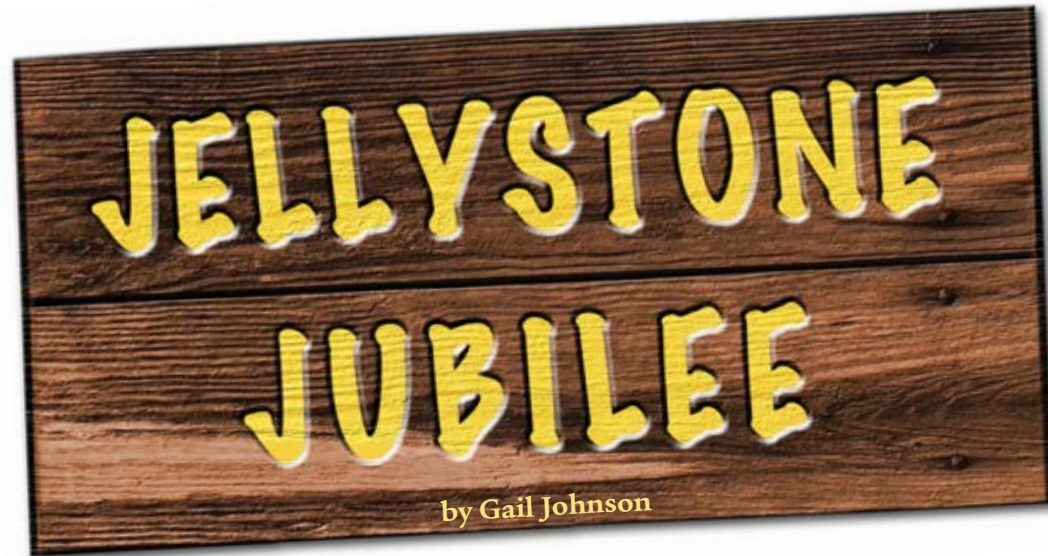
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August 20 through 25 went down in the record books in and around Warrens, Wisconsin, as one of the wettest weeks in recent history. That did not, however, dampen the enthusiasm of the 250 rally attendees who gathered at Yogi Bear's Jellystone Park Camp Resort near Warrens. The facility itself was extraordinary, with not only very nice camp sites and amenities, but a huge new lodge on site which housed conference rooms, a restaurant, a hotel, an arcade, and a large indoor water park.

Each evening campers enjoyed a themed meal served in the lodge ballroom, with many attendees dressed appropriately for the evening's theme. Themes included Mardi Gras Night, Western Night, Picnic Barbeque, and Field and Stream.

Registration took place on Monday, and, as is the usual cus-

tom, Tuesday was devoted to seminars and other activities on site. One of the highlights of Tuesday's events was a ladies' tea, which was attended by about 70. Favorite tea cups were brought and stories shared about them, and our knowledge of the customs surrounding tea was tested in a "tea trivia" quiz. Prizes were awarded, and everyone seemed to have a "jolly good time!"


Wednesday the sun actually peeked through the clouds, which made our bus tour very enjoyable. Our destinations that day included: Fort McCoy, a nearby military base; a cranberry farm, where we actually were guided out into a cranberry marsh to see the unripe berries growing; and the Cranberry Discovery Center, a museum/restaurant/gift shop in Warrens where we were served (what else?) cranberry coffee and cranberry pie! I

had always thought "cheese" when considering Wisconsin's main products, but we learned that cranberries also rank right up there at the top of Wisconsin's agricultural economy.

Thursday, we again boarded buses and rode to nearby Eau Claire for Fanny Hill's Dinner Theatre. There we were treated to lunch at a lovely Victorian Bed and Breakfast on a bluff overlooking the Chippewa River. We had time to roam the gardens and visit on the deck outside, or just watch the birds and butterflies busy in the gardens from our seats in the dining room. After lunch, we were treated to a comedy performed by local actors—delightful!

In addition to the many activities already mentioned, there were horse shoe tournaments, a back-your-wagon race, and a very interesting arts and crafts display done by and for the participants at the rally.

Special thanks should be given to the local Tiffin dealer, King's Campers, for the wonderful support they gave throughout the rally. They provided two technicians who, along with the two Tiffin techs who came from Red Bay, did an excellent job of servicing the units needing minor repairs.

For those of you who have not yet experienced an Allegro Club rally, please consider doing so. We have a wonderful time of fun, fellowship, good food, and seeing interesting places in this grand country in which we live! Until the next time, have fun "Roughing it Smoothly"! 

*From left:* Yogi, Jimmy & Cindy • Joanne Brown getting polka lesson from youngest member of the Good Time Dutchmen. • Minnesota Go-For Allegros happily accept check from Jimmy for chapter attendance at rally.



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**TIFFIN/ALLEGRO CLUB BAY BASH**  
TBA, Bay Area, CA  
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**ALLEGRO CLUB BRANSON OR BUST**  
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# *Almost Heaven, West Virginia*



by Fred Thompson

**Most of us** can't think of West Virginia without humming John Denver's recording of lyrics that brought this small mountainous state to the national consciousness and popularized our desire to belong to the land. The people, the mountains, the rivers, the trees:

*Blue Ridge mountains, Shenandoah River  
Life is old there, older than the trees  
Younger than the mountains, blowing like a breeze.*

....

*Country roads, take me home  
To the place, where I belong  
West Virginia, mountain mamma  
Take me home, country roads.*

If those words don't make you grab the motorhome's keys and hook up your tow car, then check out the Fall color on these pages. West Virginia provides some of the best scenic byways in the nation, and October can only improve them. And just how far away is West Virginia? Two-thirds of the U.S. population is within a 500-mile drive of this Appalachian state, according to a demographic survey from the West Virginia Division of Tourism.

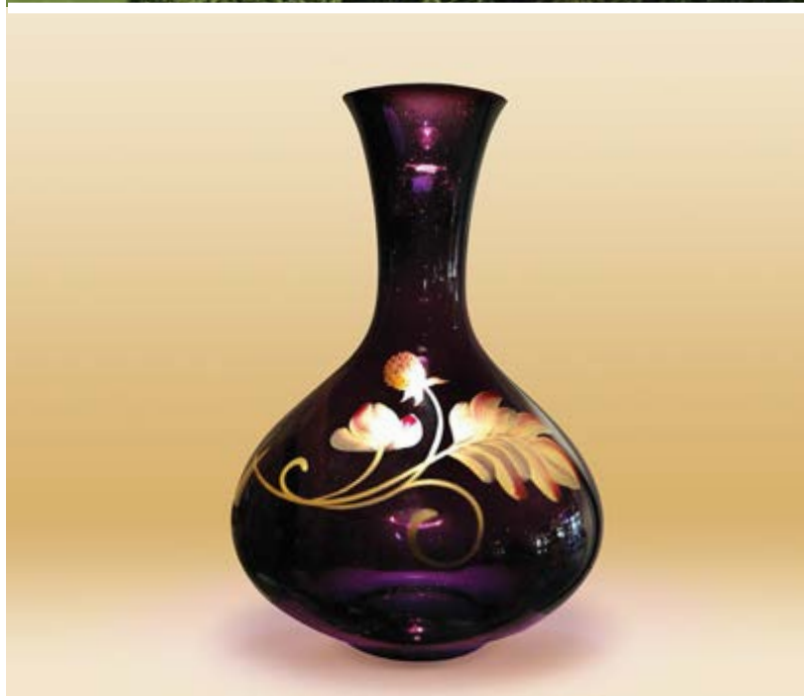
Our trip in September was the third time in seven years we have journeyed to this state for nature's relaxing nourishment. West Virginia has an extensive park system, including five which have been elevated to "resort park" status. Those include Cacapon, Canaan Valley, Pipestem, Stonewall, and Twin Falls; however Cacapon does not offer camping. All of the resort parks offer 18-hole golf courses with Stonewall and Canaan Valley being the crown jewels. In fact, Stonewall boasts an Arnold Palmer Signature course.

Although we are not golfers, we decided to make **Stonewall** our first stop because of its many other amenities. The campground sites are the largest we have seen in many years, with many overlooking the lake. The regular rate is \$33/night plus tax. Seniors (62+) receive a 10 percent discount. Those in the campground can enjoy all the amenities of lodge dwellers for a **\$12 daily resort pass**. This includes (for up to four users per pass) the use of paddle boats, water bikes, canoes, kayaks, bicycles, indoor/outdoor pools, fishing equipment, the fitness center, and daily naturalist tours. And that's just the beginning if you really feel like indulging yourself!

Stonewall offers a luxurious *massage therapy and spa salon* with treatments starting at \$49 and topping out at \$459 for six hours of "The Ultimate Indulgence." Many rejuvenating packages are available from \$95 to \$155 including a 75-minute hot stone massage.

---

*Clockwise from left:* The view of the New River Gorge from Hawks Nest is spectacular any time of year, but especially in the Fall. • The full hook-up campsites at Stonewall are spacious, providing privacy and room for outside activities. • The Arnold Palmer 18-hole course at Stonewall is carefully manicured every day. • A Fenton art glass vase





STEVE SHALUTA/WV COMMERCE

The resort's 7,149-yard *Arnold Palmer Signature golf course* has lush greens and fairways. The course is surrounded by woods, water, valleys, and hillocks to create a golf environment that has something for every skill level. With a practice facility, pro shop, clubhouse, and packages that start at just \$150, Stonewall's course is a must for the traveling golfer. Several times each month, reduced rate packages are offered for nine holes or afternoon only play.

The *MountainMade at Stonewall* shop in the lodge presents creations and workshops by selected artists from West Virginia. Workshops are offered throughout the year, with ten scheduled in October and November. The classes are held in Thomas, about an hour's drive from the park.

You don't have to leave the park for fine dining. *Stillwaters* presents a host of New Appalachian culinary creations. Lighter fare is offered at T.J. Muskie's and Lightburn's. We found a delightful restaurant in Bridgeport with excellent European cuisine. The **Provence Market Café** serves lunch and dinner at moderate prices.

West Virginia has been known for over a century for its factories that produce exquisite creations of **art glass**. Sadly, many of these factories have gone out of business due to the very high cost of natural gas used to fire their kilns and the severe competition of imports. *Fenton Art Glass Company* announced in September that it would cease operations this fall. The Fenton Gift Shop will remain open and the company's management will be exploring ways to continue to offer visitors and tourists the glass making experience. "We hope to see many of our customers and friends during the fall season," said the company's president, Randy Fenton. Through December the Gift Shop hours are 8 a.m. to 7 p.m., Mon-Fri; 8-5, Sat; and 12-5, Sun. Call 800-319-7793, x327 & x283 for information on live glass blowing tours. Fenton is located on I-77, just off exit 185, in Williamstown, about a 90-minute drive from Stonewall via I-79, US 50, and I-77.

