

Roughing It Smoothly®



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Tiffin Phaeton owners

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Reinvesting for Quality, Service, and Success

by Bob Tiffin

Tiffin Motorhomes is a very fiscally conservative company. Over our 41-year history we have made it our practice to use cash reserves to expand our real estate, physical plant, and equipment. Since we are a family-owned business, we are not obligated to pay annual dividends to stockholders. Our purpose is to reinvest for quality, service, and success.

In September 1972, we had a 20,000 square foot building to use for the assembly plant, a 2,500 square foot welding shop, two cotton warehouses, and a cotton gin situated on 5.6 acres. As our business grew, we reinvested our profits in new and better equipment: table saws, welders, small tools, and air compressors. We quickly ran out of space for assembling the motorhomes and had to erect more buildings and fixtures. We realized early that we had to maintain a huge raw materials inventory, with chassis being the most expensive item.

In the mid-70s, after we had built several hundred motorhomes, it became obvious to me these “houses on wheels” we were building needed to look more streamlined, finished, and modern. Initially, we were most concerned about how to streamline the *outside* of the motorhome.

In late 1977 and early 1978, I hired the Ronald Powers engineering group to design and fit a new front cap on the 1979 Allegro. They actually created a mold for us to make the fiberglass front cap, and at that time, this was the most expensive device we had ever purchased.

If you compare our 1979 Allegro to the 1992 Allegro, you can easily see that the front and rear cap designs remained the same for 13 years. Early in that 13-year span, Powers also designed a new dash for the Allegro. At that time we thought we were making huge strides as we reinvested our modest profits in improving the design of the Allegro — a step that was essential for Tiffin Motorhomes to be competitive.

Our business really took off in the 1980s after so many of our competitors went out of business due to the extremely high interest rates during the Carter administration. We could not keep up with the orders. So we doubled the size of our production plant and our real estate, reinvesting again the funds we had been saving. It was a good problem to have and we were glad



the plant expansion took care of it.

In the latter part of that decade it became apparent that we needed to redesign the motorhome interiors to be competitive. In 1989 we invested our resources in a Vor-Woods laminating machine that laminated vinyl and wood grain materials onto a substrate to produce pre-finished cabinets. We continued to use that construction technique for many years to make the face frames for cabinets and many other laminated parts. We purchased the doors for the cabinets from outside vendors.

From a large roll of aluminum, we formed the siding in-house on a press. Hanging the aluminum siding on the production line was a fairly easy process and it allowed us to move our production up to 12 units a day. But the technology for laminating fiberglass to make the sidewalls was developing fast and I knew we had to make another major investment from our resources.

In 1987, with a new engineering plan to manufacture a laminated one-piece sidewall with a fiberglass exterior, we purchased the lamination machine and built a new assembly plant. Using the fiberglass skin, we built the Open Road in the new plant and continued with the aluminum-sided Allegro in the plant that now houses our woodworking and sub-assembly shops. By the 1992–93 model year, it was obvious that fiberglass was the way to go, so we terminated our iconic, aluminum-sided Allegro that had been our “bread-and-butter” product for 20 years. It was from our new plant in 1987 that we launched our first *major* new brand: the Allegro Bus.

In 1998 we reinvested our resources again to introduce another new brand: the Phaeton. One year later we came out with a second floor plan for the Phaeton. This “upscale brand” joined the Allegro Bus to give our buyers more choices.

At that time we were purchasing fiberglass from Filon. When we realized in 2002 that we needed smoother exterior walls, we began buying flat panels of fiberglass from Owens-Corning. Two years later we purchased a company just north of Iuka, Mississippi, called Water Way, to make front and rear caps and other fiberglass parts. This purchase enabled us to control the manufacturing quality of the caps and was one of the best in-

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Ride into the Sunset on a Zephyr . . .

TEXT BY FRED THOMPSON • PHOTOGRAPHY BY CONSTELLATION IMAGEWORKS

A Tiffin 2014 Zephyr to be exact. It is Tiffin's finest coach. Everything from the top to the tires achieves a synergy of perfection. During the company's 2012 model year, the marketing and design teams spent endless hours reevaluating every facet of the Zephyr to develop that synergy and add even more value to the company's premier motorcoach.

"We wanted to put into the Zephyr everything we know about building a fine motorhome," Jerry Williamson, Tiffin's general sales manager, said recently while taking a small group on a tour of a 2014 Zephyr. "The Zephyr is loaded with many high-value features that are included in its base price," he continued. "Even if you selected all of the nine options, your Zephyr would still have an MSRP of considerably less than \$590K. Feature for feature our competition is \$150,000 higher."

The Décor

The standard features—that is, what is included in the base price of \$562,800—are amazing. The exterior of the 2014 Zephyr is a knockout. Tiffin introduced White Mahogany as one of the 2014 paint options. The TMH paint plant has raised the bar in the industry this year with eight — that's right — eight coats of paint. With the dynamics of the front and rear caps, the graphics, and the new logo type, this Zephyr's first impression is nothing short of achieving perfection.

Your expectations will be rewarded when you step inside. The

two décors are Sonata and Cosmopolitan, with the latter featuring the optional Ralph Lauren fabrics that are usually combined with the optional High Gloss Glazed Cordovan. The Cordovan cabinetry and valances plus the cream UltraLeather™ sofas create a very handsome cross between a "tuxedo" and an art deco look. The coach we reviewed had the Sonata décor (standard), a more informal interior with earth tones and light brown UltraLeather covering the Villa sofas.

The Interiors in the Living Area

The Hide-A-Bed (PS) and the Magic Bed (DS), both covered in UltraLeather, are standard.* As noted earlier, there are only nine options. You can opt for two lift recliners (MSRP \$1,400) to replace the Magic Bed. In place of the standard dinette-computer workstation, you can choose the UltraLeather™ U-shaped dinette (MSRP \$2,520) or the UltraLeather sofa booth dinette combination (MSRP \$2,800), both by Villa.

The cabinetry in this coach is High Gloss Glazed Honey Natural Cherry (MSRP \$2,100). It should be noted that two finishes are standard: High Gloss Cherry Wood and High Gloss Natural Cherry Wood. Regardless of the finish you select, your cabinets will be handsome as well as functional, providing for an efficient, organized galley. Over the last decade, Tiffin craftspeople have honed their techniques and skills to create cabinets, doors, and furniture you would expect to see in fine homes.

Both the driver and passenger chairs by Villa rotate easily

*In describing the interior of the motorhome, the rear cap is North and the front cap is South. Across the motorhome may be referred to as E-W. Other acronyms used for brevity include DS for driver side and PS for passenger side.

into the living room to increase the seating to accommodate eight. Both powered chairs are adjustable in six directions and have manually adjustable head rests and back recliners. The passenger chair has a powered leg lift that clearly puts it in the category of a fully featured recliner.

Interior Lighting

The lighting in the Zephyr is creatively designed to brightly illuminate the entire living area or selectively illuminate based on your activity: partying, reading, sewing, napping, cooking, surfing the internet, or catching up on your business records at the computer workstation. The living area is a multi-tasking area for active and busy owners. The living-cooking-dining area is 23' 6" long from the dash to the bedroom door and 12' 8" wide when both slide-outs are extended. In the main ceiling, 31 recessed LED barrel lights with seven area control switches put lighting exactly where you wish. Over the sofa bed, three area controls, including two swivel lights for reading, give you more choices. The lighting system over the dinette and Magic Bed has three controls.

For a low lighting effect while watching a movie, turn all of the ceiling and slide-out lights off, and turn on the rope lights in the valances. You can experiment and create the lighting effect you want for any situation. The ceiling boasts a double molding (11' 6" × 4') with a recessed tray. An oval center with faux marble and three recessed barrel lights is the centerpiece. Recessed lighting in the molded tray and the marble oval produce a very pleasant softening effect. Sconce lighting on both sides of the front windows and a light sculpture above the dining table offer decorative illumination.

Using Your Workstation For Business — Or Just a Dinette

First offered in 2006, the dinette-computer workstation is a favorite option ordered by Tiffin owners. It is standard on the Zephyr. Capped with a solid surface counter top, the 18-inch deep × 72-inch wide cherry credenza serves as the cabinetry for the workstation. It provides the location for your laptop or monitor. The north side of the cabinet houses a slide-out tray for a keyboard. Just under the keyboard a door opens to a large shelf for your printer. If you are using a desktop computer, a center cabinet under the dinette table offers an enclosed housing. The south end of the workstation has two drawers and a filing cabinet with hanging rails. The 25-inch wide table for the dinette is cantilevered from its wall mount. Sixteen inches of its 40-inch length retracts into the cabinet when you travel. Two dining chairs remain with the dinette and two more folding chairs are stored under the bed.

In the 45TZ floorplan, the solid surface countertop for the dinette-computer workstation extends seamlessly into the countertop for the adjacent cabinet supporting the mid-section 42-inch Panasonic television. The counter top measures 29.375 × 30.5 inches, and the cabinet itself has a large 22 × 25-inch drawer over a double-door compartment with 5.5 cubic feet of storage. This floorplan could easily become a mobile support or sales unit for a business. Whether you are traveling for business or pleasure, the cabinets over the sofas and the dinette provide over 24 cubic feet of storage.

Just as easily, with its 25 × 40-inch dining table, the dinette-workstation provides the setting for a dinner for four. With the large credenza, it becomes the setting for a large buffet dinner. Serve your guests and retreat to the awning covered patio. With



the six-foot folding tables that you keep stored in the basement, you can handle a banquet for twelve.

The Galley

In the 2014 Zephyr, “all electric” is standard. The galley features an induction cooktop which eliminates propane entirely. The induction system directly heats a cooking vessel, as contrasted with heat transfer from electrical coils or burning gas in a traditional stove. Cooking vessels made of ferromagnetic metal are necessary for induction heating, and a complete set is provided with the coach. Induction cooktops are faster and more energy-efficient than traditional electric cooking surfaces. Similar to gas burners, induction allows instant control of cooking energy.

The two-unit induction cooktop is positioned parallel with the front edge of the countertop. This configuration provides extra room for a solid surface shelf (8.5" x 68") that fits flush against the backsplash (not shown in the above illustrations). Underneath are four handy drawers (13" x 6.5" x 3").

The microwave-convection oven has been a standard feature for so long that I sometimes forget that it is included in Tiffin's base price. Positioned directly above the induction cooktop, TMH uses a residential size Sharp Carousel unit that makes it easy to bake roasts, desserts, casseroles, cakes, or whatever may be on your menu.

Positioned directly below the cooktop, the optional Fisher & Paykel Dishdrawer (MSRP \$1,260) gives you one more degree of “roughing it smoothly.” With heavy, normal, fast, delicate, and rinse cycles, the unit will do just about everything a residential dishwasher can do. A large drawer under the dishwasher is provided for storing the ferromagnetic pots and pans.

As usual, the cabinets in the galley are an engineering marvel. The galley's work surface area, including the sink covers, is 22.5 square feet. The island slide-out cabinet on the south end of the galley adds another two square feet. Three 14-inch-long drawers in the island slide-out offer that extra storage that TMH leverages in all of its motorhomes. On the north end of the galley,

you will see a 3-drawer stack for stashing all of the little items you need in a kitchen.

The roll-out storage system under the double sink is so unique that TMH gave it a name — StowAway™ — and protected it with a registered trademark. Since the front of the cabinet for the double sink angles out into the room about 15 degrees, TMH's cabinet designers created a trapezoidal cabinet that uses every bit of the space. The overall cabinet is 32.5 inches long, 17.5 inches wide, and 15 inches deep. A receiving bin on the south side of the large slide-out cabinet safely stores the two sink covers. When it is fully extended, two over/under storage bins appear in the rear half of the sliding box. With the extended cabinet stationary, the top box slides on drawer-type rollers back into the area under the sinks, exposing the lower storage box. The front half of the cabinet is the storage area for the trash can.

To the right and left of the microwave-convection oven, the overhead cabinets in the galley yield 9.5 cubic feet of storage. Conveniently, two of the cabinets have slide-out boxes to help

you access whatever you tucked away at the back. The third cabinet above the sink has adjustable shelves.

On the opposite side of the galley, anchoring the north end of the DS slide-out, Tiffin selected a 19.8 cubic foot Whirlpool double-door refrigerator with a slide-out freezer in the lower third of the unit. It dispenses water and ice through the door and provides a display for monitoring and adjusting the temperature in both the freezer and the fridge. This unit is supplemented with a 2.5 cubic foot freezer in the basement. It is mounted on a slide-out track in the compartment next to the entrance. With the flip of a switch, it can become your beverage cooler when you are entertaining outdoors on the patio under the coach's double awning (second awning optional).

Below, left to right: The dinette/computer workstation changes the dining area into an office. ♦ The PS sofa in minutes converts to a queen air comfort bed. ♦ The expand-an-island creates 2 square feet of work-space or a convenient serving area. ♦ The optional drawer dishwasher makes cleanup easy. ♦ The dining table will slide out to serve four.



TIFFIN INNOVATION: EXTRAORDINAIRE™ AC SYSTEM

The interior ambiance in your Tiffin coach is enhanced by a state-of-the-art heating and cooling method, developed by Tiffin engineers for exclusive use in our luxury coaches. Modeled on residential-style systems, it uses adjustable registers and return vents placed the length of the ceiling to keep the airflow moving in a circular pattern to maintain your desired interior temperature. Whisper quiet and incredibly efficient, it easily lives up to its name – Extraordinaire.



Entertainment

The two 42-inch Panasonic HDTVs in opposite ends of the living area are the anchors for a beautiful entertainment system in the living–dining area. The control system resides in a louvered, double-door cabinet under the bedroom TV, just a few feet away. The mid-section TV is your primary screen for enjoying surround sound entertainment.

Powered by a Panasonic 1000-watt system with “Wi-Fi Built-in,” it provides a wide variety of web content, including Bloomberg TV, Netflix, Twitter, Cinema Now, Vudu, Fox Sports, Picasa Web Albums, and YouTube videos. Your Wi-Fi connection can be supplied by Verizon’s 4G network MiFi air card. By January 2014, Verizon expects to have approximately 98 percent coverage in the U.S.