*Blenko Glass Company* in Milton is still in full operation with factory tours offered Mon-Fri from 8-3:15. Visitors view the glass making process from an observation deck. The Visitor Center and Glass Blowing demonstration center is open Mon-Sat from 9-4, and Sun 12-4. The factory is located in Milton at exit 28 on I-64 approximately 30 miles west of Charleston. From Stonewall, allow about two hours for the 120-mile trip.

Much closer to Stonewall, *Hinkles Dying Art Glassworks*, operated by master craftsman Ron Hinkle, offers a factory tour featuring hand-blown glass created one piece at a time in a picturesque setting. Sand, lime, and soda ash are combined as the main ingredients and melted in a 2,400-degree furnace. After its creation, each piece is slowly cooled to room temperature and later ground and polished to become a finished work of art. Take I-79 north from Stonewall to Rt. 33 east. Take the Buckhannon exit and drive on Rt. 20 south five miles to Sago-Hampton Road and follow the signs.

If you are interested in **Fiesta dinnerware**, you will have a

NPS Ranger Richard Altare blends lessons on ecology with the history of early settlers of the Bluestone River canyon. • The Pipestem stable provides trail rides for teens and adults and pony rides for children. • Five action rivers in central West Virginia draw whitewater enthusiasts from all parts of the country.

longer drive from Stonewall. The Homer Laughlin China Company's retail outlet is located in Newell at the very northern tip of the West Virginia panhandle. However, if you are a collector or one who enjoys using Fiesta for your daily dinnerware, you will be able to find every piece currently available. The outlet at 672 Fiesta Drive is open Mon-Sat, 9:30-5, and Sun 12-5.

**Other attractions** we found worth a visit included the *state's longest covered bridge* at Philippi, the falls at *Blackwater Falls State Park* (plan a picnic for this location), the *Smoke Hole Caverns* at Seneca Rocks, and *Seneca Caverns* at Riverton. As you traverse US 219 between Parsons and Thomas, you will get a great view of the *44 wind turbines* that run six miles along the ridge of Backbone Mountain. Although it was not meant to be a destination attraction for travelers, the Mountaineer Wind Energy Center, by its uniqueness and sheer magnitude, commands your complete attention.

The *West Virginia State Wildlife Center* in French Creek is just a short drive from Stonewall on Rts. 19 and 4. The Center is a modern zoological facility displaying native and naturalized wildlife. The large natural habitat enclosures permit the display of elk, buffalo, mountain lions, timber wolves, black bears, deer, and otters. There is a large wooded picnic area with grills and a shelter.

Although we did not have time to visit the following two attractions, they were recommended by the concierge at the Stonewall Jackson Resort Lodge. Check with Traci for details and driving directions: *Durbin & Greenbrier Valley Railroad* (fall color trips) and *Jackson's Mill* (Stonewall Jackson's boyhood home).

Staying with our plan to camp in West Virginia's resort parks, we moved after five days to **Pipestem State Resort Park** about 30 miles south and east of Beckley. The obvious way to get to Pipestem is to take I-77 south from Beckley to exit 14 and then take a short four-mile connector road over to Rt. 20. Be forewarned that the connector is very narrow with guard rails just a foot off the white line on the shoulder. You can go south to exit 9, west into Princeton, and double back onto Rt. 20, if you prefer.

On the way to Pipestem, we stopped at the **New River Gorge Bridge**. Until the bridge was completed in 1977, auto traffic had to spend 40 minutes descending into the gorge on narrow twisting roads, cross one of North America's oldest rivers, and make a similar ascent on the other side. Today the 3,030-foot span reduces the crossing to less than a minute. The structural work of art is the longest steel span in the western hemisphere and, at 876 feet, the second highest bridge in the U.S. On the third Saturday in October, the Fayette County Chamber of Commerce hosts "*Bridge Day*," the only day that visitors may walk across the bridge. The event lures hundreds of parachutists to jump from the bridge and float to the river below. The *Canyon Rim Visitor Center* just north of the bridge is operated by the National Park Service. The Center features a museum and slide show to explain how the bridge was constructed. The area has picnic tables and scenic views of the bridge and gorge. The parking lot has six slots for motorhomes.



Tamarack is the nation's first statewide collection of handmade crafts, art, and cuisine showcasing "The Best of West Virginia." • Dulcimers are enjoying a revival. Musicians-craftsmen make and play originals at Tamarack. • The open-air passenger cars were built on flatbeds that once hauled logs. The side-mounted steam cylinders on the Shay locomotives produce greater torque than conventional drives, allowing the engines to ascend nine percent grades.





RON SNOW/WV COMMERCE

The New River, along with the Gauley, Tygart, Potomac, and Shenandoah rivers, provides some of North America's best **whitewater rafting**. If you want to experience the "wild" part of West Virginia's promotional "wild and wonderful" slogan, here is the place to do it. At the Canyon Rim Visitor Center or at Tamarack in Beckley, pick up a copy of "Whitewater Rafting" published by the state's tourism department. The brochure lists 29 outfitters along with advice on choosing an outfitter, safety, experience, facilities, and trips and package deals.

**Hawks Nest State Park**, less than 10 miles from the New River Gorge Bridge, provides some of the most spectacular views of the gorge. Although the park does not have a campground, it is worth a stop to enjoy the aerial tramway into the gorge which is open daily in October to take advantage of the Fall color show. The park also offers a nine-hole golf course with great views of the gorge. Rental equipment is available.

We left Hawks Nest and hurried on to Pipestem, arriving there at dusk, just in time to select a campsite. Most of the sites accommodating 40-ft. coaches are parallel to roads through the campground. Sites 1–31 offer full hook-ups. Sites 23, 25, 26, and 29 are back-ins which can handle a 40-ft coach. No. 39 is a long back-in and a very private site in the electric only section which can handle any length. You will need to make reservations during the color season. Call 800-CALLWVA or go online at [www.pipestemresort.com](http://www.pipestemresort.com) for reservations. Rates: \$23/night for full hook-ups.

Built in 1970, Pipestem capitalizes on the *Bluestone River* as one of its major scenic assets. That asset was enhanced in 1988 by the National Park System when it protected sections of the Bluestone, the Gauley, and the New rivers under the National Wild and Scenic Rivers Act. Today you can take a tram from the *Canyon Rim Center* and descend 900+ feet to the *Mountain Creek Complex*. NPS rangers Richard Altare and Kathleen Holloway lead visitors on very *informative hikes* along the Bluestone. A native of the mountains surrounding the park, Ranger Altare related fascinating stories about the families who settled the canyon:

the Beechers, the Farleys, the Meadows, and the Lillys. Until the railroads came into nearby Hinton, opening the area to logging and mining, the settlers survived by subsistence farming. Although loggers stripped the land between 1880 and 1920, today the canyon is one of the most diverse botanical areas in the U.S. It is graced by over 1,300 plants, 100 species of trees, 200 species of birds, and counts mink, beaver, and river otters among its wildlife population. The Bluestone has an abundance of small mouth bass, bluegill, and catfish which invites fishermen whom we watched from the trail high above the river.

The Fall color here is expected to peak the last week of October. The *Nature Center* under the guidance of Jim Phillips offers interpretive walks, bird walks, videos, horseshoe tournaments, and displays of wildlife including copperheads and timber rattlesnakes.

For those of you who like to get back into nature on a horse, the Pipestem has a first class stable which is open every day 9–5 except Monday. *Trail rides* from one-half to two hours are charged at \$10/half hour. Joe Rodes, the concessionaire at the stable, offers two-hour tractor-pulled *hayrides* which include a weiner roast with chili, S'mores, and soft drinks for just \$12.50 per adult and \$6.50 per child under 12. Minimum of 10 required. Call 304-466-1800, x373, for reservations.

Pipestem's *18-hole golf course* is open year-round, weather permitting. Hours: 7:30–dusk. Green fees for 18 holes, \$25; nine holes, \$16. Power carts, \$22/15. Rental clubs, \$7–10.

For hikers, the park has 16 marked trails varying in length from 0.2 miles to 5.25 miles, all with varying levels of difficulty. A map and trail guide is available at the park office.

Our next day in West Virginia took us back to **Tamarack**. Inside this architecturally unique building, the brainchild of a former governor, is the nation's first statewide collection of handmade crafts, art and cuisine showcasing "The Best of West Virginia." From furniture to glass, pottery to Appalachian quilts, baskets to strawberry jam, Tamarack features West Virginia's best handcrafts, regional specialty foods, live performances, craft demonstrations, and theater. The "Taste of West

An aerial view of the Cass Scenic Train at Bald Knob. The 4.5-hour round trip gives riders spectacular views of the Fall color. • The 77-mile Greenbrier River Trail takes advantage of an abandoned C&O line. Bikers, horseback riders, and hikers use the trail year-round.

Virginia” food court, managed by the famed Greenbrier, serves delectable meals and desserts.

Tamarack preserves the Mountain State’s rich heritage by supporting artisans and selling their handcrafts. Its vast array of products changes often to offer many a chance to expose their talents.

If you should happen to visit Tamarack first, it is a great place to plan your entire visit to West Virginia. The brochure racks at the entrance are as complete as those found in the state’s interstate welcome centers.

If you can extend your stay in the Mountain State, you should take advantage of its several **scenic drives**. The most popular of the byways is the *Midland Trail*, a National Scenic Byway that follows WV Route 60 from Kenova to Lewisburg. Pick up a copy of the Midland Trail guidebook at a welcome center or Tamarack. The drive takes you mile-by-mile through the state’s rich heritage, showing off its treasures tucked away in small towns and quiet rural places. One of those special places we discovered was the **General Lewis Inn** at Mile 162. In an antique-filled inn, we thoroughly enjoyed dining on fresh mountain trout and splurging on homemade pecan pie with whipped cream. Wonderful!

*Other byways* which have excellent guidebooks are (1) Driving Tours of Greenbrier County, (2) New River Gorge Scenic Tours, (3) Fayette Station Road Tour, (4) Appalachian Waters Scenic Byway Rt. 39, and (5) Heritage Travels of Pendleton County.

Our last day in West Virginia took us back to one of our favorite areas of the state, **Pocahontas County**, to enjoy the Cass Scenic Railroad State Park, the Greenbrier River Trail, and the National Radio Astronomy Observatory.

The use of trains to haul logs from the mountain forests was not practical until 1880 when Ephraim Shay invented a side-gear locomotive capable of negotiating the steep mountain grades and sharp curves. The forests were logged out over the next 40 years. In 1962 the state bought the property and most of the town of Cass, a company town where the day-loggers lived with their families. Today, dedicated employees at the *Cass Scenic Railroad State Park* enjoy telling how the train made history in the state’s industrial supply chain, sending millions of board feet of lumber to markets throughout the United States. The staff is structured like a real railroad company and operates under the regulations of the Federal Railroad Administration: Dave Caplinger, park supt.; Fred Bartels, trainmaster; Darren Seldomridge, conductor and brakeman; Kent Walker, interpreter; Thomas Brown and Bud Cassell, brakemen; Brad Hoover, engineer; and Amy Beck, fireman.

The trains take visitors to Whittaker (a logging camp), Bald Knob (the top of the mountain), or Spruce every day in October except the 22–25. The railroad closes for the season after its last




STEVE SHALUTA / WV COMMERCIAL

run on Oct. 28. Special Fall fares range from \$20 to \$29. The Whittaker trip takes two hours and the other two trips require four-and-a-half hours.

The *Greenbrier River Trail* is a bike trail made from a defunct railroad bed. Originally part of the Chesapeake and Ohio Railroad, this 77-mile abandoned grade was developed into a trail running north from North Caldwell to one mile south of Cass Scenic Railroad State Park. Trail use includes backpacking, bicycling, horseback riding, and cross-country skiing. It runs through five state parks and forests, providing easy access for segmented trips on any part of its 77-mile length. Bikers may rent equipment at several points along the way. We found a good shop in Marlinton, packed a lunch, and spent the next six hours enjoying the scenery of the mountains and the Greenbrier River. Several bridges and tunnels along the way made interesting photo opps.

Unexpectedly, as you drive to Cass, you will see a huge dish on the horizon. The *National Radio Astronomy Observatory* at Green Bank is located purposely in a long valley free of radio interference from radio and TV stations, cell phone towers, and air traffic. The Green Bank Science Center celebrated its 50th anniversary in 2006. The NRAO built its 100-meter telescope to study celestial objects by examining their emission of radio-magnetic radiation. The telescope has a wheel-and-track design that allows the telescope to view the entire sky above five degrees of elevation. The track is level to within a few thousandths of an inch, permitting precise pointing of the structure that weighs 16 million pounds.

And there you have it. West Virginia scientifically wild and wonderful. Just one more resource to make your trip more enjoyable. Go to [www.wvculture.org/goldenseal/felist.html](http://www.wvculture.org/goldenseal/felist.html) and get a list of the great October festivals in progress in West Virginia. 



## Oneal Oliver: *A Native Son*

by Fred Thompson

Oneal Oliver was born in Belgreen, Alabama, in 1927, a small farming community about 17 miles east of Red Bay. He grew up in Vina, about five miles southeast of the plant. His ancestors came to North America in 1665, and 114 years later found their way to Cades Cove in the Great Smoky Mountains. The Olivers are a hardy Scot-Irish clan who survived the persecution of England's King James and fled their homeland, forced out by poverty induced by political oppression and famine. The western North Carolina mountains surely reminded them of the lovely green hills they left behind. But life in Cades Cove was not easy. Many began to move west looking for arable land to farm.

Oneal's parents eventually settled in Belgreen. In the face of the Great Depression, Oneal's father left the family in search of work and never returned. In 1934 his mother found shelter in a corn crib in a rich man's backyard, earning \$1.50 a month to clean and wash for the wealthy family. As a seven-year-old, Oneal walked the area and asked many a shopkeeper and family, "Do

you have anything I can do?" Finally, the owner of the cotton gin agreed to pay Oneal 25 cents a night to stay in the gin and watch for fire. The youngster was now earning in a week more than his mother made in a month.

The job turned out to have a much greater benefit. When it was time for the equipment to be rebuilt in preparation for the ginning season, Oneal watched carefully and learned where every cog, wheel, and belt fit into the gin. By the time he was nine, he was running the gin. He continued to run the Vina gin until he was 23 and then bought it for \$18,000.

By this time Oneal was spending a good bit of time in Red Bay where he had his eye on a young lady whom he had met one Saturday—the day when everybody came to town. "I knew from the day I first saw her that she was the girl I wanted to marry," he smiled as he looked over at Idabell, recalling the event as if it were just last week. With entrepreneurial skill, he found out

*Continued on page 48*

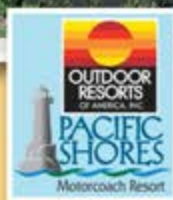
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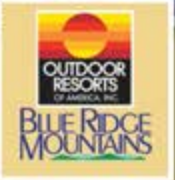
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Continued from page 46

where she went to church and made it his business to be there the next Sunday evening for the service. Idabell was only 14 when they met in 1941. They married in 1947 after Oneal returned from serving in Patton's army in Germany.

Other (pronounced *oh'-thur*) Bullen owned the gin in Red Bay and asked Oneal to operate it for him. Oneal bought the gin in 1953 from Other for \$150,000 and paid it off in two years. "Mr. Bullen gave me a \$10,000 bonus for paying it off early," Oneal said, amazing this writer with his success—a young man with a fourth grade education! Bullen and Oliver continued their business relationship with a joint partnership in a hardware store.

Soon after they married, Oneal and Idabell started their family which gradually grew to six: four boys and two girls. They became active in their church where Oneal taught a Sunday School class for many years. "My son-in-law to be was in my class with my daughter," he laughed. "I guess I didn't run him off."

"In the late sixties, I built and operated the gin in Red Bay for the co-op. Several men went together and financed it at a cost of over \$1 million. The equipment could gin 10 bales per hour," he said, "while the old Vina gin could barely do one bale per hour."

"Of course, we knew the Tiffins all through the years. I knew Bob and David when they were just little boys," Oneal recalled. "When Alex Tiffin, their dad, decided to buy the gin, he put Bob in there to run it. Bob was a quick learner. I think he must have always wanted to run a cotton gin."


But one day, fate brought the two men together like it never had before. "Bob was trying to slap cotton into the rollers when his arm was caught and pulled in up to his shoulder," Oneal said, scrunching up his face like he could feel the pain himself. "Somebody hollered for me to come shut the gin off and called for the doctor," he said. "I had to remove a lag bolt to release the rollers and get Bob's arm out. His blood had lubed the rollers and kept them from pulling Bob on into the gin. Gins can be mighty dangerous equipment," Oneal observed knowingly. "I told the doctor to get ready to catch him when I released the rollers' cause I knew he would faint." The accident put Bob in the hospital for two weeks, but did not do any permanent damage. Oneal ran the gin until Bob returned soon after to take over.

In 1972, Oneal and Idabell decided to move to Tupelo, Mississippi. Before long, they owned six gins. "Actually, over my life, I have owned 13 gins," he said. "It was something that I just had a knack for doing right."

Later that year, Bob Tiffin founded Tiffin Motorhomes and several years later Oneal and Idabell bought one of the first Allegro Bays with a slide-out. Oneal Oliver eventually sold his gins and found a new business that turned out to be very profitable.

William King Self owned a pre-fab manufactured housing plant in Marks, Mississippi. Self was building an avant-garde round house that was not selling well. Oliver told Self that he needed to design a house that people in the South would buy. Self went pheasant hunting in Europe for two weeks. By the time he had returned, Oneal had designed and built a component pre-fab house that favorably impressed Self. He told Oliver that if he could make the business profitable, he would give him half of it.

Oliver responded by producing 100 houses a month from the pre-fab plant. Self then purchased 400 acres near Tupelo to develop a planned subdivision of 200+ homes which they named Haven Acres. Sadly, Self died from an accidental discharge of his gun as he removed it from the car after a hunting trip. True to his word, in his will he left half of the pre-fab housing plant and subdivision to Oneal Oliver. As the subdivision was completed, Oneal and Idabell gradually retired.

The Olivers still live in Tupelo and continue to enjoy a warm friendship with Bob. Oneal eventually bought a second Allegro which he still has. The couple's spiritual influence resulted in a son, a son-in-law, and a grandson becoming preachers. The couple has 10 grandchildren and 14 great-grandchildren. The entire family regularly has reunions at Oneal and Idabell's home on a lake just south of Tupelo. 

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# Tiffin Motorhomes Celebrates 35 Years

by Amanda Hester

On August 11, 2007, Tiffin Motorhomes held the annual company picnic plus we celebrated our 35<sup>th</sup> year anniversary. The day started with our first company motorcycle ride. The ride kicked off at 8:00 a.m. in Tuscumbia, Alabama, at the Rocking Chair Restaurant where the riders were served breakfast, and ended that afternoon before the picnic. The ride was led by Jack Elliott, one of the regional sales managers here at Tiffin, with a total of 62 bikes participating. We hope to continue with another motorcycle ride next year.

The picnic was held at the Alabama Music Hall of Fame located in Tuscumbia, Alabama. The employees enjoyed touring the Hall of Fame during the evening.

The first person on stage was Bob Tiffin. He welcomed everyone to the picnic and thanked the employees and their families for coming out. The entertainment began at 5:00 p.m. with an opening act from Joseph Baldwin. Following him was a performance by the Burney Kids, a group of four young children who sing gospel. Their mother Tonya is employed by Tiffin Motorhomes.

After that we had entertainment for the rest of the evening by a group of five Tiffin Motorhomes employees. Members of the group included Byron Underwood, Neal Thompson, Lambert Garrison, Kristy Kelton and Patrick McCollum.

Hamburgers and hotdogs were enjoyed by everyone, along with ice cream, snow cones and roasted peanuts.

All kinds of entertainment was provided for the kids. We had jumpolines for all ages, water slides, clowns that did face painting and made balloons for the children, and a batting cage.