With its Blu-ray™/DVD Home Theater System feature, the Panasonic unit can support 3D/full HD content and playback. Six surround sound speakers are located in the ceiling of the living–dining area. The two ceiling speakers above the driver and passenger chairs tie in with the two speakers in the front corners of the cabinetry above the dash to provide surround sound stereo for the in-dash radio and CD player. The four ceiling speakers opposite the front slide-outs provide surround sound for the mid-section 42-inch Panasonic HDTV, both for regular programming, DVDs, and CDs. The sound is enhanced by the big bass woofer hidden in the cabinet under the dining table.

In addition to the standard Winegard Roadtrip Mission/In-

Motion Satellite, TMH has also included as standard equipment the receiver which is pre-programmed for DirecTV, but it does require a subscription. As an option (\$245 MSRP), this coach was prewired for the Winegard Trav’ler Satellite to bring in HD programming from satellites that are located just above the horizon. With the Integrated Universal Dock for iPod and iPhone, you can launch your personal digital music collection as well as videos and photos stored on those devices.

In the 2014 Zephyr, TMH upgraded its in-dash automotive entertainment system with USB ports located in the dash and the passenger console. The ports will allow you to charge your phones and other electronic equipment such as the iPad. Since the automotive radio has Bluetooth, you can transfer your music albums from iPhone, iPad, and iPod into the coach’s surround sound stereo system.

Heating and Cooling the Zephyr

Three low profile roof air conditioners with heat pumps handle the cooling requirements for the Zephyr. A 12,500 BTU Onan Quiet Diesel generator powers the cooling system when the coach is not using shore power. Until outside temps fall below the high-30s, the heat pumps will also provide sufficient heat to warm the motorhome.

Tiffin uses the Aqua-Hot Heating System to warm the coach when the weather pushes into the thirties and below. Using hydronic technology, the system heats a fluid that is pumped to six heat exchangers located throughout the coach, providing a quiet, even heat with no cold spots. Aqua-Hot also provides continuous hot water to the galley and the bathrooms.

In 2014 Tiffin began using a foil wrap in the construction of the walls and roof. Although testing is still being done to measure the results, it is estimated the foil wrap during hot weather may reduce the interior temperature as much as 10 degrees.

The Zephyr employs two roof-mounted solar panels (standard equipment) to help maintain the charge on the eight coach batteries.

Heated Floors Plus a Central Vac

For 2014 Tiffin introduced an oblong porcelain tile (31.5" × 8.75") with a mix of light gray and brown marble patterns. The tiles are laid in a brick weave design. A buff-colored, square, porcelain tile with three small, square insets is another choice. Tile throughout the coach is standard. Included as a standard feature in the Zephyr, heated floors will banish the cold touch of porcelain on your bare feet. That’s an especially nice amenity when you pop out of a warm bed on a cold morning. Clean-ups are easy with the Zephyr’s central vacuum system. A VacPan™ at baseboard level in the galley invites you to sweep the crumbs right into the system that whisks them away.

The Master Bedroom

The master bedroom, bath, and closet should be described as a “masterpiece.” Just close the big sliding door to the living



quarters and relax. The Sonata décor is understated, yet warm and welcoming. The High Gloss Glazed Honey Natural Cherry paneling, cabinetry, and molding encloses the bedroom with a comfortable richness that would have pleased George Vanderbilt.

With the cherry-framed, tufted headboard accented with lantern-styled sconces and overhead reading lamps, the king-size bed with standard memory foam mattress beckons its owners for a restful night's sleep. Optionally, you can order an Air Comfort King mattress or a Sleep Number bed, both with dual controls. Both sides of the bed have end tables with magazine racks and 110-volt service. Touch controls for three lighting systems, the ceiling fan, and the generator are right at bedside. Both sides of the bed slide-out have screened windows to capture evening breezes. Each window has solar and privacy shades.

Bedroom storage is abundant. Supported by hydraulic struts,



the bed lifts with a slight tug to expose 13 cubic feet of storage space. The cabinets above the head of the bed provide another 12 cubic feet of storage.

The PS slide-out houses the control center for the entertain-



ment system. Concealed with louvered doors, it is built into a handsome cabinet with two more drawers and a hamper. The cabinet is capped with a solid surface countertop on which a 38-inch Panasonic HDTV is seated. Under a large sliding window, an adjacent chest with two large drawers is also finished with a solid surface countertop. It is the perfect location for your collectibles or family pictures. A cabinet over the window is the right place for your video and movie collection. Movies can be enjoyed from bed or in the high energy surround sound system in the living room.

An Elegant Bath Completes the Suite

With a change in cabinetry finish to White Chocolate, the spacious rear bath assumes a complementary character of its own. The double sink vanity in a brown marble pattern is manufactured as one unit in Tiffin's solid surface countertop division. In a lighter tone of brown, the backsplash in a basketweave design and



the White Chocolate finish of the cabinetry add to the décor's harmony.

The shower itself is a work of art. Picking up the subtle buff and gray tones in the rectangular floor tiles, the designer successfully combined darker gray solid surface material in the shower's floor and wainscot with buff-toned porcelain tile mounted diagonally over the upper walls. Mounted on concealed hinges, the heavy glass door to the shower appears to float

as it is opened and closed. The detachable shower head on a flexible hose is adjustable to multiple streams and sprays. The shower head's mount slides on a vertical bar to accommodate a bather of any height. Overhead, an insulated sliding panel opens to blue sky and sunshine. When the panel is closed, an LED light illuminates the shower.

Beside the shower, a maserator toilet is positioned under a window on the passenger side. Concealed by a louvered cover, the overhead exhaust fan will flood the room with fresh air. Located conveniently above the window, a cabinet provides storage for toilet necessities.

And not to be missed, close the sliding door to the closet and you will find a full-length mirror.

And a Walk-in Closet?

Yes, the architect found the space for an 8-foot wide walk-in closet. Above the 8-foot rod for hanging your wardrobe, you will find an 8-foot shelf, too.

A 3-drawer chest with solid surface countertop is conveniently located for storing your folded clothing. And you have a PS window to keep your closet fresh.

Nothing is missing in this coach! The depth of the closet permitted locating the stacked washer and dryer right next to the bath. Both units are standard equipment on the Zephyr and they have the wash and dry settings and options that you would expect to see on a residential washer and dryer.

We're not done yet. On the back wall of the closet, concealed by your hanging wardrobe, TMH includes a safe as standard equipment. You can protect your cash, valuables, and jewelry when you have to be away from home.

Then There's A Luxurious Half Bath

We haven't mentioned the half bath yet. Just as you would expect in a primary residence, a half bath or water closet is a "must-have" amenity for your guests. Designed for privacy with a concealing, heavy, solid cherry door, this half bath features the richness of handsome cabinetry, a solid surface countertop with molded lavatory, a handmade basketweave backsplash, and a quiet, electric-flush toilet. The mirrored cabinet door above the lavatory has theater lighting. A ceiling exhaust fan with louvered cover and a window with valance and privacy shade bring in fresh air.

From the Driver's Point of View

SEATING COMFORT: The Villa driver and passenger seats are just firm enough, yet the seat swells around you with comfort. Six air suspension bags, tuned shocks, dual ride height adjusters, and six big Michelins (315/80R22.5) isolate you from disconcerting pot holes that could have otherwise spoiled your ride. The PS/DS seating has six directional adjustments that not only get you into the perfect driving position, but also give you continual options to adjust the pressure on your back, rear, and legs to promote better circulation. With a toggle switch on the left console, you can move the brake and fuel pedals in and out for optimum adjustment to your leg length and ankle movement.

DRIVING AIDS: The In-dash Navigation System is standard equipment. Its software is especially designed for RV navigation and can be operated with controls on the Smart Wheel or through the touchscreen. The system gives navigation instructions both visually and verbally.

The Mobileye Collision Avoidance System is offered for the first time this year (optional at \$1,400 MSRP). Using sophisticated vision algorithms, Mobileye's collision avoidance technology is able to interpret a scene in real-time and provide drivers with an immediate evaluation based on its analysis. The system issues warnings for impending rear and head-on collisions, lane drifting, high beams to low, exceeding speed limits, safe following distance, and collision avoidance with pedestrians and bicycles.

THE COCKPIT'S ENVIRONMENT: As you enter the coach, the panel on the left side of the step well has illuminated, square



switches to activate both exterior and interior entry lights, including a ceiling entry light, the patio and door lights, the lights in the cargo bays, the main hall, the road lights, the assist handle, the door lock-unlock toggle, and the light master (which turns on everything again just as you had it when you exited the coach). A switch in the lower right corner turns off the individual panel lights to extend the longevity of the bulbs. On the side of the panel you will notice switches to keep the entry step deployed or stored, and the battery disconnect.

To keep the navigator busy, the new PS console has seven toggle switches: Exterior ground effect lighting (optional, MSRP \$560), the door window night shade, PS window night shade, PS window solar shade, step cover, map light, and PS fan.

The driver has toggle controls on his left console for solar and privacy shades that cover his side window, permitting safe adjustment while the coach is in motion. The entire windshield has solar and privacy shades controlled by toggles on the dash.

The Zephyr may take the trophy for the quietest cockpit of any motorhome in its class. With very low noise from the road and the equipment itself, owners will enjoy listening to their favorite XM channels (subscription required) or CDs.

LEVELING THE COACH: In the 2014 Zephyr, the Hadley Smart Air Management System (SAMS) automatically levels the parked coach by integrating the suspension provided by the hydraulic jacks and the air leveling system. It also eliminates

the extra control panel for the jacks. But even more important, SAMS controls the ride height of the Zephyr during normal road use, resulting in a smoother ride over mechanically controlled valve systems.

Down Under

As noted earlier, the first compartment next to the entrance houses a 2.5 cubic foot Dometic freezer which extends out on a double track for easy access.

Then you will find Tiffin's signature double-door basement storage compartment. Measured prior to the installation of the slide-out trays, you will get approximately 180 cubic feet. While the double slide-out trays (one is standard, second tray optional) are a labor and back-saver, they will reduce the storage capacity by approximately 60 cubic feet.

The fourth, fifth, and sixth storage areas house the Aqua-Hot system, the DEF tank, and an electrical compartment for relays, solenoids, battery minder, and more.

Rounding the rear corner to face the Cummins engine compartment, the impressive rear cap opens to reveal one of the best organized rear engine installations in the business. All check points are at eye level, clearly labeled, and easy to reach. All of the drive belts are in accessible locations for easy replacement. Tiffin includes two extra belts with the coach.

Walking forward from the rear on the driver side, the first compartment contains Tiffin's well-designed utility bay. Every component system is labeled, easy to reach, and intuitively ready to use. The water hose has a power rewind; the black and grey drains have large diameters to make a dump quick and easy; you have both standard and tripod cable connections; the outside shower with towel and liquid soap dispenser take care of quick clean-ups; the tank flush, water pump, water filter, and a SeeLevel digital tank monitor complete the service center.

The next compartment houses the 50-amp service cord with a power retract reel, the power protection transfer switch, and easy access to Aqua-Hot's electronic controller and fluid supply. Doors three and four open to the large storage compartment where the tray slide-outs can deploy in either direction.

Doors five and six open to service compartments for the HWH hydraulic system for the leveling jacks, and eight sealed, service-free house batteries. The last compartment on the front corner of the coach contains a well-labeled fuse block, compressed air supply head, and the reservoir for windshield washer fluid. The slide out in the front cap moves the 12.5-kw generator in and out for servicing.

Now Let's Get Moving

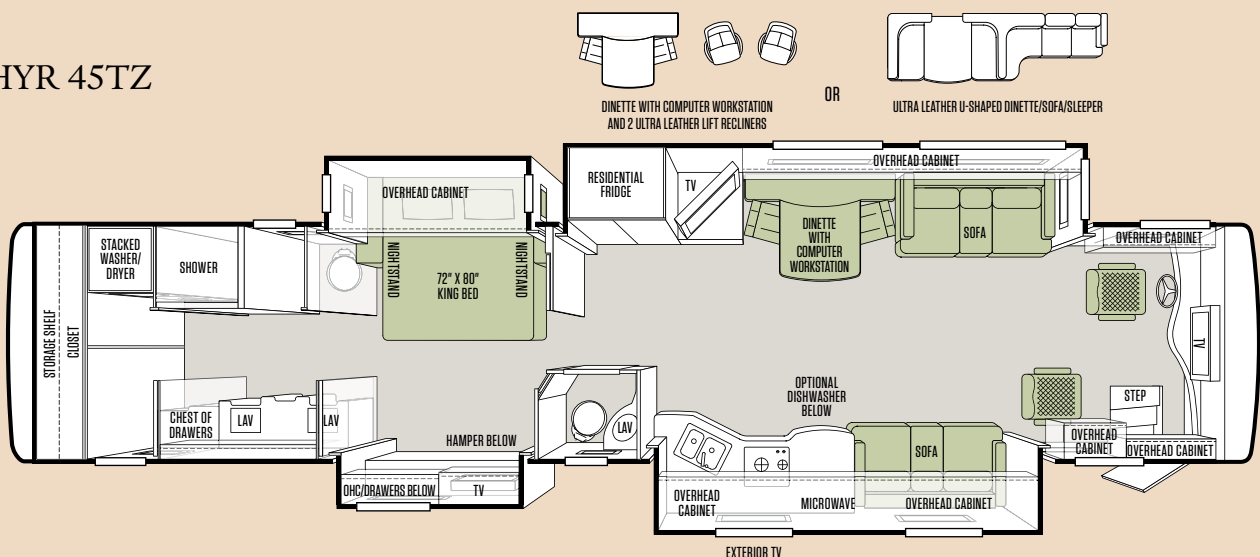
The Zephyr's power plant is the big Cummins ISX 11.9 liter 500-horsepower diesel that transmits its power to the drive wheels through Allison's 6-speed 4000 MH transmission. The engine delivers 1,645 lb.-ft. of torque at 1,200 RPM, and develops the 500-hp rating at 1,800 RPM.

The 11.9 liter engine moves the 25-ton coach convincingly whenever you press it into service. The architects for the Zephyr anticipated the owners of this top-of-the-line coach would need greater cargo carrying capacity and accommodated that demand with over 6,300 pounds.

For those who identify and enjoy the results of excellence in engineering, driving the Zephyr is an experience to which they look forward — never a chore. After a few hours of orientation, the controls in the cockpit become a synergistic extension of yourself. Each gauge and toggle is right where it should be, allowing you to make adjustments without taking your eyes off the road. For example, the engine brake has a hi-low toggle switch you will use often. Cruise and high-low beam controls are built into the left side of the steering wheel, while the windshield wiper controls are on the right side of the wheel.

The Zephyr was never meant to be a racehorse, but you will feel the coach surge forward whenever you need its power to negotiate multi-lane traffic or pass a slower vehicle. You should make each day's drive a relaxing experience. If you are on an Interstate, get in the right lane, set the cruise control below the speed limit, and get your favorite music playing. Many have found that the back roads are our best bet for discovering the real America. But wherever the road takes you, keep on roughing it smoothly. **RIS**

ZEPHYR 45TZ



SPECIFICATIONS: Model tested, 2014 Zephyr 45TZ with Quad Slide, Base MSRP* – \$562,800. MSRP as tested with options – \$577,325.

STANDARD FEATURES

Structural

Steel cockpit overhead support frame
Seamless one-piece gel-coat fiberglass molded roof cap
One-piece molded gel-coat fiberglass front & rear caps with integrated air intake
Gel-coat fiberglass outside wall panels
Steel-aluminum laminated side walls, floor, and roof
Laminated floor decking
Insulated roof ducts laminated into roof construction
Steel basement construction
Insulated firewall
Insulated steel cage engine cover

Automotive

500 hp @ 1,800 rpm Cummins ISX 11.9L engine
1,645 lb-ft torque @ 1,200 rpm
Heavy duty rear hitch with 15,000 lb. towing capacity
Allison 4000 MH transmission
Two-stage engine brake
HWH hydraulic leveling system
Automatic air leveling system
Six aluminum wheels plus two steel inner wheels
Independent front suspension
Full air brakes
VIP Smart Wheel with integrated radio switches
Fog lights

Exterior

One-piece fiberglass gel-coat front & rear fenders
Fiberglass gel-coat engine access door with swing-up hinges & shocks
One-piece aluminum face swing-out baggage doors with integrated power locks
Pass-through full basement storage
Slide-out storage tray (slides out on both sides)
12.5kw Onan generator with power slide system
One-piece fiberglass generator access door
Phone, 120v and 12v outlets inside the storage compartment
Auto generator start system
Eight house batteries
Three low-profile roof air conditioners with heat pumps
Aqua-Hot hydronic heating system
Two solar panels
Easy hook-up water compartment with built-in hose exits
Multi-port manifold system for hot & cold water lines
Fiberglass water service center panel and compartment
Water pump switches located at galley, lavatories, and water service compartment
In-motion low profile satellite system* (receiver not included)
One-piece panoramic windshield
Black tank flush system
Water filter system
Vented fresh water tank for potable water fill
Power water hose reel
SeeLevel tank monitor at dump station
Outside shower
Recessed LED docking lights
Air horn
Basement and outside compartment lights
Porch light
Lighted exterior grab handle
Deadbolt entrance door lock
Keyless entry system (includes exterior compartment doors)
Custom Zephyr mud flap
Carefree Paramount awning
Basement electric refrigerator
Flush mounted & painted-frame dual pane windows
Magnum 3000 watt sine wave inverter
Front cap protective coating
Insulated windows, flush mounted with painted frames
Rearview heated mirrors with integrated sideview cameras
TV antenna

Electric power cord reel
Exterior TV in slide-out wall

Cockpit

Contemporary wrap-around vinyl-covered dash
Backlit lettering for dash switches
Built-in driver & passenger consoles with control switches
Six-way power driver & passenger seats including passenger power footrest
Adjustable headrests on driver & passenger seats
Seatbelts integrated into driver & passenger seats
Solid surface step well with recessed lighting
TV in overhead cockpit area
Computer slide-out tray in dash with lock-out rails
Built-in storage drawers in dash
Smart Wheel™ with controls for ICC, cruise, windshield wipers, high/low beams, stereo & radio
USB dash receptacle
In-dash stereo/navigation system with Smart Wheel controls
Adjustable accelerator and brake pedals
Power steering
Driver & passenger overhead fans
Driver & passenger map lights
Power solar/privacy windshield shades
Power solar/privacy shades for driver & passenger side windows
Driver's insulated power window
Dual 12v outlets in DS dash area
Rearview mirror with integrated compass & outside temperature
Color rear vision monitor system with built-in cameras and mirrors
Sideview cameras activated by turn signals
Satellite radio (requires subscription)
Cellular phone antenna
In-dash AM-FM radio with CD
12v battery power disconnect
Fire extinguisher

Living Area / Dinette

Freestanding dinette with computer workstation on driver side
Decorative ceiling panel
Ultraleather™ Magic Bed – DS
Ultraleather™ Hide-A-Bed Sofa – PS
Home theater surround sound system with Blu-ray™ player
Powered solar/privacy shades (living room & cockpit only)
Decorative wall and dinette lighting package
Carbon monoxide detector
TV in front living area
TV in midsection entertainment center

Kitchen

Solid surface counter tops with splash guards
Stainless steel residential refrigerator with ice & water dispenser in door
Induction cooktop
Integrated solid surface galley sink with solid surface covers
Expand-an-island
Ceramic tile splash guards with decorative inlays
Stainless steel convection microwave with exterior venting
Power solar/privacy shades & hardwood valance
Ceiling flush-mounted multi-lighting system
Built-in soap dispenser

Bath

Two rectangular lavatory sinks with soap dispensers
Dual medicine cabinets with mirrors
Elongated ceramic toilet with electric flush
Towel holders & lavatory accessories package
Decorative pocket door with full-length mirror
Walk-in closet with 94-inch clothes rack across rear of coach
Laundry center (stacked washer/dryer) in rear walk-in closet
Large 3-drawer chest w/solid surface countertop in walk-in closet
Two windows with hardwood valances and privacy shades

Solid surface shower walls with inlaid decorative tiles & residential glass door
Skylight in shower with sliding cover & LED light
Ceiling flush-mounted multi-lighting system

Bedroom

Duvet package with pillows
TV with floating mount
DVD system & satellite receiver with DirecTV (requires subscription)
Dual control Sleep Number king mattress (72" x 80") with night stands
Large storage area beneath bed
Decorative hardwood & wrought iron ceiling molding
Ceiling fan
Solar/privacy shades
Vanity with built-in drawers
Safe located in walk-in closet
LP gas detector
Ceiling flush-mounted multi-lighting system

General Interior

Wall-mounted thermostats
12v attic fans with hardwood louvers & wall-mounted controls
Cable TV hook-up and phone jacks
Solid hardwood raised panel doors
Recessed doors & drawers
Self-closing ball bearing drawer slides (selected areas)
Heated tile floor
In-motion digital satellite system
Padded soft-touch vinyl ceiling
Power solar/privacy shades with wall-mounted controls (day & night)
Porcelain tile flooring throughout entire coach
Integrated speakers with hardwood louvers
3000 watt sine wave inverter
LED lights in ceiling
Ceiling flush mounted multi-lighting system
Wall-mounted switches for lights and accessories
Rope lights beneath bedroom vanity area & in window valances
50-amp electrical distribution
12v breaker panel
Ducted return air conditioning system
Energy management system
Air driven step well cover
Smoke alarm
GFI outlets in galley and lavatories
Lighted interior grab handle at entry door
Entertainment system with Blu-ray™ player
Complete cable wiring interfacing with surround sound & satellite receiver
Hydronic heating system with continuous hot water
Central vacuum cleaner system with VacPac™
SeeLevel interior tank monitor
All electric coach
Extraordinaire™ AC System
Herringbone pattern tile floor

OPTIONAL FEATURES ON THIS COACH

Sonata Interior (standalone)
Glazed Honey Natural Cherry cabinets
2nd Carefree Paramount awning
Dishwasher (drawer type)
2nd exterior slide tray
Exterior ground effect lighting
Previre for Winegard Trav'ler Satellite
Collision Avoidance System

OPTIONAL AVAILABLE FEATURES ON THE 45TZ

Cosmopolitan interior, fabrics by Ralph Lauren
Glazed Cordovan Wood cabinets
Glazed Cherry Wood cabinets
Glazed White Chocolate bathroom cabinets (std)
Cherry Wood cabinets (std)
Natural Cherry Wood cabinets (std)
Staggered brickwork pattern tile floor
Ultraleather U-shaped dinette
Ultraleather sofa booth dinette combination
Two lift recliners – DS

Memory foam king mattress (72" x 80")
LPG tank, includes 2-burner recessed cooktop (deletes all electric coach)
Combo washer/dryer

MEASUREMENTS

Wheelbase – 316" (292" from front axle to drive axle)
Overall length – 44' 11"
Overall height with roof air – 12' 10"
Interior height – 84"
Overall width – 101"
Interior width – 96"

WEIGHTS AND CAPACITIES

GVWR – 48,600 lb.
GAWR (front) – 16,600 lb.
GAWR (rear) – 20,000 lb.
TAG axle – 12,000 lb.
GCWR – 63,600 lb.
UVW – 40,200 lb.
CCC – 6,340 lb.

POWER TRAIN

Cummins – 500 hp ISX 11.9L engine with side radiator
Transmission – Allison MH 4000
Tire – 315/80R22.5
Alternator (amps) – 270

CHASSIS

Spartan K2
Anti-lock braking system
Suspension (front) – IFS w/air ride
Suspension (rear & tag) – Air ride
Leveling jacks – HWH hydraulic

CONSTRUCTION

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

ACCOMMODATIONS

Sleeps – Four adults
Fuel tank – 150 gal.
Fresh water – 90 gal.
Black water – 50 gal.
Grey water – 70 gal.

MSRP

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

UVW

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

DEALERS

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

PLEASE NOTE

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

*High-definition programming is not available on a domed satellite antenna unless you subscribe to DISH Network®.

They Traveled the Continent in Three Allegros

Clinton and Gladys have been sweethearts since they were 13. Born in Mississippi during the height of the Great Depression, Clinton with just a few dollars in his pocket headed for Houston immediately after finishing high school in 1952 to link up with his cousin and find a job as a welder's helper.

"I found a job," Clinton related as Carolyn and I visited with them in the living room of their home near Streetman, Texas. "And I went right back to Philadelphia, Mississippi, and got that girl and brought her to Texas," he smiled as he winked at Gladys, sitting across the room in her recliner. The couple recently celebrated their 61st wedding anniversary.

The shipyards and their related industries in Houston provided numerous jobs for welders. Clinton's résumé reflects an ascent through new challenges, experiences, and skill levels. After spending nine years with Union Tank & Supply and becoming a welding instructor, he logged several years with Belmas, a welding fabricator, before taking a position with Metal Arch Company.

"Metal Arch was an alloy fabricator," Clinton said. "It was a new field for me. With the many chemical plants in the Houston area, there was a big demand for alloy fabrication. But there was a down side to working in alloys," he continued. "I developed lung problems and left for health reasons.

"Belmas offered a position doing stainless overlays over steel," he explained, "and they sent me to the Studie Company in Whittier, California, where I learned the procedure for cladding. Cladding is the bonding together of dissimilar metals. It is different from fusioning or gluing as a method to fasten the metals together. Open arc welding came in and is still going strong today.

"The success of welding companies was somewhat volatile, with companies often selling out and merging," Clinton said. "Gladys and I had a talk about starting our own company and in 1977 we pulled the trigger and did it. Myers Welding Company was born. I quit my job, not knowing for sure if we could make it."

The Myers bought 1.5 acres and Clinton built the building himself to get the business started. "Gladys took care of the office. I developed a stainless steel overlay machine that brought in a lot of new work. I perfected the technique for cladding the



inside of large vessels, and that process became a speciality for our company.

"One job took me to St. Croix, the largest of the U.S. Virgin Islands," he smiled, "and we both enjoyed going there for that job."

Operating as Myers Welding Company, Clinton made profitable connections with the engineering companies that had large projects underway for Texaco, Exxon, Mobil, Marathon, Champion Paper, and Dow Chemical. "The engineering companies had deadlines to meet when they came to us with their special projects for the big corporations," Clinton noted. "The special applications they needed were usually focused on their delivery date and not price. Our shop now employed 26, and I still did a lot of the work myself."

"After we had been running the business for 20 years," Gladys

Text and photography by Fred Thompson

said, "Bo (her nickname for him) came off a job that was particularly difficult, and I just told him, 'I think it's time to retire.' He thought about it for a few minutes and agreed." They sold the company in 1998.

Along the way during his career, Clinton received requests for some interesting side projects. While the Apollo moon shots were underway, Myers Welding Company made the metal boxes that the astronauts used to gather rock specimens. Clinton also made the special steel frames that were used to mount the dinosaur bones in the Houston Museum of Natural Science.

During this fast-paced career, Gladys and Bo were also on another fast track of building their family. Dwight was born in 1955, Tim in 1959, and Teresa in 1962. They began camping when their children were quite young.

"We had two cab-over truck campers which we used for 10 years before we bought our first Allegro in 1978," Clinton said. "I made stainless steel gas tanks for that camper. Back then, the gas tanks were bad to rust."

"We put over 100,000 miles on our first Allegro," Gladys said. In 1991 the Myers bought their second Allegro. While they took many trips between 1991 and 1998, they capitalized on their

newfound freedom after selling their company, finally logging 142,000 miles on the 1991 coach.

"When the new fiberglass exteriors, slide-outs, and floor plans started coming out about 10 years ago, we were ready for an upgrade," Gladys said. "We bought the 2004 Allegro Bay 37DB with two slide-outs. In nine years we have logged 69,000 miles."

On their 20-acre homesite, Clinton constructed a metal building to garage the Allegro and included full hookups to allow the coach to be used as an apartment when friends and family are visiting. The building has plenty of extra room for his projects, including a welding system. To welcome their RVing friends, Clinton built four camping sites with water and electric hookups and one with full hookups.

"When we are getting ready for a trip, we just move into the Allegro one or two days early to get in the groove of things and make sure we haven't forgotten anything we will need," Gladys explained.