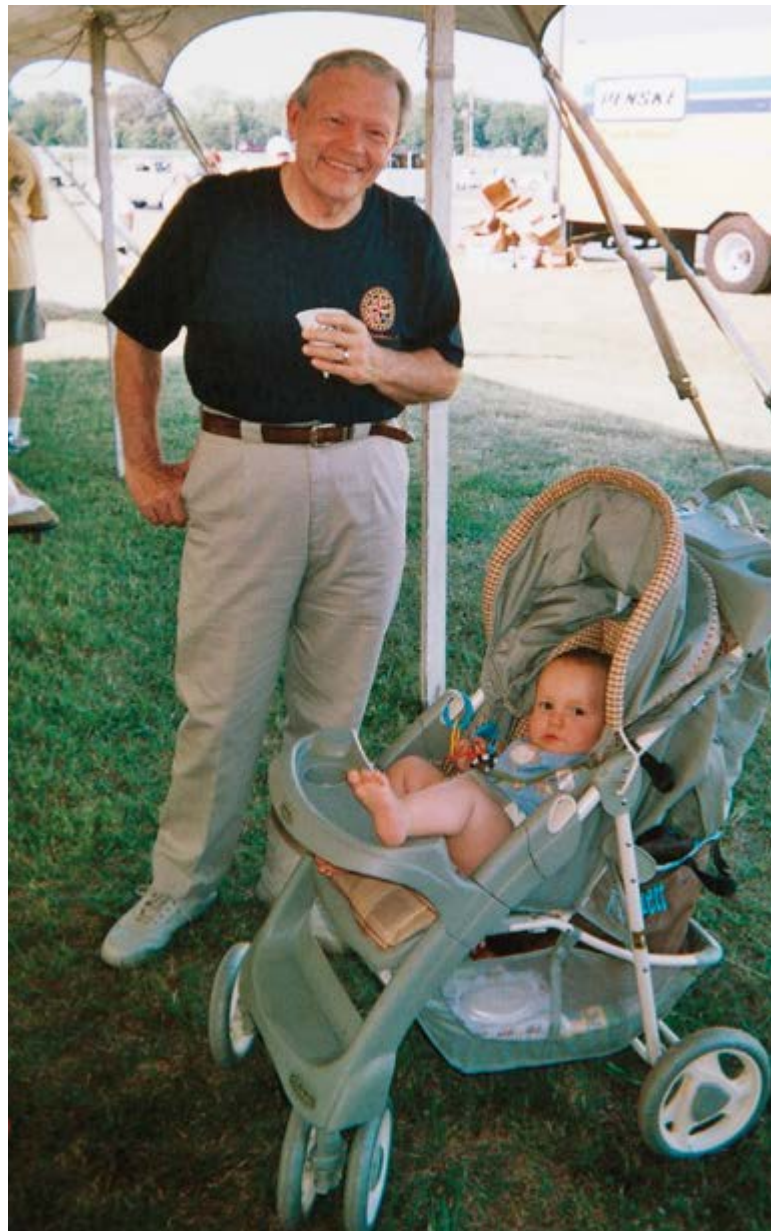
The big hit of the night was the dunking booth. Several supervisors volunteered to sit in the booths, and employees paid to dunk them. All proceeds went to the American Cancer Society, with over \$200 raised that night.

This was the first year to have our company picnic in the evening. The night ended with an awesome fireworks show.

Even though it was a hot day, we still had about 2500 people in attendance. The company picnic was a great time for the employees and their families to have a good time together. RIS



*Clockwise from Upper Left:* These two little girls just had their faces painted by the clowns. • The 35th Anniversary T-shirt was an instant hit with Tiffin employees—everyone wore black. • Bob Tiffin with his new grandson Emmett Tiffin. • Everyone having fun with the clowns. • All the kids enjoyed watching the clown make animal balloons. • The Jumpoline turned out to be the favorite attraction of the younger set.



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## How to do nothing



1 Press gas pedal until desired location is reached. You will now exit Tiffin.



2 Follow standard procedure for removal of shoes. Open lawn chair to farthest position. Maximum naptime is thus obtained.



3 We recommend extended napping. In the event naptime fails, revert to standard napping technique. (Refer also to "Having zero worries" on pg. 98.)

### ⚠ WARNING

Excessive amounts of doing nothing could increase your overall quality of life.

2008 ALLEGRO® OWNER'S MANUAL 74

THE HOW TO GUIDE





# Building the Powerglide Chassis

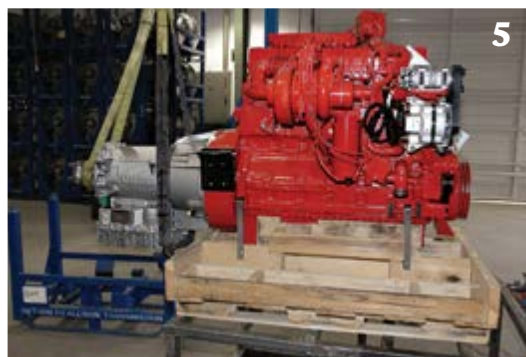


by Fred Thompson

Bob Tiffin and the engineers at Tiffin Motorhomes realized a long time ago that standard chassis from the best chassis builders still had inherent limitations. “How we design and build our coaches depends on where various chassis components are positioned,” Tiffin said. “If we want a modification to accommodate where we want to position our plumbing or waste tanks, the chassis manufacturer wants to build a far greater number than we are willing to buy in order to cost-justify the change,”

he explained. It was a lose-lose situation for both companies.

Plans for a Tiffin chassis plant have been on Bob Tiffin’s mental drawing board for several years. About three years ago, all of the pieces began to come together. The first keystone in the plan was finding the right chassis designer who could also provide competent advice on the manufacturing process. The second keystone was finding the right project manager to run production on a daily basis.



Enter the two Garys!

Gary Jones of Union Gap, Washington, designed and created the prototype chassis for several motorcoach builders over the past 10 years. His pioneering designs and innovation for creating improved ride characteristics, braking systems, serviceability features, and multiplexed electrical systems impressed Bob and his engineering team.

Gary Harris, almost a local product who was born in the small town of Decatur, Mississippi, about a three-hour drive from Red Bay, was discovered in Tupelo. His depth of experience in diesel equipment technology and service caught Tiffin's eye when he visited the Freightliner truck dealership. Harris was the general manager for the entire facility, managing service, sales, and parts. He had the management experience as well as the knowledge of component construction of engines and chassis. Tiffin knew he was the right man to organize, oversee, and manage the chassis plant that was already in the planning stage.

"Working with Bob Tiffin has been a privilege and a pleasure," Jones said. "I cannot help wanting to do my very best for TMH. Bob Tiffin leaves his ego at the door. I have never worked for a better man—ever!

As I continued to listen to Jones describe the features of the new Powerglide chassis, I could feel the synergy that had formed between him, Bob, Gary Harris, and the Tiffin engineering department.

Jeff Hatchel, Gary's senior engineer, joined us as we continued to examine the naked chassis. "When we started the TMH project in late 2005, we asked, 'Why do you want to build your own chassis? What do you hope to achieve?'" Hatchel said. "The big driver was to improve quality and ride and take better care of our customers on warranty and service issues. Mr. Tiffin feels that Freightliner and

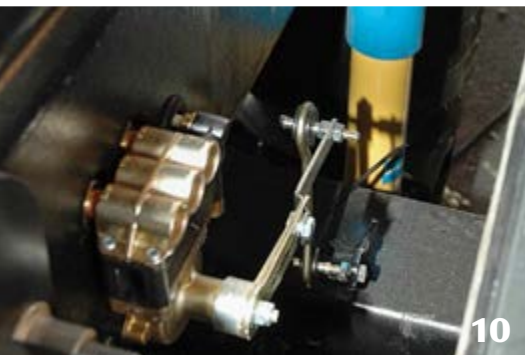
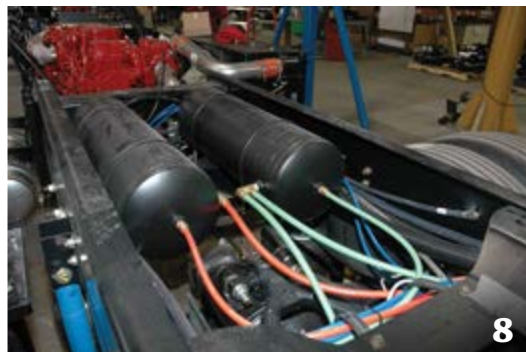
Spartan cannot move fast enough to take care of his customers. I don't think anyone in the motorhome industry is as responsive to the customer's needs as Bob Tiffin," Jones averred.

The planning sessions were thorough. Jones and Hatchel threw out question after question to be sure they were on the right track before they turned on the CAD-CAM computers. What do you like and not like about the chassis you are now buying? What features do we need to "design out" of the current chassis that don't meet your expectations? What complaints do your customers have about the chassis you use now? The Tiffin engineers wanted parts and systems more accessible for service. They said their customers often mentioned handling, better driving characteristics, solid control while braking.

Tiffin engineers pointed to regular problems with poor connectors and frayed wires. Chassis problems were often air system related, such as leaks in the leveling valves. There were often leaks in the transmission, steering, and engines.

"Bob wanted more reliability, serviceability, and outstanding ride handling characteristics," Jones said, on a recent visit to the new chassis plant where the first units were coming off the production line. "We wanted to upgrade the quality of the electrical systems. The Vansco Electronics' VMM Multiplex System provides a very robust multiplexed wiring harness that was developed for the agricultural environment and used out in the fields where no service is available. The gateway module and the multiplex wiring harness are nearly impervious to temperature, mobile shock, vibration, electrical transients, and electrical noise. The system uses military grade connectors, not plastic, but metal. All wiring connections are done by machine. With the multiplex system, we got rid of more than 40 percent of the old wiring harness. Reliability!"

"We wanted to focus on designing value for TMH's custom-



ers,” Jones said, “and their answers to our questions gave us the direction we needed.” Here are some of the key features:

*Ride and handling.* This involved frame design and overall packaging of components. The fuel tanks were moved forward to improve balance. Most diesel pusher chassis have 70 percent of their weight in the rear. Jones wanted to achieve a 60–40 balance.

*Braking system.* Air disk brakes are the best performing brakes on the market. The timing of the brakes is critical. Truck technology implements the front brakes first. Motorhomes should activate the rear brakes first, causing the coach to squat rather than to nose dive.

*Frame system.* Jones and Hatchel focused on accessibility of components for servicing, improved weight distribution, and frame components that are powder coated by the steel manufacturer to prevent corrosion.

*Suspension.* Custom tuned Bilstein shocks in addition to air bags.

*Alignment* on rear suspension does not involve any welding, whereas most chassis have welds which have to be broken if realignment is necessary.

*Steering* uses Sheppard gears which are very reliable and more easily serviced than other gear systems.

*Cooling fan drive system* uses a drive shaft driven fan to pull air over the radiator as compared to a hydraulic motor that is subject to leaks.

As the design work continued, Tiffin realized there were many other reasons to build their own chassis.