"Back in the eighties and nineties, we used the Allegro to go on hunting trips," Clinton said. "We put the jeep on a trailer and towed it to Colorado in October 1980 where we went elk and deer hunting." The evidence of their hunting successes

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are mounted on the living room walls of their home: an elk taken by Clinton and a deer that Gladys brought down.

The Myers have been to Alaska three times. “I hated to come back,” Gladys said. “The wildlife, scenery, and glaciers were so beautiful. If the kids had been with us, we just wouldn’t have come home. I also enjoyed our travels in Canada, especially British Columbia and the Yukon Territory. On our last return from Alaska, we went across British Columbia, Alberta, and Saskatchewan.”

“One of the most amazing things we saw in Alberta was the West Edmonton Mall,” Clinton said. “It has a lake with a submarine, beaches, and a golf course. It’s worth going out of your way for a visit.

“Most of our RVing has been done out West because we like the wide open spaces,” Clinton continued. “We have visited the Guadalupe Mountains in West Texas several times; it is one of our favorite destinations along with Van Horne, Texas.”

The couple’s five grandchildren and five great-grandchildren have kept them a little closer to home in recent years.

Dwight married Jeannine, and they have three married children: Jeanette, Sara, and Dwayne. Jeanette and her husband, Justin, have three children: Braxton, Preslee, and Payton.

Tim and Susan have one son, Cody, who is married to LeeAnne. They have two daughters: Kylie Rose and Lacey Cate.

Teresa married David Addison and they have a daughter, Lauren, who plans to attend the University of Mary Hardin-Baylor next year.

The Myers’ children were 13, 9, and 6 when they bought their first pickup truck camper. “Camping has played a major role in our family life,” Gladys noted. “After our children were grown, Bo and I spent 35 years traveling together in our three Allegros.”

“Our family, our careers, and RVing have given us a wonderful life,” Clinton concluded. **RIS**

Editor’s Note: As we were going to press with this issue, the Myers informed us that their son-in-law, David Addison, died suddenly from a pulmonary embolism on Dec. 5. We extend our sincere sympathy to all of the Myers family, and especially to Teresa and Lauren.



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Weight Loss, Fitness, and Good Health in

2014

by Sylvia Tarnuzzer

WITH THE ARRIVAL OF 2014, many of us are thinking about health and weight loss goals, and have begun our New Year's resolutions with the best of intentions. If you enter "weight loss" in a keyword tracker tool or in a search engine like Google, you will be amazed to see how many searches are being done per day on this subject alone. This shouldn't be surprising, because the average person has the desire to be healthy, admired, sought after, and popular. This might explain why we are so captivated with celebrities and perhaps why we at times blindly follow whatever current fad is trending in the quest to lose weight and be slimmer, sometimes at the cost of our own health.

There are many dietary fads that promise to aid you in losing weight, but when they are intelligently dissected, you wonder what ever made you think they were worth trying.

When we want to get healthy, we really should simply go back to nature. It's the easiest solution to today's very poor eating habits. A close observation of nature shows that no animal free of captivity is encumbered with excess weight, but instead they are usually very fit, agile and sharp. This is because, unlike man, all animals adhere to the simple laws of nature to maintain health. Those laws include eating the right foods and getting adequate exercise, plus getting sufficient rest and sunshine, and interacting with others.

Let's discuss the term naturopathy as a means to gain better health and well-being. Naturopathy is the term used to define alternative medicine based on the theory that diseases can be successfully treated or even prevented without the use of drugs by controlling one's diet and exercise. For weight loss, your best bet will be to embrace the three limbs of naturopathy: proper exercise, proper diet and positive thinking.

Proper Exercise: There was a time that I, like almost everyone, assumed that big, inflated muscles meant fitness and health. Perhaps size might depict strength to a degree, however, you

can ask anybody about one of the greatest martial artists of all time, Bruce Lee, a guy who was said to do a thousand push-ups and other outstanding feats of strength. Pictures of him show he was not a blown up mass of muscle as is the case with most fitness experts and bodybuilders using artificial supplements. This leads one to conclude that for proper exercise, basic aerobic exercises (such as walking, jogging, and dancing) and anaerobic exercises (such as push-ups, pull-ups, dips and weight lifting for bodybuilders) can be sufficient to build strength without the use of synthetic products.

For those who want an exercise for the mind as well as the body, Yoga definitely is unmatched. Yoga can easily be done while on the road by attending a class in the local community or purchasing a DVD to use with your TV. From my experience, if you were to begin doing Yoga moves and incorporate them with a proper and sensible diet, you would be well on your way to weight loss and increased strength and flexibility.

Some Indians perform a hundred plus rounds of Yoga on a daily basis and have immense fitness, strength, agility and virility. By adding some other poses such as forward bends (head to knee pose), backward bends, and balancing poses (arguably the best exercises to tone the arms and abdomen and restore a sense of balance), you are bound to see results. Many celebrities, including Sting, Madonna, Russell Simmons, Beyoncé and Prince practice some form of Yoga and they look fantastic! I could go on and on about abdominal exercises and breathing exercises of the Yoga genre, but the bottom line is: exercises that use the body's weight for resistance such as Yoga, Calisthenics and Pilates are arguably the best for the human body.

Have you ever seen a chimpanzee lifting rocks repeatedly? Yet that primate is easily eight times stronger than the average modern day human, evidence enough to make an observant person wonder how much healthier and fit we would be if we ad-

Editor's Note: Is it possible to stay healthy while traveling in a motorhome or RV? The answer is absolutely YES with some good advice from a fellow Tiffin owner Sylvia Tarnuzzer, founder of RVHealthy, Inc. Sylvia is a Certified Health Coach who understands our traveling lifestyle and offers great advice on her website, www.rvhealthy.com, as well as in her weekly episodes on RVNN.TV.

hered as closely as possible to nature's laws of diet and exercise.

Proper Diet: When traveling in our motorhomes we tend to eat out a lot. Have you noticed how many people still pack in their cars and go out to eat when parked at a campground? Consider the following: "You are what you eat" (anonymous) or "Let your foods be your medicine and your medicine your food" (Hippocrates, the father of medicine) or "Every herb bearing seed and every tree bearing fruit with seed in it shall be yours for food" (Gen 1:29). From these radical quotes, it should be plain to see that most modern-day meals are totally against nature's intent for us as humans. It is safe to say that if you want to lose weight, re-read these three quotes and the proper diet will stare you right in the face – Eat more Fruits and Vegetables. Take this from someone who used the plant-based diet for a month while camping and enjoying the outdoors.


The good news is there are several books on the subject of diets, but just know the best one for you is the one you will commit to. I have experimented with many kinds of diets and have been on the clean-eating diet for many years. Just eat real food without processed ingredients or anything from a box!

Positive Thinking: What you constantly think about over and over will influence what eventually comes to pass. The mind has powers that are beyond human comprehension at times. According to the author of *The Power of Positive Thinking*, Dr. Norman Vincent Peale, "You are what you are now based on your thoughts five years ago and will be in five years what you

constantly think of yourself now." Although one's thoughts are very important, without taking the steps to act on them (when they are constructive and positive) they do end up being a waste. Your reading this article indicates a desire to improve yourself whether through weight loss or any other factor.

As with any journey in life, you will have times when you may want to give up, lose faith or focus, and consequently get off the path to success. Well, my friend, you will have to literally tune your thinking to be positive to overcome your doubts and fears as you go about accomplishing your goals. Positive thinking will make all your efforts to achieve health and weight loss goals more successful.

In conclusion, forget the fads and hypes. For a healing program to be successful at anything, especially weight loss, it must include the three limbs of health: diet, exercise and positive thinking. It is my hope that this article will help you choose the best methods of attaining not only weight loss, but also fitness and health on the inside and out. Those who travel extensively or live on the road in their motorhomes are usually retired and having fun in their later years, but do they have the stamina to keep up with this lifestyle? Good nutrition, good health and a positive thought process will extend the time we are able to keep traveling and enjoying life on the road.

So for your New Year's resolutions and goals, give up the fad diets and keep in mind the three pillars of naturopathy – proper exercise, proper diet and positive thinking! 

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A Tiffin Dealership in Paradise

“We live in a hunting and fishing paradise,” Chad Brazzel began, “and most of our customers focus on that type of recreation. However, a lot of people follow the NASCAR circuit, plus drag and motorcycle racing, too. And, of course, we have many motorhome owners who follow the 14-week college football season in their coaches. Bossier City, right here in northwest Louisiana, is an amazing market for motorhomes, towables, and marine products.”

Chad’s grandfather, Melvin Brazzel, saw the potential for marketing recreational products and began stocking a few RV

With the business philosophy of having an owner in each of their three stores, Chad, Larry, and Cody see very little of each other during the business day.



towables on his sales lot where he operated a used car dealership and gas station in the late 1960s. The RV side of the business showed more potential and Brazzel turned his attention toward building an RV dealership for sales and service. In 1973 he became a dealer for Tiffin Motorhomes, just months after TMH was launched by Bob Tiffin.

Melvin’s son, Larry, still in his teenage years, was fascinated with his dad’s business and joined the company as a regular employee even before he finished high school. The business grew over the next three decades, during which time Larry and his wife had two sons, Chad and Cody.

In 2002 Melvin passed away and Larry reorganized the company and transformed it into Bayou Outdoor Supercenter. The company operates out of three locations in Bossier City. The RV sales facility and parts store are located at 1800 Barksdale Boulevard, and the service center, a short distance away, is located at 1025 Central Park. The company’s marine division, featuring entry level to high tech fishing craft and ski boats, is located at 4306 Texas Street. The location includes a large indoor sales showroom, plus the parts and service departments. The RV sales facility on Barksdale is on the north side of I-20 at the Benton Rd. exit, and the service center is at the same exit on the south side of I-20. The marine division on Texas Street is near the Industrial exit.

Chad, 35, operates the RV and marine locations, plus the

Text and photography by Fred Thompson

day-to-day business operation. Paul Sutton serves as the sales manager for the Bayou Outdoor Supercenter RV Division. The RV sales operation has grown and now has six sales associates.

“In the Class A market, we sell Tiffin motorhomes exclusively,” Paul noted. “We will sell 30 to 40 Tiffin coaches this year. The Phaeton is our top seller, followed by the Allegro RED, the Allegro (gas), the Allegro Bus, and the Breeze. We specialize in taking care of our Tiffin customers.”

The company has three technicians who are solely in charge of doing pre-delivery inspections (PDI). “Because our PDI techs are thoroughly familiar with Tiffin’s products, we have them train our sales associates,” Paul explained. “We have five men and a woman on our sales team. That’s very important because many women make the buying decision based on what they really like about the interiors. And women like to talk with women.

“We are very fortunate to have Mark Lane as our manufacturer’s representative,” Chad continued. “Mark comes over any time we need him, and he really keeps us abreast of the new features and floorplans that Tiffin is bringing out. Mark also does the homework about our competition and that really helps our sales associates compare other brands to Tiffin’s products. It

helps tremendously to know what you are selling against. We even get charts and graphs to plot the comparisons. Tiffin’s brands really measure up.”

Paul does in-house training every week on product knowledge. The sales associates also do walk-throughs and training with the PDI techs, similar to the training sessions the techs do with the owners. “Our sales people enjoy training and enjoy learning. They like to challenge each other on their product knowledge,” Paul said.

“We used to worry about sales competition in our own backyard,” Paul said. “But now, because of the internet, California and New York are our backyard. But we deal with that successfully in a 100- to 150-mile radius because our service department is so good. Larry learned the service part of the business from his father, and that is a big reason why we have such loyal customers.

“We like to keep 12 Tiffin units on the lot,” Paul noted. “Many Tiffin owners who are on their second and third units are downsizing to 33- and 36-foot diesels. We think that is a trend. Tiffin’s coaches are so comfortable and easy to operate that they expand our market to a wider clientele. You hear



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Above standing: Chad Brazzel, with Bayou’s sales staff, Tanya Morris, Dan Morton, Billy Davidson, Steve Singleton, Derek James. *Kneeling:* Billy Flowers, Quenten Smith. *Below, standing:* Cody Brazzel, with Bayou’s service staff, James Roge, Mark Devers, Stoney Brewer, Robb Elington, PeeWee Warner, Curtis Struggs, Keisha Singleton, Josh Simms, Laura Ryan. *Kneeling:* Jody Williams, Greg Duckentill, Steve Chestney, Mike Locke.

ladies say, ‘I didn’t think I could do this,’ when you persuade them to try driving a shorter coach. It is really fun to see them develop their confidence and then notice the satisfaction that follows.

“The philosophy for owner training at Bayou Outdoor Supercenter is ‘it takes as long as it takes.’ Usually a half day of training will get new owners launched and ready for an overnight run,” Paul said.

“We encourage our out-of-town customers to stay for a night or two in a local campground to get fully acclimated to their new coach,” he continued. “The new owner is assigned a technician and given his cell phone number. If they forget some of their recent training, they can call for a refresher. When they leave to try their new wings on the road, they take that security blanket phone number with them. Our techs develop a personal relationship with each new owner when they do the PDI. When they come back for service in the future, they will be greeted by the same technician. The synergy we create builds long-term relationships with our owners.”

Driver training is a separate operation. “We train our new owners on a 4-lane



Sales manager Paul Sutton meets with Steve Singleton to review the features of a new Phaeton.

parkway that is not heavily traveled,” Paul explained. “Then we take them to a large venue coliseum lot and practice tight turns, backing, and parking. We also train our owners on towing, installation of the towing equipment, and doing the hook-ups. We want to make sure everything is marrying up perfectly,” he said.

Cody Brazzel, 33, oversees the Supercenter’s service department. As often happens with most third generation owners, he began working in the company during his summer breaks from high school. Cody followed that career path and began working full time at Bayou when he finished high school. He has been the service manager for 11 years.

“We have seven technicians plus two who are RVIA certified,” he began. “We also have six technicians in our body shop. When our service writers process and enter jobs, they follow the customer



and the coach all the way through until the job is completed. Then we do a quality control check on our in-house work by sending follow-up emails and postcards that request responses.”

Bayou operates two full-lift systems that will handle all of Tiffin’s coaches. The company has 15 service bays. The body shop does full exterior repair and paint, including fiberglass walls, doors, caps, and

roof. They also replace rubber roofs. Bayou is one of a few Tiffin dealers who can replace the metal siding on older Allegros.