(1) You can increase your manufacturing efficiency.

(2) You can minimize all the things you have to do to get coach features to fit together with the chassis: less parts, processes, and things to go wrong.

(3) Multiplexed electrical systems increase functionality with software tying together different systems, such as checking jacks when moving or locking doors if going over 5 mph.

(4) Many systems within the coach have their own computers. With integration, one centralized system will control every-

---

**1** Huck bolts are permanent fasteners and never require re-torquing. **2** The initial chassis rails are assembled on a perfectly leveled steel table. **3** The rear chassis rails were lowered to minimize the intrusion of the engine box into the floor of the bedroom. **4** The Tuthill custom tuned independent front suspension system. **5** The 425-hp Cummins engine will be mounted to the rear rail system. **6** A large side-mounted radiator assures cool engine operation. **7** The muffler system is located on the passenger side opposite the radiator. **8** Air storage tanks were moved rearward to accommodate moving the heavier fuel tanks forward as part of the design to redistribute weight. **9** Chassis designer Gary Jones visited the new plant recently to check the first chassis coming off the line. **10** Four independent ride height control valves are keyed to a smoother ride. **11** The significant reduction of the wiring harness due to the use of multiplexed cables also simplified the fuse and breaker boxes. **12** Gary Jones, designer, and Jeff Hatchel, senior engineer, discuss assembly processes with chassis plant manager Gary Harris.

thing. There will be no problems with systems functioning negatively against each other.

While Jones stopped to answer a question from an employee, Hatchel picked up the interview. “Gary has an amazing base of knowledge and is intimately familiar with all of the component suppliers. He knows what works and doesn’t work. When I come up with a design idea, he knows which suppliers to contact. Anything involving computers comes into my area: modeling, element analysis (stress and strain testing with computer models), power train layouts, and system layouts (the geometry of the chassis). All can be modeled on the CAD-CAM.”

“We went directly from the CAD-CAM designs on the computer to ordering the powder-coated frame steel and other components from suppliers,” Hatchel explained. “When we got the parts, they were all pre-drilled and fit together perfectly. We actually assembled the prototype in our lab with the huck bolts. No welding at all. We worked with TMH closely and gave them checkpoints.”

Bob and the engineers were especially concerned about the cooling package, and how it would fit together with the basement storage area. Jones and Hatchel constantly checked the critical positioning of the leveling jacks, the Aqua-Hot system, fuel and waste tanks.

As we walked around one of the first chassis to go into production, Jones continued. “The air dryer takes the moisture out of the air lines, which increases the reliability of the braking system. And the dryer is exposed here so it can be easily serviced.”

Then a few steps farther he pointed my attention to the ride height control valves. “They are the key to a smoother ride, each independently controlled and operated. And they are accessible for servicing. There will be far less nose diving on coaches built on this chassis,” he said.

Gary Harris rejoined our tour of the chassis plant to tell us about the company’s plans to expand production to six chassis per day. “In addition to our manufacturing and assembly staff, we have materials manager Bobby Luther, electrical engineer Dennis Baldwin, and mechanical-industrial engineer Brad Warner. We will be adding another mechanical engineer and a documents manager to track the serial numbers of all components,” he said. Harris quickly convinced us that record keeping is a serious matter. “We designed the chassis around the 2007 emissions standards. The muffler has a diesel particulate filter which is a serialized component that has to be married to the engine and chassis serial numbers. The doc manager has to coordinate all of these records with the vehicle identification number, following a standard scheme set forth by the Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standards.”

Wow! We wanted our readers to know what Tiffin Motorhomes has done this year to make its chassis technology and quality take a first place seat in the Class A motorhome industry. On pages 56 and 62 are charts developed by Jeff Hatchel showing the specifications, plus a features and benefits comparison for the Powerglide chassis.

# Chassis Features

- Fleetguard ES Complete Extended Life Engine Coolant
- Allison TranSynd Transmission Fluid
- Orscheln Color Coded Dip Sticks
- WABCO 18.7 CFM Air Compressor
- Fleetguard Fuel/Water Separator w/WIF Sensor
- Remote Mounted Fuel Filters For Serviceability
- Air Filter Restriction Indicator
- 1000 Watt In-Block Heater
- Compression Brake by Jacobs (3,6)
- Seltec 10 Cubic Inch R-134A - A/C Compressor
- Electronic Cruise Control With High Idle
- Douglas Tilt/Telescoping Adjustable Steering Column
- VIP Leather Wrapped 18" Smart Wheel w/Wiper Controls, ICC, Cruise & High Beam
- Teleflex Adjustable Gen II Suspended Pedals
- Air Suspension Featuring Tuthill
  - Bilstein Custom Tuned Shocks
  - 4 Haldex Pneumatic Ride Height Valves
- Michelin XZA H Rated Tires
- Polished Aluminum Wheels w/Trim Kit
- Haldex PURest Air Dryer W/Auto Moisture Ejector
- Day Time Running Lights
- Two Interstate 950CCA Maintenance-Free Batteries
- R-134A Air Conditioning Condenser
- Push Button Shift Control
- Powder-Coated Bracketry
- Air and Electric Horn Ready
- Auxillary Air Supply Front and Rear
- Audible Turn Signals
- Actia Electronic Gauges w/LCD Msg Center
- Vansco Multiplexed Electrical System
- Cruise Control & Low Coolant Level on Light Bar
- Electronic Air Suspension Deflation System
- Parker-Eco Air Cleaner
- Dual Fill 150 Gallon Fuel Tank
- Tow Power w/7-Way Trailer Plug
- A/C Condenser Integrated into Radiator Package
- Hobbs Remote Rear Service Lamp

For more Powerglide Chassis features and their benefits, see page 62.

# Allegro Bus on Powerglide Chassis

**Engine: Cummins ISL 8.9L Diesel, Turbocharged, Aftercooled**

Peak HP: 425 HP @ 2000 rpm  
Peak Torque: 1200 lb-ft @ 1300 rpm

**Transmission: Allison Electronic 3000 MH 6-Speed Automatic w/2 overdrive gears**

**Shifter: Keypad Electronic Shifter w/Digital Display Readout**

**Vehicle Weight Ratings**

Front GAWR: 14,600 lbs  
Rear GAWR: 21,000 lbs  
GVWR: 35,600 lbs  
GCWR: 45,600 lbs  
Hitch Rating: 10,000 lbs

**Front Axle: Tuthill IFS 1460**

Capacity: 14,600 lbs  
Track Width: 84.3"

**Rear Axle: Meritor "Quiet Ride"**

Capacity: 21,000 lbs  
Track Width: 84.5"  
Drive Ratio: 4.63:1

**Brakes: Full Air Brakes w/Auto Slack Adjusters and 4-Wheel ABS**

Service Brakes Front: Bendix ADB225  
17" Vented Air Disc  
Service Brakes Rear: Meritor  
16.5" x 7" Drum  
Engine Brake: Jacobs Compression Brake  
Parking Brake: Spring Applied, Air Release

**Cooling System: Direct Driven w/2-Speed Clutch**

Radiator: Side Mtd Cross Flow Alum  
Charge Air Cooler: Side Mtd Cross Flow Alum

Transmission Oil Cooler: Remote Mounted Oil to Water

**Electrical system: Vansco J1939 Fully Multiplexed Electrical System w/Auto-Reset Fuses**

Alternator: Leece-Neville 160 Amp  
Starter: Denso 12 volt  
Battery: Two Interstate 950 CCA @ 0°; Maintenance Free

**Frame: Raised Rail Construction w/ Low Profile Engine Mounting Huck Bolted Frame, 50,000 PSI Steel**

**Fuel Tank: 150 Gallon, Dual Fill**

**Steering System: Sheppard M110**

Rating: 14,600 lbs  
Ratio: 23:01  
Pump: Gear-driven, vane pump  
Wheel Cut\*: 55°

**Suspension: Custom Tuned (Air)**

Front Suspension: Tuthill IFS1460  
Rear Suspension: Tuthill RD2300  
Shock Absorber: Bilstein Custom Tuned

**Tires: Michelin 295/80R 22.5 XZA2 LRH**

**Wheels: Hub Piloted Polished Alum 22.5" x 8.25"**

2 Inner Steel 22.5" x 8.25"  
10 Bolt Lugs, 11.25" Dia Bolt Circle

**Instrumentation: Actia Electronic Gauges w/LCD Message Center**

Speedometer w/Odometer, Tachometer, Engine Oil Pressure, Coolant Temperature, Coolant Level, Voltmeter, Fuel Level, Air Pressure, Trip Meter



## Inman's Answers

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

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

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

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

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

### Dear Danny . . .

We have just purchased a 2007 Allegro 34 TGA. The new coach has met all of our expectations so far, although the current time and mileage is four months and 2000 miles. Nine hundred miles were on the unit as a result of delivery. The dealer notified us when the coach was ready for "pickup." We arrived to find the water pump malfunctioning and a tech was called to repair or correct the problem while we waited. We were not informed as to what the problem was and I still do not understand the complete operation of the system. Do your delivery drivers inform the dealers of any mechanical problems they may

encounter en route? This is one of the reasons I read every word of your column, "Serious Tech Talk." It is very informative and professionally written. Since retirement we have owned two "fifth wheels" and two "Class A's" all purchased as new units. We have had many problems with every unit except the Allegro. This unit is well-designed and built. Our experience with all of the selling dealers has been the same. As soon as they have your check, you're on your own. Kings Campers, Wausau, Wisconsin, may be worth a visit. Thanks again for your magazine and contribution to it.

Daryl Hehl  
Brooklyn Park, Minnesota

Dear Daryl,  
Our drivers are employees of Tiffin Motorhomes, not a contract delivery service. They are very conscious of the performance of the unit. They will sometimes stop at a service center in transit to the dealer and have a problem fixed. But our drivers will always inform the dealer of any unresolved problem they may have discovered. We are fortunate to have a great team of conscientious drivers who care very much about our owners being pleased with our coaches.

Possible fire is always on our minds. We have three small extinguishers inside. I'm sure a large one would help, however. No one has ever shown us how to use the back window to leave the coach. Are there any written instructions on this? With pictures? Can it be done for practice and not harm the seal? We have a 1996 Allegro coach.

Bruce Martin  
Hoover, Alabama

Dear Bruce,  
There are no written instructions available. The rear escape window in the 1996 Allegro can be used only once. When you break the seal and push the window out, it falls to the ground. After the emergency, a new window must be installed by a dealer or by the TMH Service Center.