The service operation handles repairs to slide-out deployment equipment, and removes slide-outs to replace the floors in the slide-out box. Ceramic tile installation and replacement is offered as long as the tile is not under a slide-out. Carpet replacement in the slide-outs and in the

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Happy Bayou Outdoor Customers



Charlotte and Harold Wingfield are enjoying their new Allegro Bus 45LP.

primary floors on older motorhomes are routine jobs.

The service operation replaces windshields and windows that are fogged or have faulty hardware. “Tiffin is very good in taking care of warranty replacements for their windows,” Cody noted. “For that matter, as a manufacturer they handle and process warranty replacements better than any other company we do business with. Getting parts from Tiffin is a process that is handled well. We send a picture by email of the part we need as we discuss the order live with a person in the parts department, and we nearly always get the order right the first time.”

Several years ago Bayou bought a Workhorse chassis dealership and was able to bring over two certified technicians in the transaction. They also acquired a large parts inventory and manuals in the deal. However, repairs to brakes, wiring, and engines are sent to a Workhorse warranty and general repair operation in Longview, Texas, about an hour’s drive from Bossier City. Bayou’s service center is authorized to perform warranty work on Spartan and PowerGlide chassis. They are an authorized Onan repair shop. The service department handles routine service on both Cummins and Caterpillar engines.

Bayou’s cabinet shop handles all types of repairs, including rebuilding and restaining cabinets. They often remove couches and replace with desks designed by the customer. One of the most popular requests today is the replacement of gas-electric refrigerators with residential refrigerators. If there is room in the basement, Bayou will add additional batteries and put in a

larger inverter, including the programming for managing the new residential refrigerator.

Bayou can handle repairs to Tiffin’s entertainment system, including the replacement of HDMI cables and splitters. They have made several repairs to entertainment systems that were built in 2012 and earlier. One of the company’s technicians is qualified to work on the programmable solar/privacy shades that are used on the Allegro Buses and Zephyrs.

To make sure their customers receive good service while they are traveling, Bayou joined the Route 66 RV Network. It is a cooperative of 150 dealer-based service centers across the U.S. who have each pledged to treat an owner as one of their own customers if they purchased an RV from any network dealer. When a Bayou owner calls with a problem, Bayou’s service finds the nearest Route 66 RV Network dealer to take care of them, scheduling them promptly and charging fairly to take care of his problem.

Chad and Cody Brazzel are focusing on quality growth. Larry’s forte is service and he continues to advise and assure its expansion and improvement.

“We are not looking to expand into new locations,” Chad explained. “Our goal is to take care of our customers better this year than we did last year, and to continue improving our service operation every year we are in business. When we do that, we are confident that our sales will grow, too. Right now 75

Continued on page 64



Charlotte and Harold Wingfield have been loyal customers at Bayou Outdoor Supercenter for more than 10 years. "Steve is on my speed dial and he always knows how to take care of us," Charlotte said.

"Last Spring, Charlotte got the latest issue of the Tiffin magazine that had the Allegro Bus 45LP on the front cover," Harold laughed. "She called Steve as soon as she read the story and saw the pictures to see if Bayou had one on their lot. They had just gotten one in the day before. Charlotte practically tore the door off the house getting to Bayou before someone else could buy it. We have taken several trips already and really enjoyed it. I build drag racers and have worked with race cars and engines most of my life. This PowerGlide chassis and Cummins engine are really put together right."

"I just love the floor plan with the bath and a half, plus the walk-in closet at the rear of the coach," Charlotte continued. "When we go to the races, we have to do without hookups most of the time. We entertain quite a bit while we are there and this coach is really big enough to do that."

"This is really the perfect coach for what we do, and we are looking forward to taking some nice trips in it, too," Harold said.

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Interviews from Maine and Prince Edward Island



Hank & Shirleen Smith

Hometown: San Antonio, Texas
Interviewed in Houlton, Maine

- Hank & Shirleen own a 2009 Phaeton 40QTH with a Cummins 360 on a Freightliner Chassis.
- They've been married 33 years.
- They have 2 daughters & 2 granddaughters: Deborah & Tracey each have a daughter and they all live in San Antonio, Texas.
- Hank & Shirleen have owned 4 RVs; purchased this Tiffin coach in 2011; and they traveled 9,000 miles in the first 10 months.
- Hank drives 95% of the time - Shirleen 5%.
- They travel approximately 5 months each year.
- Thus far they've traveled in 20 states with this coach and prefer driving 200 miles per day.
- Their love of travel was the motivation to start RVing in 1981 and they've explored 48 states.
- Favorite states: Oregon, Washington & CA.
- His bucket list: to visit all 53 National Parks & they've been to 30 thus far; her bucket list: National Historic Sites / National Monuments.
- They've just returned from New Brunswick, Prince Edward Island & Nova Scotia.
- Hank is V.P. of the Texas Bluebonnet Allegro Club - formed in San Antonio in May 2012.
- Hank & Shirleen both had a 30 year career in telecommunications; a 2nd career of 15 years in real estate; & both retired in 2007.
- Hank's hobbies are: photography, traveling, reading, fishing and he's a handyman.
- Shirleen's hobbies include: photography, traveling and reading.



Wally & Greta Farrah

Hometown: Sussex, New Brunswick, Canada
Interview: Brackley Beach, Prince Edward Island

- Wally & Greta own a 2006 Phaeton 40QSH with a Caterpillar 350 on a Freightliner Chassis.
- They have been married 45 years.
- Their daughter: Tanya has 2 children & lives in Midland, New Brunswick; Sons: Sean lives in Austin, TX & has 1 child; Michael lives in Moncton, New Brunswick & has 2 children.
- Wally & Greta purchased this coach, their 1st, 3 months ago & have traveled through Maine, New Hampshire and 3 Provinces of Canada.
- Wally prefers driving 300 mi. each day; drives 100% of the time; has driven this coach 3,000+ miles; & they plan to travel 3 months annually.
- They've camped with 4 of their 5 grandchildren.
- Wally's enjoyment is exploring new places & being out in the open. Greta likes waterfront camping and having a small home to clean!
- Friends came to their P.E.I. waterfront site for a campground sponsored bluegrass festival.
- Favorite places: Lunenburg and Mahone Bay on the southern coast of Nova Scotia.
- Their bucket list: Newfoundland; 3 Atlantic Provinces; Northern Ontario; Florida & Texas.
- Wally had a 38 yr. career as a mining engineer and has been enjoying retirement since 2006.
- His hobbies: golf and surfing the internet.
- Greta had a 35 year career as an RN - first in a hospital and later in a nursing home.
- Her hobbies include golf, reading, gardening and helping others!



Jim & Eloise Duff

Hometown: Loxley, Alabama
Interviewed in Houlton, Maine

- Jim & Eloise own a 2007 Phaeton 40QDH with a Caterpillar 350 on a Freightliner Chassis.
- Jim served in the U.S. Army from 1971-1974.
- Jim & Eloise have been married 20 years.
- Their blended family: Daughter: Kylie has 2 children & lives in St. Johns, FL. Sons: Eric lives in Fort Worth, TX; Ryan lives in Loxley, AL; Adam has 2 children & lives in Loxley, AL; and Jon lives in Colorado Springs, CO.
- Their tiny toy poodle 'Too' travels with them.
- Jim & Eloise have owned 3 RVs since 2005 and travel 6 months annually.
- Jim's favorite areas: Lake Mead - Las Vegas; P.E.I. & Little Pigeon River - Sevierville, TN.
- Eloise likes Destin FL; P.E.I. & Northern CA.
- Their bucket list includes: Yellowstone Nat'l Park; Montana; Key West, FL; & the Dakotas.
- They've driven 57,000+ miles in this coach; traveled in 40 states and camped in 30.
- Jim, Eloise & friends meet in Auburn, AL for Auburn home games & go to the bowl games.
- Jim had a 30 year law enforcement career in military police, local police, border patrol, ATF & was a U.S. Customs Agent for 18 yrs.
- His hobbies include: Sports and RVing.
- Eloise retired in 2006 after a 31 yr career: 1st with a police dept., later from clerk to an IRS agent & lastly with the U.S. Customs Service.
- Her hobbies: antiquing & is a 20 yr. member of the Fairhope, Alabama Mardi Gras Society.

Editor's Note: Elaine and Mike Austin retired in 2007 at the urging of their children who wanted them to realize their dream: buy a luxury motorhome, go full time, and spend several years just enjoying themselves and seeing the country. After a career turning around failing steel companies, Mike connected with the University of South Alabama as a guest lecturer in their Business Institute. Elaine discovered a whole new career in real estate. In March 2008, they bailed out, bought a new Allegro Bus, and "hit the road." In 2011 they traded for a new Phaeton 40QBH.

Jeff Shook

HIS BROAD EXPERIENCE AT TMH IS FOCUSED IN R&D

Many of the managers and engineers at Tiffin Motorhomes grew up in towns and cities within 100 miles of Red Bay. That radius has generated a wealth of talent whose leadership, ingenuity, and skill continue to produce the best Class A motorhomes in the country. Jeff Shook is one of those engineers.



Born just 40 miles away in Tupelo, Mississippi, Jeff grew up in Golden and Belmont, within jogging distance just across the state line from Red Bay. After he finished high school in Belmont in 1988, he studied for two years in the engineering program at Northeast Mississippi Community College in Booneville.

In 1990 Jeff took a position in the cabinet shop at Sunshine Mobile Homes and advanced to the “lead man” position in a very short time. When Belmont Homes expanded operations in 1992, he applied for a position with the company and within six months became the cabinet shop supervisor in one of their new manufacturing plants.

His on-the-job experience in shop work and supervision led to an opportunity in cabinet production at Tiffin Motorhomes in 1999. A step back to a shop job in the staining department eventually led to a much better position. By this time Jeff was married to Sherry,

and the couple had a little boy named Luke, who was born in 1996.

A transfer to the solid surface countertop department for two years broadened his experience with new materials. When Tiffin began to use CNC routers, Jeff was offered a chance to use the new CAD/CAM technology. “The software was not that difficult to learn and I began producing two-dimensional profiles of the products we were building,” he said.

In 2002 Jeff moved on to the sidewall engineering department. “The manufacturing prints were a lot simpler then. By 2004 we were doing sidewalls on the CAD/CAM routers,” Jeff continued. “Darrell Dancy was our director of engineering at that time.”

Jeff was promoted to senior design engineer and assigned the responsibility of integrating all of the 3-D CAD/CAM models from the design work of the chassis department, the wall and roof departments, and the cabinet shop. “I brought

together the three-dimensional models from the designers in all of those departments and put them into a composite model, with the purpose of checking for clearances and conflicts,” Jeff explained. “Then I added the 3-D design models for the front and rear caps and married them up with the 3-D modules for sidewall and roof designs.”

As the available technology developed, it became possible to take the CAD files for the 3-D models and convert the data to drive the company’s new CNC routers that had been brought online to make the walls.

“From 2004 to 2006, I worked with Steven Coon, Nathan Hill, and Brent Conwell to transfer the CAD data for the sidewalls to the CNC routers to gain greater accuracy in manufacturing the parts,” Jeff said. “We also integrated the channels in the styrofoam insulation to accommodate the wiring harnesses. That experience made it easier for us to create



Jeff consults with Dee Bohannon on a change to the sub-floor for a Phaeton motorhome.

the channels in the roof structure, which was our next project.

“Earlier a steel structure was used to form the arch in the roof,” Jeff continued. “With our 3-D CAD technology we designed a molded foam core roof block which formed a slight arch for good water run-off, provided better insulation, and strengthened the now flat steel supporting structure for the roof with a lam-

inate topped with fiberglass. I designed the first one-piece fiberglass top for the model years 2005 to 2007.”

In 2006 Jeff was tapped for the job of senior product engineer for the front-engine Allegro and Allegro Bay motorhomes under new engineering manager Brad Witt. Jeff’s job included designing and integrating the new floorplan designs, continuous improvement projects

for existing models, and creating the design progress timelines for the front-engine design group. “I saw the motorhomes through to completion,” he said. “The 34TGA was one of our best. I also had the distinction of designing the only prototype that never made it to the production line,” he smiled.

“In 2008 the big layoff came and we lost about half of our engineers,” Jeff said. “It was a difficult time. I briefly was promoted to senior design engineer for all of our models, a position that was brought on by the reduction and consolidation of the department. As we continued to downsize the department, I went into the chassis design for the Allegro Bay. When that brand was phased out, I focused most of my work on the design of the pass-through storage compartments in the Allegro, a feature that has been very popular with our owners.”

In late 2008, Jeff moved into chassis design to create the basement structures for all of the brands except those using the PowerGlide (the chassis for the Breeze and the Allegro Bus). “After the floorplan is designed, one of the first things we do is design the sub-floor structures,” Jeff noted. “All of the welding design is created in my plans.”

Recently, Jeff’s position led to a new assignment. With his office now located in the R&D department, his skills are focused on creating the design work for the initial sub-floor in Auto-Cad and then moving the files into AutoDesk Inventor. “By entering the physical properties of the materials being used and the correct geometry of each piece, we can do stress analysis and weight evaluation before we actually build the prototype sub-floor and put it on the chassis,” Jeff explained. “There are so many parts to consider including cross members, down tubes, doorjamb metal, the location of the door with its hinge line-up, and the integra-



Jeff, Sherry, Luke, and Abby celebrated Christmas at their home in Belmont.

tion of the sub-floor with the cap design.

“The Inventor software technology reduces our costs in planning, design, material selection, and construction. We are finding ways to reduce weight, improve structural integrity and safety, lower costs, and increase cargo carrying capacity. Problem analysis is one thing that really makes my job interesting. I like to contribute to improve our motorhomes,” Jeff said.

“The toughest part of any sub-floor plan is routing of the plumbing and electrical systems efficiently. Then comes the placement of the hydraulic lines and the fuel delivery system,” he said. “RVIA has strict standards that apply to the entire sub-floor design. There are safety codes for the location of the liquid propane lines; the distance of the fuel fill location from the exhaust of the generator and the engine; the prescribed distance from the exhaust to window openings; the protection of LP gas lines; the electric harness shielding and protection — and the list goes on.”

Jeff Shook has an interesting set of problems to solve each day he comes to work. To make his life more interesting, he has decided to go back to school to work on his B.S. degree. “When I was working on my A.A. degree, my 20-year-old urgency to get out and be on my own led me to believe that I could get along just fine without the degree. Now my 43-year-old reasoning, and perhaps a little pride, tells me that I should finish and get those two degrees,” Jeff confided.

In the spring semester this year, he will be taking 20 hours to finish his A.A. degree in engineering. This fall he plans to enroll in a special bachelor’s degree program at Union University designed for those who have full-time jobs. All of the classes meet for four and a half hours on Saturday. The group that enrolls will stay together for the entire two-year program. Jeff’s degree will be in Organizational Leadership with a concentration in Project Management.

“I am really looking forward to fulfilling my educational goals,” Jeff said. “I believe the coursework and the interactive sessions between the members of my group will significantly improve my abil-

ity to make a contribution at Tiffin.”

Jeff’s family is excited about his goals, too, although it may limit the time they usually spend together on weekends. Jeff and Sherry were married in July 1994. Luke is now a senior at Belmont High School. He plays saxophone and more importantly, Luke is the band’s drum major. He is hoping that will lead to a scholarship when he attends college next fall. Abby, 12, plays flute in the middle school

band and loves art. In addition to being mom and wife, Sherry keeps a very active schedule with her position at Golden Manufacturing, a company that makes uniforms for the military, including the Navy, Marines, and Army.

Whenever possible in their busy schedule, the family enjoys attending musical performances, visiting the area’s state parks, and taking summer vacations to destinations like Disney World. **RIS**



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Key West

WHEN THE COLD GETS IN YOUR BONES, KEEP DRIVING. . . .



Text and photography by Fred Thompson



Crowds gather at Mallory Square each evening to wait for another beautiful sunset. As the sun dips into the ocean, enthusiastic applause follows, surprising uninitiated visitors. An hour prior to sunset, tourists are entertained by buskers who hope onlookers will favor them appreciatively with folding money. This entertainer deftly juggled a torch, a hatchet, and a Bowie knife while riding a unicycle.

W

EATHER RECORDS SHOW the lowest recorded temperature in Key West, Florida, is 41°F. And that has only happened twice in the last 150 years. So it is no wonder that folks who can't get warm in the winter months just keep on driving south until they run out of asphalt. The average high in the winter months is mid- to high-70s and the average low is mid- to high-60s. The chamber of commerce doesn't advertise that the sun will shine nearly every day — it just does and everyone depends on it. The trade winds and the fact that Key West is only 77 miles north of the Tropic of Cancer account for the warm winter temperatures. Like most tropical climates, there is only a small difference in the monthly mean temperature between the coolest month, January, and the warmest month, July. While we were there in late November, folks were jogging along Roosevelt Boulevard in shorts, sunbathing by the pool, and taking evening dips at 9 p.m. and later.

The growing season in this sub-tropical climate is “always.” The primary

Conveyance Choices to See Key West Sites

1. Your Legs. The Pelican Path Self-Guided Tour of Key West is a walking tour with 51 stops that presents the history of the island. Download the tour at <http://oirf.org/page.php?p=pelican> You can easily spend a full day following the tour, especially if you stop long enough to visit some of the houses and buildings. This story will highlight a few of those stops.

2. Lloyd's Tropical Bike Tour. Over 40 years ago, Lloyd Mager visited his brother in Key West and was enthralled by the sub-tropical island. He went back home to New Jersey, packed up his belongings, and moved. He sold his car and has not owned one since. "I'm here to show visitors the real Key West," Lloyd says with feeling. "You don't have to have a lot of money to have a lot of fun." With his machete, he pops open coconuts, slices a mango, or spears a papaya. "These are fruits



PHOTO COURTESY OF LLOYD MAGER

that folks in the 'Upper 48' never get a chance to pick and sample right where they grow," he says.

A reviewer for *The New York Times* said, "The stop at Nancy Forrester's Secret Garden, a stunning little rain forest . . . , is worth the cost alone." The tour is \$35 (bicycle included) and lasts for two hours. Each tour is limited to 15 bikers, so call ahead for reservations: 305-294-1882. Bikers should meet at Moped Hospital, corner of Simonton and Truman, 15 minutes before your reservation time. www.lloydstropicalbiketour.com

3. Old Town Trolley Tours. Many visitors recommend the trolley tour as the first thing a newcomer should do in Key West. Online rates at www.trolleytours.com start at \$27.41 for a 2-hour tour. You can "hop on/hop off" the second day for free just to get around town and continue seeing the sights. Other tours of up to 4 hours, and package tours that include the admission fees to attractions, are priced accordingly.



PHOTO COURTESY OF OLD TOWN TROLLEYS

colors are green and blue—we are talking about vegetation and ocean. And everywhere you look, flowers are blooming.

Geographically, Key West is the last island in a 130-mile chain that begins at the tip of the Florida peninsula just south of Miami. The islands offer very limited sandy beaches since they sit on coral reefs in relatively shallow water. Due to the Spanish influence, the word "Cayo" was used to describe each named island, thus, Cayo Hueso (Key West). Today the islands are generally referred to as the Florida Keys.

Those who are planning to park their rigs for the winter months in Key West, or one of the nearby keys, usually make their paid reservations months, or even a year, in advance. But don't be discouraged, there are still nice spots available. We recommend Bluewater Key RV Resort at milepost 14.5 just north of Key West on U.S. 1 and Boyd's Key West Campground at 6401 Maloney Avenue.

One of the neatest things about Key West is the popularity of bicycles. You probably can peddle anywhere on the island in 20 minutes. Automobile parking spaces come at premium prices. The city has credit card kiosks in almost every block to sell hourly permits that you must display on

your dash. If you ride your bike after dark, by law you must have a headlight and a flashing red tail light. If you don't have lights on your bicycle, there are several shops in town that can provide the required lights. So bring your bikes!

Key West has an interesting history. Some have called it the "Gibraltar of the West." Of course, there are no imposing bluffs here like the Gibraltar overlooking the entrance into the Mediterranean from the Atlantic. But its strategic location for keeping watch over the 90-mile-wide shipping lane connecting the Gulf of Mexico with the Atlantic Ocean have made Key West an important port militarily, politically, and financially.

When the Spanish were plundering the riches of Mexico and Peru, and hauling silver and gold back to Spain, pirates used the keys to hide and plan attacks. Whenever possible, the Spanish galleons used the keys as shelters from hurricanes and lesser storms.

The Spanish governor of Cuba in 1815 deeded the island of Key West to a Spanish naval officer by the name of Salas, just four years before Spain ceded Florida to the U.S. Aware of what was happening politically, Salas sold Key West twice: once to Gen. John Geddes, a former governor

Outdoor Activities in Key West

The year-round moderate temperatures make enjoying the outdoors a not-to-be-missed part of the Key West experience. Many options are available to assist the visitor's up-close and personal encounter with nature's display of tropical plants and animals. The following activities present some of the possibilities that will make a visit to Key West an unforgettable adventure.

Kayaking: Explore the unspoiled wilderness of mangrove islands, tidal creeks, and "flats" where you can see the area's unique marine life, birds, plants, wildlife, and geologic and natural history. *Lazy Dog Kayak Guides* is located at the Hurricane Hole Marina (MM 4) on U.S. 1. Lazy Dog is open daily, and offers complimentary pickups. For information on tour



PHOTO COURTESY OF LAZY DOG

times and fees, visit www.lazydog.com, or call 305-295-9898. *Blue Planet Kayak* meets at the Fort East Martello Museum and Gardens in front of the Key West Airport, but also offers free pickup service to customers. Call 800-979-3370 or visit www.blueplanetkayak.com for information and reservations.

Snorkeling: A very popular activity among visitors to Key West, snorkeling provides an intimate encounter with the marine life wonders that inhabit the pristine coral reefs just off the coast. Tropical species that are found no place else on earth can be seen here. To plan an unforgettable underwater adventure, visit www.furywest.com, or call 305-294-8899. *Fury Water Adventures* also offers jet skiing, parasailing, and a glass bottom boat tour.

Golf: The Florida Key's stately palms, dense mangroves,



of South Carolina, and later to John W. Simonton, a U.S. businessman. After his friend, John Whitehead, called his attention to the Key's strategic location, Simonton won the struggle to gain a clear title to the island.

Simonton sold three-fourths of the island as three undivided quarters. Tracing the names of the buyers, and their subsequent sales, it is easy to see how the streets of Key West were named. John Mountain and U.S. Consul John Warner purchased a quarter and resold it to Pardon C. Greene, who became a permanent resident. John Whitehead bought a quarter. And John W. C. Fleming bought the last quarter Simonton offered for sale.

John Simonton wintered in Key West, but spent his summers in Washington where he lobbied for federal assistance to develop the island and establish a naval base. He wanted the U.S. to take advantage of the island's strategic location and to bring law and order to the town.

Pardon C. Greene became prominent politically and financially. He established the firm of P. C. Greene and Company, and later served on the city council and as mayor. Whitehead lived in Key West for eight years and was briefly a partner in Greene's company.

Born in England, Fleming had a mercantile business in Mobile and spent only a few months on Key West in 1822. He returned 10 years later to develop salt manufacturing, but died unexpectedly the following year.

During Whitehead's eight-year tenure, he was the chief editorial writer for the town's newspaper, *The Enquirer*. He preserved copies of his newspaper and the *Key West Gazette*, its predecessor, providing a valuable insight to life in Key West from 1820 to 1840.

When you walk the streets of Key West and see the names of Simonton, Greene, Whitehead, and Fleming (now Fleming), you will witness the recognition of these men as the "founding fathers."

While the Florida peninsula technically became a U.S. territory in 1819, the federal control of the Florida Keys was not clearly defined. In March 1822, Lt. Commander Matthew C. Perry sailed the *Shark* to Key West and planted the U.S. flag, claiming all of the keys as U.S. property. No other countries ever protested the claim. Later that year Commodore David Porter took charge of Key West and, with an anti-pirate squadron, put a stop to acts of piracy in the keys and the Straits of Florida.

serene lakes, and clean, clear tradewinds offer a dramatic backdrop for challenging your golfing skills. The *Key West Golf Club*, 6450 East College Road, offers PGA professional instruction and rental clubs, a Pro golf shop, and dining. For further information, visit www.keywestgolf.com or call 305-294-5232.

Fishing: Because of the variety of fish and fishing areas, something is always biting! Sailfish, Marlin, Wahoo, Tuna, Dolphin, and Barracuda are just a few of the fish available off the coast of Key West. Coast Guard approved and inspected, the Charter Boat *LINDA D* offers full-day or half-day charters. The *LINDA D* is located on Charter Boat Row at the Key West City Marina. Call 305-296-9798 or visit www.charterboatlindad.com for more information, or email captbill@charterboatlindad.com.

Beaches: Because the keys are primarily coral-based islands, the beaches are not gently sloping sand that allow you to wade 50 yards out into the ocean. However, the beach at *Fort Zachary Taylor State Park* is a pleasant spot for sunbathing and watching the sunset views. Located where the Atlantic Ocean meets the Gulf of Mexico, Ft. Zachary Taylor is situated near the southernmost point of Key West. Guided tours of the fort are available daily.

Gardens: The Key West Garden Club is one of the island's last remaining free attractions. This seaside tropical garden is a natural oasis of abundant tropical plants. Situated at the water's edge with a stunning view of the Atlantic Ocean, the secluded garden is open daily. A butterfly garden, water lily pond, and waterfall add to the relaxed mood, a nice contrast

to the busy streets of Old Town Key West, and, on warmer days, a welcome respite from the tropical sun. The rare collection of native and exotic trees and plants features a variety of bromeliads and an orchid arbor.

The garden is located at 1100 Atlantic Boulevard on Higgs Beach, site of the West Martello Tower, begun in 1863 as a battery for military protection for the island. The tower was never completed and never armed. It was used during the Spanish American war to quarter troops, but was released by the Army to Key West in 1947, and declared a National Historic Site in 1949. Visitors can stroll the brick pathways through arched courtyards as they enjoy the lush, colorful foliage. For more information, visit www.keywestgardenclub.com, or call 305-294-3210.



A banyan tree encroaches the ruins of the West Martello Tower

In the years that followed, many Bahamians, known as Conchs (pronounced CONKS), emigrated to Key West. In the 1900s, many residents of the island started referring to themselves as “Conchs.” Today, the term is generally applied to all residents of Key West. However, the original meaning of “Conch” applies to someone with European ancestry who emigrated from the Bahamas. When a baby was born, the family would put a conch shell on a pole in front of their home.

Prior to the Civil War, residents of Key West engaged in fishing, salt production, and salvage. By 1860, salvaging wrecks on the reefs made Key West the largest and richest city in Florida and the wealthiest town per capita in the U.S. The locals furnished their homes sumptuously with the fine furniture and chandeliers salvaged from the wrecks. And selling the furnishings they didn't keep made them wealthy. In the Duval Street antique stores, you will still see that influence in the items available for purchase.

After Florida seceded from the Union at the beginning of the Civil War, Key West remained in Union hands because of the naval base. Most residents openly sided with the South by flying Confederate flags over their homes.

Fort Zachary Taylor, built between 1845 and 1866 on the south side of Key West, became a strategic outpost. Union forces began work in 1861 on the East and West Martello Towers that served as side armories and batteries to the larger Fort Taylor.

As the Confederate forces struggled to win the war in the southeastern states, South Florida and the keys had little strategic value. It was even easier for the Union to continue their control of Fort Jefferson on Garden Key, 68 miles west of Key West. The government began construction of that fort in the 1840s to assert U.S. influence over the Florida Straits and the Gulf of Mexico.

After the Civil War, salt production and salvaging wrecks declined as a major source of employment and wealth. As Cuba fought unsuccessfully for its independence in the sixties and seventies, many Cubans fled to Key West for sanctuary. In a few years, the island had gained a thriving cigar industry.