The escape windows in the side walls can be reused. The latches allow the window to detach during an escape, but it can be reattached.

We have a 1995 Allegro Bus bought new. We have problems with black streaks every four feet on the ceiling. It has gotten darker. It must be the glue used in fabricating the ceiling. I've had it cleaned by professionals, but it only lightened it a bit. Do you have any suggestions regarding what to use to clean it? My floors are cleaner looking than my ceiling. I would appreciate an answer on this.

Alice Lowrimore  
Arlington, Texas

Dear Alice,  
The streaks are caused by the interaction of the resins with the metal strips in the metal roof beams that were used in motorhome construction 13 years ago. There is nothing that we can do today to remove the discoloration in the cloth ceiling material. Although it is labor intensive and expensive, you can cover the streaks with wood strips that match the cabinets and mount them to the beams with countersunk screws which can be covered with wood buttons. A specialty cabinet shop would be your best bet unless you are a good do-it-yourselfer.

We have a 2003 31-ft. Allegro with two slides. The bedroom slide-out has left 10-15 inch markings on the floor carpeting. How can we fix this problem? Is there a carpet cleaner that can fix these long black streaks? Any suggestions would be really helpful.

Russell A. Kelley  
Modesto, California

Dear Russell,  
The rollers may have retained residues during the manufacturing process. First, saturate a towel with a fairly heavy solution of water and Dawn (or similar) dish detergent. Place the towels where the rollers will rest on them when the slide-out is in. Pull the towels from under the rollers. You may have to do this two or three times. Then come back with a dry towel. This process will not clean the carpet itself, but should keep the streaks from reoccurring. A professional carpet cleaning will probably get the best results.

While traveling in a thunderstorm with heavy rain, the battery light came on followed by the ABS and transmission lights and finally the smoke alarm. The voltmeter pegged at max. I pulled over and shut down the engine. After a 20-minute wait and lessening of the rain, I started the engine again and all appeared to be normal. I then drove 400 miles to home base with no further incident. All gauges and warning lights appear to be normal. I have run the engine once a week for 30 minutes and had no further problems. What happened? We have a 39-ft. 2001 Allegro Bus with a 330-hp Cummins. We had just been to Red Bay for service two days prior for a new heater core.

Raymond and Angeline Whitehead  
Batavia, New York

Dear Raymond & Angeline,  
The heavy rains apparently introduced moisture into the Electronic Control Module (ECM) which controls all of the gauges. The moisture most likely caused the gauges to malfunction and show

incorrect readings. The smoke alarm going off is a separate issue which may have been caused by static electricity generated by the thunderstorm.

Fred Cole  
San Bernardino, California

We have a 2005 Allegro Bay. Our cold water pressure is great. However, our hot water pressure is virtually nil. The hot water pressure is about 25–30% of the cold water pressure. Any suggestions?

Jim and Kathy Beedle  
Springfield, Illinois

Dear Jim and Kathy,  
The check valve in the hot water system is likely the problem. It could have debris in it, or it could just be broken. Replacing it should restore your hot water pressure.

I have a 2007 35-ft. Phaeton. I installed a fluorescent light in the bathroom (two F578/D bulbs—same as others in the motorhome) and wired it to the light over the mirror. Seniors need more light. A dealer's employee saw the extra light and how it was wired. He cautioned me on adding this light as it may be over-taxing the wiring. He strongly recommended I contact Tiffin. Please advise if this is acceptable and if not, where to pick up a hot wire. I don't want a fire.

Ronald Allen  
Mason, Michigan

Dear Ronald,  
The fluorescent light you installed has very low wattage. The wiring should support adding the additional light fixture. The circuit is protected by a 20-amp fuse. Do not add fixtures or outlets on that circuit that might exceed a draw of 20 amps.

Our Allegro WB 31-ft. motorhome started leaning to the passenger side in 2003. What could cause that leaning? How can a leaning coach be fixed? Our Nichols RV went out of business in Tulsa. It is not clear how to get the problem fixed.

Worth Clinkscales  
Tulsa, Oklahoma

Dear Worth,  
If your motorhome is on a Chevrolet chassis, it will have air bags and coil springs on the front end. A faulty air bag is probably causing the problem and will have to be replaced. If a leaf-type spring is causing the problem, you will have to take the coach to a professional spring shop to have the leaf re-arched or have an extra leaf added to level the unit.

We have an Allegro Bus 2004—what a perfect driving and camping motorhome. I cannot find any

information in our booklets regarding the in-dash air conditioner on it—how to turn it off and on, and how to set the temperature control.

Dear Fred,

The functionality of the in-dash air conditioner is almost identical to the automotive controls in your car. Some cars, such as a Buick or a Cadillac, do have a specific temperature control setting. The one in the Bus, however, is a simple rheostat control that you move until you find a comfortable position.

Are there any more recalls for the Workhorse chassis other than the fuel pump recall? Information and help from Workhorse folks is hard to come by. So far, I have not been notified of any recalls, including the fuel pump recall.

Joe L. Thompson  
Knoxville, Tennessee

Dear Joe,

We are not aware of any current recalls which have been issued by Workhorse. However, if the recalls do not directly affect units we have in production, Workhorse sends recalls directly to the coach owner. To be absolutely certain, call Workhorse with your VIN and ask for current recalls.

We recently purchased a 2000 Allegro Bay. Is it possible (easily) to replace the pre-wired VCR with a DVD player?

Dave Zirkle  
Columbus, Ohio

Dear Dave,

Yes and no. The VCR can be replaced by a DVD but you will have to run a set of RCA cables from the DVD player to the back of the TV. This may require removing the TV from its over-dash housing.

I have a 2001 Allegro on a Workhorse chassis. I bought it used from an Allegro dealer in Amarillo, Texas. Whenever I set the parking brake, I can never be sure if it will hold. We spend time in state parks and can't be sure about the transmission being in park. It has been looked at by the service department at the dealership and they assured me it is fine, although the coach nearly ran over me while getting fuel on our last trip. What would you suggest? Thanks.

Bob Steward  
Canyon, Texas

Dear Bob,

This brake system has been used by Ford, Chevrolet, and Workhorse for many years. When you put it in "park," it activates a brake system that

locks the drive shaft and prevents the coach from moving. If you do not feel comfortable using it, purchase a set of chock blocks and keep them in the coach.

I recently purchased a 2007 35-ft. Allegro Bay with an 8.1-liter gas engine. Love the coach, but hate the performance. I believe Workhorse ran a comparison test against the V-10 Ford to compare fuel mileage and towing power. The results were 8.8 on fuel mileage and better on towing than Ford was. I'm only getting 6.5 to 6.7 mpg and sluggish on towing, especially on grades. If I could get 1½ to 2 mpg more, it would be great. Any suggestions?

Claude Howie  
Dothan, Alabama

Dear Howie,

Our best advice is for you to contact Workhorse to see if they have any suggestions you have not tried. Two things which we have recommended in the past is to hold your speed to 65 mph or less and refrain from using cruise control in hilly or mountainous country.

We have a 1988 21-ft. Allegro on a Chevrolet Astro Van chassis. I think we are only the second owners. It still looks and runs the same. In our travels we have only seen three or four units like ours. I would like to know what years and how many were built. Any other information would be appreciated.

Walt and Carole Draime  
East Sparta, Ohio

Dear Walt and Carole,

Tiffin built approximately 500 Astro Van motorhomes between the years 1986 and 1990.

I own a 2006 Allegro Bay (FRED) with 15,000 miles. It's been a great coach so far except for a problem with the Sony back-up camera, slide-outs, and power window. They don't work all the time on start-up, but after a varying warm-up time (5 to 10 minutes) they come on line and then work. I have had my coach worked on at Red Bay twice in the past year, both times they changed the solenoid that controls the camera, slides, and power window. After changing the solenoid, the problem appeared to be fixed only to have it occur again. Do you have any suggestions about what needs to be done to fix the problem? Also, are the chassis batteries being trickle charged when the coach is plugged in to shore power?

Pete Mowry  
Waddell, Arizona

Dear Pete,

On your unit, an ignition wire activates the solenoid which in turn operates the power windows, slide-outs, and back-up camera, etc. The problem should have been solved by replacing the solenoid or the connections to the solenoid. The problem could also center on a poor connection causing inaccurate voltage to operate the solenoid. The chassis battery is only charged when the engine is operating.

The diesel generator in my 2000 Allegro Bus draws fuel from the chassis fuel tank. When the tank gets to the half-full level, the generator stops. This is very inconvenient on a hot day when I'm running the roof AC as I drive. Can this be corrected so that the generator can continue to draw fuel down to the tank's one-quarter level?

Keith Lynn  
Swansea, Illinois

Dear Keith,

It is possible to make the modification. However, you have to drop the fuel tank in order to access the sending unit and the fuel pick-up tubes. The modification is usually made by the chassis manufacturer.

It is getting close to time for a carpet replacement in our 1995 36-ft. Allegro Bus with one slide. I easily did the job on our last Rockwood coach by cutting the total carpet loose and using it for a pattern for the new carpet but it did not have a slide-out! If I butt the new carpet up to the step-up to the slide-out, will the rollers fall well over the joint?

Jim and Ruth Sylvia  
Cordova, Maryland

Dear Jim & Ruth,

To prevent the rollers from catching on the carpet, it is necessary for the carpet to extend all the way to the coach wall. If you decide to do it yourself, we advise contacting a dealer or the Tiffin service department for specific instructions about lifting the slide-out with jacks to give room to install the carpet all the way to the sidewall.

I have a 2001 Allegro Bus—triple slide on Freightliner XC raised rail chassis. I have three questions about upgrades. Can they be done at the Tiffin Service Center in Red Bay?

Question 1: Is it possible to add side view cameras that are activated by turn indicators?

Question 2: Can I get electric controlled sun visors for the windshield?

Question 3: Can I change the doors on the lower

compartments to open sideways? This would make getting to the storage area much easier with the slides out.

Jim Wyatt  
Kenney, Texas

Dear Jim,

Q1: Although we have to change the whole camera monitoring system, we can retrofit the side view cameras.

Q2: The electric sun visors can be installed at our service center.

Q3: The side-opening doors can only be installed during the original manufacturing process.

We have a 1998 Bus. Is there any way to change the floor? Storage and battery doors are in the floor and are a real aggravation. We can close off the storage but how can we change the battery access?

Also, how can we clean the carpet headliner without making the material "fuzz" up? Would prefer a vinyl headliner but the cost is very high.