Since its only access to the outside world was by water, Key West was economically isolated. But that changed in 1912 when Henry Flagler extended his Florida East Coast Railway (FEC) to Key West. He envisioned Key West as a thriving port

Key West Attractions That We Enjoyed

The Little White House. Harry S. Truman is one of only eight vice presidents who succeeded to the office of president due to the death of his president. Truman was the seventh who had this experience when President Roosevelt died in April 1945. He became president as World War II was drawing to a close, but he had to make one of the most stressful decisions ever made by a U.S. president: the decision to drop the atomic bomb.

Truman was one month short of his sixty-first birthday when he became president. He was in the middle of his first term as a senator from Missouri. By the time he had served 19 months in the White House, he was physically exhausted. His doctor ordered complete rest and recommended a warm climate. Staff members who had spent time in the military suggested the commandant's house at the U.S. Naval Base in Key West.

The house was built in 1890 for the Navy's base commander and paymaster. The 8,700 square foot home required interior redecoration that cost \$35,000. Over the next six-and-a-half years, the president spent 175 days at the Navy base, coming twice a year in November and March.

Because communication technology had improved significantly during WWII, it was not difficult for Truman to have daily conferences with his staff in Washington. When he felt it was necessary, cabinet and staff members made the 3-hour flight from Washington to the Key West Naval Air Station at Boca Chica. Courier pouches arrived daily from Washington.



Truman often entertained the press and his staff with picnics and fishing trips.

At the Little White House, the president developed a very strict regimen. He began his day with bourbon and orange juice, a one-hour walk, and a two-hour swim. He was in his office by 10 a.m. and meetings often extended into the evening. But when staff and cabinet members were in town, they often played poker in the living room on a table that was custom-built for Truman. Each seated position had an ash tray made from a brass shell casing.

On one occasion, an enlisted man received an assignment

to bring products from Cuba and the Caribbean countries into the U.S. His trains could haul freight into the states faster and cheaper than ships could bring their cargos up the east coast. Passenger service was in Flagler's marketing plan, too. On New Year's Eve 1920, the Casa Marina opened as Florida's most luxurious destination. Sadly, he died in 1918 while the resort was in its planning stages, but the architects and the FEC executives wanted the resort to serve as a testament to Flagler's vision and contributions to the economic development of Florida. Now owned by Hilton Hotels' Waldorf-Astoria division, the Casa Marina went through a \$43 million overhaul recently to restore it to its original grandeur. Plan to have lunch at the Casa Marina, or even stay a couple of nights to enjoy the flavor of a bygone era.

After the 1935 Labor Day hurricane destroyed much of the FEC Railway, Key West again found itself isolated from the U.S. mainland. Classified as one of the three worst storms of the century, the hurricane took the lives of hundreds of residents in the keys and over 400 World War I veterans and their families who were living in camps on Windley and Lower Matecumbe Keys. Suffering from the hardships of the Great Depression, the unemployed

veterans had been sent to the keys to work on the federal highway the government was building to connect Key West to the Florida peninsula.

Three years later construction of an automobile highway to Key West was completed, using much of the route originally constructed by the FEC Railway. The Overseas Highway, as it is sometimes called, is an extension of U.S. 1, which runs 2,369 miles along our east coast from Key West all the way to Fort Kent, Maine, at the Canadian border. Flagler's legacy also included a huge landfill at Trumbo Point for his railyards. The landfill is now a part of the facility used by the U.S. Coast Guard.

The Key West Naval Air Station on Boca Chica Key, just four miles east of the central business district of Key West, is blessed with near-perfect flying weather year round and unparalleled aerial ranges for air crew training within minutes after pilots take-off.

Key West's importance as a military post increased during World War II. At the beginning of the war, the Navy had only 50 acres on Boca Chica. By the end of the war, the Navy base had expanded to over 3,000 acres which included a critically positioned submarine base. The Navy built a fresh water



that brought him to the Little White House. During his assignment, he was introduced to the president who engaged him in conversation. To the astonishment of his poker partners, Truman invited the young man to join them for their evening poker session. “Sir, I am due back on ship at 1800 hours and I have no way to contact my senior officer for permission,” the enlisted man responded. “I think we can take care of that,” Truman responded quickly with a laugh.

The furnishings in the Little White House are essentially originals used by Harry, Bess, and Margaret Truman. The home became a working presidential office where new legis-

pipeline from the mainland to supply its bases in the keys, which, of course, benefitted the civilian population as well.

Harry S. Truman was Key West’s favorite son. He arrived in Key West in late November 1946 for R&R ordered by his doctor, and stayed for several weeks in the commandant’s quarters on the U.S. Naval Base. As he left, he thanked the staff and promised to return whenever he needed to rest. He returned in March 1947, bringing his cabinet and staff members from Washington when they were needed. The March trip set a precedent and Truman returned to Key West in November and March for the rest of his presidency, plus five additional visits after he retired.

Diesel submarines were phased out and the sub base was closed in 1973. The “Little White House” was boarded up until 1986 when the house, barracks, and 100 acres were auctioned off to a real estate investor. The barracks were torn down to build condominiums, but public outcry saved the home which was donated by the investor to the state of Florida. A careful restoration brought it back to its 1950s appearance.

Key West is the southernmost point in the continental United States that is accessible to civilians. A concrete

monument shaped in the form of a buoy is located on the southwest corner of the island at the corner of South Street and Whitehead Street. It proclaims in brightly painted colors that it is the “SOUTHERNMOST POINT IN THE CONTINENTAL U.S.A.” It also notes that Key West is *The Conch Republic* and that the corner is “90 miles to Cuba.”

lation and policies were initiated. A new cabinet office, the Department of Defense, was conceptualized in the president’s meetings with his cabinet members and staff.

President and Mrs. Truman continued use of the Little White House on several occasions after he left office in 1952. Presidents Eisenhower and Kennedy, and Secretary of State Colin Powell, have found the home to be a relaxing retreat and a perfect location out of the public eye to have meetings.

In 1918 Thomas Edison lived in the commandant’s home while he conducted experiments at the naval base that resulted in the development of 41 weapons used by the Navy in World War I.

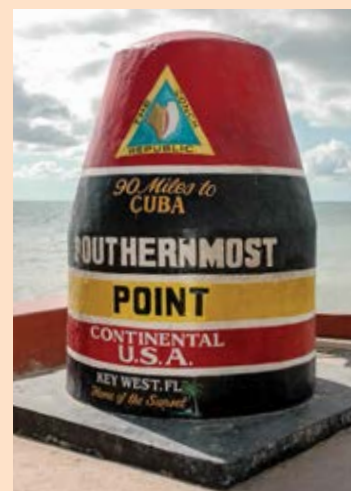
The home is located at 111 Front St. in Old Town. Daily tours are offered from 9–4:30. The last tour begins at 3:45. Admission: adults, \$15; seniors 62+, \$13, purchased online. Slightly higher if purchased at the gift shop.

The Hemingway Home. Like many movie stars of his day, Ernest Hemingway became a larger-than-life figure who volunteered at age 18 for service as an ambulance driver on the Italian front in World War I. He was injured by an Austrian mortar on July 8, 1918. Two soldiers were killed in the explosion and another severely injured. Though injured himself, Hemingway got the soldier to a hospital but could not remember the rescue when he began to recover. The Italian government awarded him the Italian Silver Medal of Valor.

Having begun his journalism career in 1917 as a stringer

monument shaped in the form of a buoy is located on the southwest corner of the island at the corner of South Street and Whitehead Street. It proclaims in brightly painted colors that it is the “SOUTHERNMOST POINT IN THE CONTINENTAL U.S.A.” It also notes that Key West is *The Conch Republic* and that the corner is “90 miles to Cuba.”

The west side of the island is called “Old Town,” which includes the historic district, Fort Zachary Taylor, the Truman Annex, Duval Street, and Mallory Square. Homes, bungalows, and mansions built in the second half of the nineteenth century are squeezed into tightly laid out lots and streets in the western half of the island. Walking, bicycle, and trolley tours will tell you the fascinating stories of the people who made Key West what it is today and show you how they lived.





for the *Kansas City Star*, Hemingway knew that he wanted to write. His experiences in Italy generated the raw material for *A Farewell to Arms*, an historical novel. After the war, he spent several years in Paris as an expatriot, influenced by the authors and artists of the “Lost Generation.” His first novel, *The Sun Also Rises*, was published by Scribners in 1926. Three years later *A Farewell to Arms* rose to the top of the best seller list and catapulted Hemingway into prominence as an American author. Hemingway went on to author more than 20 volumes of war history, novels, and collections of short stories.

Hemingway’s first marriage to Hadley Richardson lasted less than six years and produced one son, Jack, born in 1923. He married three more times, never with more than a four-month interval between a divorce and the next marriage. Hemingway arrived in Key West by way of Cuba with his second wife, Pauline Pfeiffer, whose Uncle Gus lavished on the couple both a new Ford Roadster and a home on Whitehead Street. The couple had two sons, Patrick and Gregory.

Built in 1851, the Spanish Colonial house was in disrepair when Ernest and Pauline took ownership. Many years later, after an extensive restoration, the home became a National Historical Landmark, which to some extent was precipitated by Hemingway receiving the Nobel Prize in Literature in 1954.

In 1937 Hemingway added a pool at a cost of \$20,000, an unprecedented sum to spend during the Depression. European antiques and artwork reflect the couple’s taste in the house that you can visit today. The mounted trophies and skins from his African safaris and hunting trips in the American West attest to his skill as a sportsman.

The Hemingways divorced in 1940 and he took up residence in Cuba with his third wife, Martha Gellhorn. Pauline continued to live in the house until her death in 1951. He occasionally used the house during the following 10 years when he traveled between Ketchum, Idaho, and Cuba.

A jewelry store owner, Bernice Dixon, bought the estate in a silent auction for \$80,000. At her death in 1988, she left the estate to her family who operate the home and grounds as the museum that you can visit today.

Butterfly Garden. Over 20 colorful exotic bird species and 50 to 60 butterfly species await the visitor to the *Key West Butterfly & Nature Conservatory* at 1316 Duval Street in Key West. Visitors walk through the climate-controlled habitat of hundreds of these beautiful winged creatures amid flowering plants, waterfalls, and tropical trees. A 15-minute film describes the life-cycle of the butterfly, and live caterpillars feeding and developing on their host plant are on display.

The conservatory offers a rare opportunity to observe the diversity of size, shape, color, patterns, and behavior of butterflies that make these delicate creatures of nature such a delight. The Learning Center offers illustrated information on the anatomy and physiology of butterflies, and details the incredible annual migratory pattern of the Monarch. The gift shop offers a wide variety of butterfly and nature-related items and unique artwork. Visit www.keywestbutterfly.com or call 305-296-2988 for more information.



The Mel Fisher Maritime Heritage Society and Museum. Nearly 400 years ago, on September 4, 1622, a fleet of 28 ships left the harbor in Havana, Cuba, to return to Spain with cargoes of silver, gold, pearls, grain, indigo, tobacco, and coral from the New World. Nine of the small ships were driven off course into the Florida Straits by a hurricane that struck less than one day into their journey. The *Santa Margarita* and the fleet’s flagship, *Nuestra Senora de Atocha*, carried the bulk of the treasure. By dawn of the following morning, 550 persons and cargoes worth more than two million ducats had been lost to the sea. In 1969 Mel Fisher began a search for the lost ships. The *Margarita* was discovered in 1980, yielding silver and gold ingots, incredibly beautiful jewelry made with precious stones and metals, and thousands of silver coins.

It would be another five years before the hull structure and the main cargo hold of the *Atocha* was found, 16 years of persistence based on the certainty of its existence. The estimated value of *Atocha’s* treasure is well over \$200 million. The

discovery gave historians and marine archaeologists a priceless window into the past, and will require decades of research to reveal all of the secrets that were buried with these ships.

Built in Cuba, the *Atocha* was a 112-foot long, 550-ton galleon armed with 20 bronze cannon. Many divers and researchers were involved in Mel Fisher's long search for the ship. Kane Fisher, Mel's son, and two crewmembers discovered the "main pile" of the cargo hold which looked like a virtual reef. When they scanned the "reef" with a metal detector, the device went "wild." The reef was silver bars, over 140,000 silver coins, silver plates, copper ingots, and stone ballast. The thousands of artifacts in the pile made the discovery a fantastic time capsule.

The Mel Fisher Maritime Heritage Society and Museum is located at 200 Greene Street (corner of Greene and Whitehead). You can purchase tickets to the museum online at www.melfisher.org or at the museum.



A small portion of the 3500 lbs of silver ingots found in the *Atocha*'s main hold

Duval Street, the Center of Key West's Business District



Duval Street is a beehive of people, mopeds, and bicycles.



Duval at night continues to be a center of activity.

Upscale Camping in Key West

1. Bluewater Key RV Resort. A luxury motorcoach resort, Bluewater Key is located at milepost 14.5, north of Key West



A Bluewater Key motorhome site

on U.S. 1. The lots average 35 feet wide and 70 to 80 feet long, and are designed to accommodate 45-foot coaches. Each site has full hook-ups including water, sewer, 50-amps, cable TV, and internet access. Each of the resort's 81 sites is privately owned and uniquely designed to suit the owner's tastes. The resort has waterfront, canal, and poolside sites, a large heated and cooled freshwater pool, shower & laundry facilities, gate security, boat ramps and storage. RVers must have a reservation before arriving and must arrive well before dark.

www.bluewaterkey.com 800-237-2266 or 305-745-2494

2. Boyd's Key West Campground. Boyd's celebrated its 50th year in Key West in 2013. The campground offers waterfront sites, a marina with boat ramp and boat slips, wireless internet, full hook-ups including 50-amp, heated swimming pool, lounging beach, four bathhouses conveniently located throughout the park, 24-hour security, and Key West bus service. Boyd's lays claim to being the "southernmost" campground in the U.S. The office staff can assist you in renting kayaks, waverunners, sailboats, and deep sea fishing charters. 6401 Maloney Ave. www.boydscampground.com 305-294-1465



PHOTO COURTESY OF KEY WEST SEAPLANE CHARTERS



third largest coastal fort ever built by the U.S. Ironically, its large cannons and 420 smaller guns located on the 2nd tier were never fired. The 15-inch Rodman cannon could propel a 440-lb. shot for 3.2 miles and pierce a 10-inch plate of iron.