Fred Hebblethwaite  
Pocahontas, Illinois

Dear Fred,

Moving the battery location would be a major task, not only in finding a safe place to put the batteries, but also in safely running the cables under the floor to the new battery housing. This modification is strongly discouraged.

We don't know of a way to clean the carpet headliner without making the material fuzz. However, we suggest that you visit an auto detailing company that has experience in cleaning the headliners of automobiles. If you have success, please share the knowledge.

In the past four years we have purchased two new Tiffin motorhomes. We presently own a 2006 37DB Allegro Bay, and have enjoyed its many nice features. However, we would like to replace the booth dinette with a free-standing cabinet/dinette. Is this retrofit possible? Would it be cost prohibitive?

Dan and Susan Gudas  
Boerne, Texas

Dear Dan and Susan,

The retrofit can be done by some of our dealers and at the Tiffin Service Center in Red Bay. The cost at the plant varies with the floorplan but is approximately \$1,500 to \$2,000.

In regards to Mr. Dunn and Mr. Ruskauf in the July issue, my best was 11 mpg with a tail wind, poorest was 6 mpg with a strong headwind and

hard rain. I have a 1978 Allegro 454 Chevrolet. We traded for her in the Fall of '01, did some upgrades, and put her on the road in Spring of '02. Auto parts: Plug wires with ceramic ends, about \$100; Heat shield over the starter bender (the heat from the manifold will melt the bender), Auto Zone, \$5.00.

P.S. She is 26 ft., and next year will be a 30-year-old classic. Very strong. "Way to go, Bob!" I will always be a Tiffin man.

William O. Crawford, Jr.  
Wappapello, Missouri

Dear William,

Thank you for sharing your experience and knowledge. We appreciate your loyalty to Tiffin Motorhomes. Please send us a picture of your coach and we will publish it in the next "Inman's Answers."

We purchased a 2006 35-ft. Phaeton in September 2005. We love it. Having made trips along the eastern shore, I have one question. Are the front seats on our coach able to revolve? We didn't have much of a walk through or any training.

Kay Reynolds Long  
Lewisburg, Pennsylvania

Dear Kay,

First, disconnect the seat belts from the wall. Make sure that the electrical hook-ups at the floor have enough slack for the chair to rotate. The release lever on the side of the seat will allow it to swivel. Angle the seat back forward, and use the motorized forward-backward control to maneuver the chair to clear the steering wheel as you rotate it 180 degrees.

We have a 2003 Allegro Bus and have enjoyed it. There are a few problems the dealer could not fix and now he is no longer in business. The brackets (plastic) that hold the drawers have all broken. The blinds (day/night) will not stay up and I have not been able to fix them. The most costly problem is that oil keeps spraying out of the engine. We were told it would stop after 14,000 miles, but it hasn't. It has been serviced several times. Your input is greatly appreciated.

Sandra Hill  
Prosperity, South Carolina

Dear Sandra,

The plastic brackets are available through our parts department and are not difficult to replace. The strings mounted inside the vertical sides of the valance need to be tightened. After you examine the mount, it will be obvious how you can re-knot the ends of the strings to tighten them. You will need to take the coach to the engine manufacturer's service center to get the oil leak repaired.

## ALLEGRO 32 LA

*Continued from page 12*

cabinet is 7 inches deep, 30 inches wide and 22 inches high. Amazingly, the bath has 19 cubic feet of storage overall.

The shower is 45 inches wide and 30 inches deep with a skylight positioned directly over it. An optional Fan-tastic fan services the bath. The toilet is an elongated design with step flush.

### The Bedroom

With the slide-out extended, the bedroom measures 10' 3" × 7' 4". The back wall has a full-width mirror which gives the room greater visual depth. The slide-out extends on the passenger side with a large window at the head of the bed. On the opposite wall, a double wardrobe provides 24 cubic feet of full-length hanging space, plus three 18½ inch wide drawers under a small vanity

top serviced by 110v and phone outlets. A window above the vanity affords cross ventilation for comfortable sleeping in pleasant temperatures. The bed has queen-size width (60 inches) and 74-inch length.

### The Patio

Extended with a pull rod, the coach's 16½-foot awning covers the entrance door. The patio is serviced by a 110v outlet as well as a telephone jack.


### Driving Performance

The 5.9L Cummins diesel brings more than adequate power for this coach. At 1600 rpm the engine generates 600 lb.-ft. of torque. The coach's GVWR (gross vehicle weight rating) is 24,000 pounds. Its UVW (unloaded vehicle weight) is 19,168 pounds. Minus full capacities of fresh water and propane plus four adults (average 154 lbs./each), the

coach has a CCC (cargo carrying capacity) of 3,625 pounds. Unless you carry a full set of barbells on your journeys, you are not likely to exceed your CCC.

Of course, the miles per gallon you get from this coach will always be based on individual driving habits, terrain, temperature, and total load. But if you don't exceed the speed limit and you aren't spending most of your time in the Rockies, you should find yourself logging 11 to 13 miles per gallon.

The coach handles really well on the road: good cornering, firm suspension, and almost no wandering in the steering ratio. If you don't already have two drivers in your family, this coach is the right one on which your partner can learn.

Visit the Tiffin dealer nearest you and ask to drive the Allegro 32LA with the front-end diesel option. I think you will be pleased with your experience. 

## TIFFIN MANAGEMENT TEAM

*Continued from page 15*

housed in a former gas station also has a catering business. With Harold serving as the point man to make the arrangements, Swamp John's fed all of Tiffin's 1,150 employees over three days.

Because of his desire to place customer service at the top of his agenda, Harold has recently been given new opportunities from Tiffin Motorhomes. Three years ago he launched North Alabama Paint Body and Equipment to supply the Belmont full body paint plant. As a businessman with a long history in wholesaling, Harold was able to locate wholesale resources and provide substantial savings to TMH.

Last year he started a third company to supply TMH with polished aluminum rims for its new Powerglide chassis. Mounting Systems, Inc., purchases rims with a mill finish from Continental Aluminum in California. Continental's aerospace technology produces aluminum alloys which they bleed over into their wheel division. Kimbrough installed a \$100,000 robotic buffing machine to produce a bright mirror finish from the milled aluminum. Creating the mirror-finish rims locally allows Harold to produce a very competitively priced rim for Tiffin.

"The level of service we have rendered to

Tiffin Motorhomes over the last 25 years has completely redefined our business and how we run it," he said. It has been and continues to be a very good relationship for both companies.


So what does the future hold for Harold Kimbrough and his family business? "I would like to do more of the rallies and less supervision here in our shop," he said. "I am a people person, and rallies just fit my style." Kimbrough explained that the big box stores often run mom and pop shops out of business. "Thanks to Tiffin Motorhomes, we have been able to diversify."

Another area of interest to Kimbrough are tires with pressure charged by nitrogen. "The pressure does not change with temperature. Nitrogen produces a totally dry environment inside the tire — no rust. The pressure is more stable because the molecules are larger and don't leak as easily," he explained. "Major tire centers are beginning to offer it."

Harold Kimbrough was born only a half mile from the building where he works. His and Debra's home is just a short drive away. And his parents, Bill and Mary, live down a side road to SR 20 in a historic antebellum home they restored several years ago. "It was one of the few plantation homes in the area that the Yankees didn't burn,"

Harold said as we drove out to see the big house. The 11 bedroom home stood empty for 75 years. Abraham Ricks required seven years (1825–1832) to build the home made of heart pine. "The Yankees befriended the Ricks family and used the house for a hospital," he continued. The 16 × 16-inch timbers used in the post and beam construction afforded high ceilings and large rooms. The original floorplan had no bathrooms and the kitchen was in an adjoining outbuilding to avoid the hazard of cooking over an open fire.

Harold's friendship with Bob Tiffin led him to a new hobby: collecting antique cars. "Bob has been into antique cars for a long time. He encouraged me to give it a try," he explained. Today Harold takes great pride in a 1935 five-window Ford coupe with rumble seat and roll-down back window. The coupe has an 80-hp flathead V-8 engine. It won first place in the 2005 National Ford V-8 Flathead Show, earning 956 points out of a possible 1000. Six months ago he came home with a 1940 Ford Pickup with a V-8 Flathead 85-hp engine.

If you had to find one word to describe Harold Kimbrough, it would be *exuberant*, an attribute that has served him well in dealing with Tiffin Motorhomes and its customers. 

## Dealers Meet at Orlando Renaissance in July to See 2008 Models

Over 70 percent of the Tiffin dealers assembled the fourth weekend in July at the Orlando Renaissance to learn about the advances the Class A manufacturer had made during the past 12 months in both manufacturing processes and product features.

In addressing the dealers, general manager Tim Tiffin took the wraps off the new Tiffin Powerglide Chassis, a development the company's R&D began three years ago. The thrust was to develop the engine-chassis module in tandem with the coach box, Tiffin said. A history of the chassis's development and its industry-leading features can be found on page 53. Tiffin pointed out that the chassis plant will increase production slowly in order to guarantee total quality control, with the plant ramping up to produce one unit per day by late fall. The tandem-axle chassis will be introduced by the end of the year, he said. With 31 locations throughout the U.S., Coach Care has

been retained to provide maintenance for the new chassis.

The company continues to make administrative investments to streamline its operation. Most significant this year is the installation of SAP software, a comprehensive program integrating all phases of TMH production control with administrative management reporting. The software generates new databases of information never before available.

Major equipment additions this past year include a computerized and programmable Optimizer Saw, a Water Jet Router which cuts tile flooring, and the Dynamometer which tests and evaluates the tire mountings on the Powerglide chassis.

The company added six new bays to the Customer Service Center and 20 additional campground sites. The Allegro Club offices were relocated to a much larger facility adjacent to the campground. The Belmont Paint Plant is currently turning out 11-13 coaches per day with full body paint. In addition to a Rain Simulator system, a new Final Finish and Clean-up Facility was added to the Belmont plant

*Continued on next page*



### Top Ten Tiffin Dealers

- Lazy Days
- La Mesa RV
- Bankston Motor Homes
- Ingrams RV
- JC's RV
- Suncoast RV
- Dickey-Stout Motor Ranch
- Horizon-Lussier
- Sherman RV Center
- Kings Campers

L-to-R: Bob Upton and Dave Moreland (La Mesa), Micheal Hagey and Rick McDermott (Suncoast), Phillippe Fr chet and Jean-Fran ois Lussier (Horizon-Lussier), Bob Tiffin, Ron Gajewski (Kings Campers), Marlin Ingram (Marlin Ingram's RV Center), Royal Yarbrough, Jr. (Dickey-Stout Motor Ranch), Mark Dennis (Bankston Motor Homes), Mark Castor, (Sherman RV), Pat Overby, Sharon Padley, and Tammy Lull (Lazy Days).





which can serve eight coaches at a time.

Van Tiffin, director of product development, highlighted the new features of each brand for 2008.

### **Allegro**

Engine orders for the Allegro are now split 50-50 between gas and diesel. An entrance for a satellite tripod cable has been added to all brands. The Allegro now offers full tile in the living room/galley, a free standing dinette, Diamond Shield, and two new floorplans—the 32 LA and the 35 QBA which may get nicknamed “the bunkhouse.”

### **Allegro Bay**

Chrome mirrors, side cameras, and full LR/galley tile are now standard. Automatic Fan-Tastic fans are now standard in the water closet. The Bay also was outfitted with a larger inverter.

### **Phaeton**

The country's best-selling diesel pusher got new front and rear caps with Tahoe headlights. Other body improvements include a flip-up door for the engine compartment and a three-inch wider entrance door. New inside features include five-inches more leg room for the passenger chair; recessed map lights; MCD privacy and sun shades; automated screen choice for aerial, satellite, or DVD reception (no switching box); full tile in LR/galley/bath; larger kitchen sink with cover racks for storage; all TVs HD-LCD flat panel.

### **Allegro Bus**

TMH's flagship luxury coach got a more versatile paint design, giving it a totally new look. New features include: horsepower upgraded to 425; key fob entry & cargo lock-unlock system with headlight flash acknowledgment; new fiberglass

design for fenders (18 new ones this year meant a new full-time engineer for the CNC router machine); all windows have MCD privacy and solar shades; increased sink size; storage rack for sink and stove covers; glaze available on all cabinet stains; radius door for shower; full solid surface backsplashes; optional solar screen for awning; and a new 40QRP front kitchen floorplan with 42-inch HD-LCD television at mid-ship position.

President Bob Tiffin told the dealers that the company would increase production again this fall to keep up with orders. “We are creating fresh new products all the time based on customers and dealers input. I can't predict the future, but I know we can look at what has made us successful in the past and continue to follow that pattern,” he said. Dealer approval was demonstrated with large orders to meet Fall sales demand. **RIS**

## **Powerglide Chassis: *Features and Benefits***

*(Continued from page 56)*

### **Tiffin control of production and design.**

Improved quality and value. Able to immediately adapt chassis design in response to changing customer needs. Able to tailor design to improve manufacturing and quality.

### **Full length 50,000 psi strength steel rails with fabricated rear drop section.**

Frame design for superior stiffness, strength, and weight distribution. Drop section allows for easy access to serviceable engine components.

### **Ladder type frame joined by Huck bolts.**

#### **Exclusive use of zinc plated yellow dichromate finished Grade 8 fasteners.**

Huck bolts provide superior reliability and strength for joining non-serviceable components. Exclusive use of Grade 8 fasteners eliminates manufacturing mix-ups and provides a superior connection. Yellow dichromate finish provides superior corrosion resistance.

### **2007 Cummins 425 HP ISL and Allison 3000 MH transmission.**

Powertrain delivers higher peak horsepower with smooth shifting characteristics and cleaner exhaust emissions.

### **Direct driven radiator fan with 2 speed electronically controlled clutch.**

Superior safety with efficiency. Highly controllable fan drive system only draws full fan power from the engine when it is needed.

### **Custom optimized 2007 cooling package.**

Smaller & more efficient Cummin's certified cooling package leaves more room for storage while providing superior performance.

### **Front air disc brakes with rear air drum brakes. Four wheel four sensor ABS.**

Putting disc brakes in front and drum in the rear provides an economical way to get the most performance per dollar out of your brake system. Front disc brakes will provide reduced brake fade, reduced pulling during braking, and improved stopping distance. Four Wheel four sensor ABS provides the highest level performance and safety.

### **Improved weight distribution (Close to 40/60 front/rear axle weight split).**

Superior ride handling characteristics w/less rear end waggle and body roll. Safer coach especially in windy conditions and during emergency braking and lane change maneuvers.

### **Tuthill heavy duty custom tuned independent suspension system.**

Custom tuned suspension provides superior ride and stability. Improved serviceability and strength over other designs.

### **Four independently controlled ride height valves.**

Improved ride that adjusts each wheel to continually changing road conditions.

### **Fully multiplexed electrical system with internal auto reset fuses, and electronic gauge/instrument panel. Gauges include custom J1939 compliant speedometer, tachometer, odometer, oil pressure, fuel level, voltage, engine temperature and low air.**

Increased reliability/serviceability. Requires less wiring running the full length of the chassis. Large custom Tiffin gauges are easy to read during day or night time driving.

### **Sheppard M110 gear and Tuthill 1460 IFS suspension.**

Low effort turns and a full range of static steering. 55 degree wheel cut.


### **Custom convenient chassis service center.**

Provides full access to oil and transmission fluid levels, auxiliary air supply, with remote service center light having a magnetic base and 20" retractable cord.

## PRESIDENT'S CORNER

*Continued from page 6*

one thing I try to remember every day: don't get comfortable because one or two bad seasons will put us in deep trouble. We have to stay on top of our game. At the end of the day, I know with a certainty that our employees make this company what it is today.

[*Editor's Note:* Tim arrives at the office around 6 and puts in 10+ hours on a routine basis. He and Lynne have four children. Their two boys, Trent and Brock, are now working in the TMH warehouse during the summer, following patterns set by Tim and Bob three and five decades ago. Daughters Hannah and Laura, along with the boys, enjoy several motorhome trips throughout the year with their parents, especially during the fall football season. Tim enjoys helping the children with their extracurricular activities during the school year. He continues to be an avid tennis player, getting in several sets each week. They make their home in Tuscumbia, Alabama, about a 45-minute drive from the plant.] 

## DEALER PROFILE


*Continued from page 31*

campaign with fostering a relaxed freedom about camping, as well as furnishing us with many email addresses."

Horizon-Lussier's name itself is a major factor in the company's success after being in the RV business for 39 years. Its location on Highway 10 is a prime factor in continuing to keep their product in front of the public. "Actually, we have been here so long that we have become a reference point from which other dealerships measure themselves," Lussier said. "During our fiscal year, we expect to do \$40+ million, with 60 percent of the dollars generated by Class A sales," he continued.

Each September in the village of Saint Tite, three hours north of Montreal, the nine-day Western Festival will draw 400,000 visitors, including 10,000 campers in every conceivable kind of recreational vehicle. Last month, Horizon moved a large segment of its Class A inventory to Saint Tite where it sold over 25 units.

Somehow Jean-François and Sylvie find time for recreation, especially in the winter months when the company closes from December 20 through January 14. They enjoy scuba diving in Florida, the Bahamas, and the Pacific beaches in Mexico. Both are avid Harley-Davidson riders: he on a Softail Deuce and she on a Low Rider. "It's a different way to release pressure and relax," Sylvie said. "We are close to Vermont and love to ride in the Green and White Mountains, especially in the fall. The scenery is just spectacular."

"The company's success can be attributed to so many factors," Jean-François said. "All of our departments are staffed by employees who understand our customers and what it takes to keep them happy. Philippe keeps us at the top of our game in sales, and it is up to Sylvie and me to make Horizon-Lussier the leader in quality and customer service." 

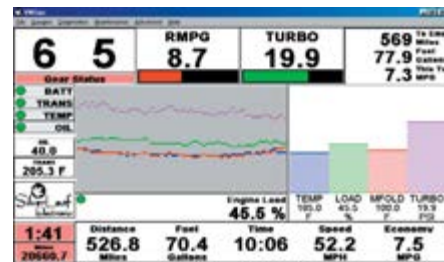


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# F R O M T H E R O A D

## The Life and Times of Tiffin Motorhome Owners

### The Neshoba County Fair

The Neshoba County Fair in Neshoba County, Mississippi, has to be the best! It is unique in that most of the families in the county have cabins at the fairgrounds, and move into them as much as three weeks before the fair commences. In addition to the usual county fair items, we have horse racing, antique car shows, and political speakers from candidates for coroner to the president of the United States. The best part is visiting old friends and family. I am a brand new Tiffin convert from Holiday Rambler!

Bill Banks, Madison, Mississippi

### An Unfortunate Crash, But No Major Injuries Thanks, Tiffin!

We are writing from Bowling Green, Ohio, to share our Allegro Bay story. We purchased our 2001 Allegro Bay Pusher brand new in 2001 and made a lot of trips between Ohio and Florida. On one such trip about 18 months after getting our Bay Pusher, we were northbound on I-75 at four in the morning. Jacob pulled over on an entry ramp to the Interstate to let our puppy go potty and was startled by a man sleeping alongside the road in a large bag. Scared by the encounter, Jacob jumped back into the motorhome and we motored on. He quickly became upset because he had not thought to offer food, blanket, or anything to help the poor fellow. As he contemplated turning around, he found himself on the berm of the road. He overcorrected and the coach swerved heavily into the east guardrail. That impact threw us completely around, knocking out the batteries, losing power, and slamming us into the westbound guardrail. Luckily, we were between the rail and the white edge line of the highway, safely out of oncoming traffic.

My husband, myself, a friend, and our puppy suffered very minor injuries. The state troopers, the tow truck drivers, and the scrap yard owner were all astounded that our coach stayed so intact after two very forceful impacts—and moreover how we all walked out (albeit through the windshield) unharmed. The troopers stated that they had pulled fatalities out of motorhomes with far less damage.

Well, the Good Lord was there for us, no doubt, but I must say if it were not for a well-built Tiffin Motorhome, the outcome could have been much worse.

It has been five long years now without our diesel pusher and we miss it every day. We continue to read your magazine and hope for the day soon that we will be able to replace our Allegro Bay. The insurance called it a total loss. When we went to retrieve our belongings out of it, we wept.

We wanted to share our story with you and let people know just how well-built your coaches really are. We are living proof! Our thanks to all of the people at Tiffin Motorhomes for your ethics and hard work.

Jacob and Deborah Hinton, Bowling Green, Ohio

### Our Phaeton Took Us There: Alaska to Florida

In all of our travels, we have learned that the best restaurant is our own galley or a good cook fire just outside. From halibut fishing in Alaska, to walking the beaches of Florida, to the salmon and trout fishing in our great state of Washington, our Phaeton has taken us there and we love it.

Jim Nelson, Stevenson, Washington

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