Every casemate located on the 2nd tier had a cistern under it for collecting fresh water. The fort's cisterns should have held 1.5 million gallons of water, but settling in the floors after construction caused them all to leak badly and be useless.

Since the U.S. continued to control Fort Jefferson during the Civil War, it became a prison for captured deserters. Dr. Samuel Mudd was the fort's most famous prisoner. He set John Wilkes Booth's broken leg, although he denied knowing at the time that Booth had assassinated Lincoln. Dr. Mudd was pardoned by President Andrew Johnson in 1869.

By 1870 European navies were no longer causing difficulties with free commerce in and out of the Gulf of Mexico. The U.S. Army abandoned the fort in 1876. It served as a coaling station for a short time until ships began using diesel fuel.

In 1908 the area became a national wildlife refuge to protect the sooty tern rookery from egg collectors. Today Bush Key is closed to landings during tern nesting season, but birders with binoculars can enjoy watching sooty parents taking turns shading their single egg. Brown noddies also nest in the Bush Key rookery. Both species feed by capturing fish and squid from the sea's surface. The magnificent frigate birds soar over the islands on 7-foot wingspans. They feed on fish and tern hatchlings. You may also see brown boobies, roseate terns, brown pelicans, and double-crested cormorants. Birding actually began in the Dry Tortugas in 1832 when Audubon visited the islands for several days.

The fort was proclaimed the Fort Jefferson National Monument in 1935 and then redesignated in 1992 as the Dry Tortugas National Park.

Continued on page 64

Scan for more pictures of Fort Jefferson



Dry Tortugas and Fort Jefferson

A cluster of seven islands composed of coral reefs and sand lie 68 miles due west of Key West. First named Las Tortugas (The Turtles) by Ponce de Leon in 1513, the islands/reefs soon appeared on mariners' charts as the "Dry Tortugas" because they offered no fresh water. The early mariners soon realized that the loggerhead turtles nesting on the islands were a good source of fresh meat. They took the turtles on board their ships and kept them alive until needed by pouring salt water over them several times each day.

For the next 300 years, the islands were used as a place for pirates to launch attacks on galleons hauling valuable cargoes from the New World back to Europe. Those same galleons sometimes sought shelter on the islands during the stormy hurricane season.

In 1825 a lighthouse was built on Garden Key to warn sailors away from the coral shoals. The lighthouse that now stands on Loggerhead Key was built in 1857.

In 1829 construction was started on Garden Key to build Fort Jefferson. The U.S. realized it could control navigation to and from the Gulf of Mexico and protect Atlantic-bound Mississippi River trade by fortifying the Tortugas. The construction process went on for 30 years, but the fort was never finished.

It has been estimated that 16 million brick were used in the construction of the fort. The best brick came from a kiln in Maine, and that same company is still making brick today. Fort Jefferson is the

Do Not Stop that Heartworm Medication

by Dr. John Pilarczyk

COLD WEATHER HAS ARRIVED in the northern states and the Snowbirds are heading south for the winter. You may be thinking, “no more mosquitoes so we can stop giving that heartworm preventive until next spring.”

Do not stop. You are traveling south into warmer weather where mosquitoes are still prevalent. The medication you are giving probably also prevents other parasites that are not transmitted by mosquitoes.

As you travel in your RV, it is best to give your pet a heartworm medication year round as you are likely exposing your pet to mosquitoes. While some states such as Arizona and New Mexico do not have mosquitoes, if you travel to Louisiana, Texas, or Florida, you will find that those areas have mosquitoes throughout the year. Even though your stay is temporary, it only takes one bite to infect your pet.

I will explain how your heartworm medicine works so you can see why year-round medication should be given. The heartworm life cycle consists of seven larval stages before it becomes an adult. When the mosquito bites your dog or cat, the first stage larva that developed in the mosquito is passed on as level 3 to your pet. It takes 10-20 days to develop into the L-4 stage and three to four months to become an adult. The heartworm medication is only in your pet’s system for 24 hours, and kills the larva at stages L-4 & L-5, preventing the heartworm from developing.

As long as you give your pet a heartworm medication monthly, you stop the L-4 from becoming an adult. If you miss a dose for one or more months, then this L-4 stage can go into L-5 and the larva eventually develops into an adult heartworm. The heartworm preventative does not stop the latter larval stages.

If your dog should become infected, the treatment for adult worms needs to be done. The treatment today is the use of a drug called Immiticide. It can be rough on your dog. As the worms die, they have to be absorbed by the lungs, which can lead to pneumonia-like symptoms. Another problem with Immiticide is that it is in very short supply and must be imported from Europe. Merial, the manufacturer, is supplying veterinarians with the drug on a case-by case situation.

As you can see, this is not a route you want to take. In years past, it was recommended to people living in the northern states to administer the heartworm preventative to their pets starting

in April and stopping in November. However, with the climate changes and the extensive travel RV’ers do, it is not worth stopping and starting which might allow that larval stage to escape the medication and become an adult heartworm.

Now you may ask “Why do I need to check my dog yearly for

Continued on page 64



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Dr. Pilarczyk practiced veterinary medicine for 38 years in Tampa, Florida. You may address your questions to Dr. Pilarczyk at parkwayvet@yahoo.com.

End of the Oregon Trail Interpretive Center Reopens

The Oregon Trail Interpretive and Visitor Information Center in Oregon City, Oregon, has reopened after renovations and expansion over the last two years. Outdoor interpretive signage, new hands-on exhibits, and the featured film, "Bound for Oregon" are now available to help visitors have an enhanced understanding and appreciation of the westward journey of emigrants to Oregon during the mid-1800's. Some of the museum's special exhibits and lectures being planned for 2014 will feature stories on "Traveling to Oregon," "Oregon City Economy," and "Food on the Trail."

In collaboration with the Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde, an exhibit depicting the "parallel history" of the local Native Americans and the pioneers will tell the story leading to the Oregon/Oregon City of today. This installation will focus on two local tribes, the Willamette Tumwater and the Clackamas Chinook peoples, who lived at Oregon City along the Clackamas and lower Willamette Rivers when the pioneers began arriving. The project will integrate the Native American and emigrant perspectives to present a rich, more inclusive history of the events surrounding that period in our country's development.

Visit www.historicoregoncity.org, check the Facebook page, or call 503-657-9336 for updates on events and exhibits.



3-Part Oregon Trail Story Reprinted As One 36-page Booklet

The 3-part series of the Oregon Trail Story that ran in issues 9:4, 10:1, and 10:2 of *Roughing It Smoothly* has been reprinted in a 36-page magazine format. Several Tiffin owners informed us that they were cutting those issues apart, putting the Oregon Trail pages in plastic sleeves, and placing them in 3-ring binders.

If you are planning to do the Oregon Trail trip, you can purchase the 36-page saddle-stitched format for \$9.00 including postage. Make your check or money order payable to Book Production Resources and mail it to Book Production Resources, P.O. Box 1150, Monroe, GA 30656. We reprinted a very limited number, so hurry if you want a copy.



Tiffin Motorhomes Brings Home Eleventh Quality Circle Award

On behalf of Tiffin Motorhomes, President and CEO Bob Tiffin and General Manager Tim Tiffin received the 2013 Quality Circle Award from RVDA President Jeff Hirsch at the National RV Trade Show last month. The Recreational Vehicles Dealer Association conducts the annual Dealer Satisfaction Index (DSI) each year to evaluate manufacturers on eight core areas: sales support, sales territory, vehicle design, vehicle reliability and quality, parts support, dealership warranty support, and overall dealer communications. Tiffin Motorhomes was one of five manufacturers to receive the Quality Circle Award for 2013. It was the 11th time TMH has received the award.

Don't Forget Your Tool Box. . . .

By Dave McClellan Hapy1Luky2@hotmail.com
Occasionally you will need to make minor repairs on your motorhome yourself, whether on the road or parked at home. Basic tools should always be carried while traveling and could save you from major repairs and expenses later on. I carry a large tool box in the basement but since I have a tendency to overdo everything, let's discuss just what tools you may need in your motorhome.

First and foremost, if you have to stop on the side of the road, try to find a spot as far from the moving traffic as possible, where you will be safe. Call the state, county, or local police for assistance and don't forget your flares, reflective triangles, emergency flash, or other warning signals, and use your chock blocks.

The very first essentials I think of are duct tape, a hammer, and a 12-volt test light! Those three items have saved me many times throughout my 50 years as a truck mechanic and RV owner. Nowadays, tape is available that you would think is made of steel. Some tape will even withstand high heat, hold water pres-

sure, and stretch out a few yards before breaking. These amazing improvements have made making repairs with tape a lot easier than it used to be. It sure beats wrapping that gummy cloth tape around my old wooden bat that made my hands black and hard to clean! I'm 70 years old and still have two of those bats that I used to hit rocks with.

Regular electrical tape is also a must for insulating bare wires and stopping drainpipe leaks. A carpenter's claw hammer is just as important: the claw for prying and the head for striking out our frustrations! In addition, I also like to carry a few feet of small-gauge steel wire which can be used in many situations. Terri is always happy when I can fix things myself and not spend her money.

Tools that make sense to carry include a regular pair of pliers plus the following other styles of pliers: regular small slip joint, large slip joint (we used to call them water pump pliers), cutters, needle nose, and definitely two sizes of vise grips. Also pack a set of regular straight blade screwdrivers, in small, medium, and large sizes. Phillips and square-drive screwdrivers in various sizes are also a must. It would be to your advantage to also carry along a set of torque drive screwdrivers. I keep several different style bits that fit into one handle. That way you don't have too many screwdrivers taking up a lot of space in your tool box or bag. And don't forget the long screwdriver extensions to get into those tight places.

Wrenches are very, very important. It is a good idea to carry a set of standard and metric Allen wrenches. Also, a set of standard US open end/box 3/8" - 3/4" wrenches are needed and up to 1-1/4" wrenches are a plus. Another good idea is to have both a small and a large adjustable wrench. You may also want to have a set of metric size wrenches. I carry what is called a chain wrench which can give you small to super sizes for pipes and hoses. It also subs as a pipe wrench.

Standard sets of sockets, in my opinion, are not a must because you have wrenches that can be used in most situations, however, sockets with extensions can be helpful and faster at times, especially in tight places. A 1/2" drive set from 3/8" to 1-1/4" with two or three different extensions would be sufficient in most cases. If you have the room and are not concerned about weight, you can add 1/4" and 3/8" sets of sockets, but be sure to have adapters to interchange extensions and ratchets. If you plan to carry a 3/8" socket set, make it a swivel socket set up to 3/4". Again, you may want to have a 3/8" set of metric sockets just in case they are needed. You can also use a nut driver set for the smaller nut sizes.

I carry a multi-electric meter, plumbers tape, a small fine file, a hack saw, a special tool to remove/install the lug nut

caps, a utility razor knife, and a PVC pipe cutter along with about five feet of extra piping. I bring along wood matches with wood glue (to plug stripped holes), and a small kit of wire terminals and unions. Don't forget the terminal crimper and shrink tubes. Three sizes of hose clamps (especially an extra for the sewer hose), a tape measure, and a good tire gauge that reads up to and beyond your tire pressure, a putty knife, and a tube of silicone adhesive are all items that might be needed while on the road.

If you service your own batteries, you should fill the batteries with distilled water, but first remove and clean the clamps and posts. You can use a special tool for that purpose or you can just use steel wool or a wire brush, but make sure you don't touch two posts with the wire brush at the same time. Use a hydrometer for

Tired of the Old Tank Monitor Issues? Here is the Solution!!



Tank Sender



714 Display



709 Display

- ❖ All SeeLevel models have been designed for retrofit, the existing wiring in your coach can be used to install the system.
- ❖ Percentage readouts are every 3/8 inch instead of the old way of "1/3" or "1/4" fractions.
- ❖ External sender board technology eliminates fouling on the black and gray tanks.
- ❖ Digital design completely eliminates installation calibrations and any future recalibrations.
- ❖ Senders are custom fitted to your tank by cutting the sender with a pair of scissors!
- ❖ The Model 714 is the latest design that is always on for easy viewing, includes one temperature sender with a second optional temperature.



❖ GARNET TECHNOLOGIES INC

Granbury, TX 1-877-668-7813 www.rvgauge.com

testing each cell before topping off with water. Filling the batteries is simple if you use the gallon container the water came in with a small rubber hose inserted inside the container and the other end inserted in the cell of the battery. Make sure the tube is filled with water so it siphons through the tube into the cell. When it is at the correct level, just squeeze the end of the tube and insert it in the next cell. Always wear rubber gloves and eye protection when servicing batteries.

Other helpful tools and hardware that would not take up much space are an assortment of screws, small pieces of fine sandpaper, fine steel wool, extra hose washers, work gloves, white grease, plexus spray, liquid wrench, and a small oil can. A battery operated, variable speed drill with various bits will be a plus. There are some great flashlights that use the same batteries as the drill. There are also lights you can wear around your forehead or ball cap when you don't have assistance or someone to hold the light.

Sounds like a lot of stuff and you may never need all of it, but if you do, it's there to save you from being towed, stranded, or worse, from major repairs that could have been prevented. You will also impress your better half. You can't beat that combination!

Stabilizing a 2007 Allegro on a Workhorse Chassis

We are the proud owners of a 2007 Allegro on a Workhorse chassis. After our first cross country trip, we decided to investigate an upgrade to improve the handling of the coach. We were directed to Henderson's Line-Up Brake and RV in Grants Pass, Oregon. We are very happy with the results. The technicians at Henderson's took our coach for a test drive and weighed the rig at each wheel. They made recommendations to improve the handling. We got the works and it has made all the difference in the world for a cost of \$5,942 (including front and rear stabilizers, Safety Plus, Koni Shocks). Earlier this year we went across the country again, and our Allegro drives like a sports car. The Hendersons are great people and very helpful.

Bob & Sue Bliesner,
Crescent City, California

Tiffin Announces Top 10 Dealer Awards for 2013

- 1 Lazydays RV
- 2 Mike Thompson Recreational Vehicles
- 3 La Mesa RV
- 4 North Trail RV Center
- 5 General RV Center
- 6 Dixie Motors dba Dixie RV
- 7 Colton Auto & RV
- 8 Poulsbo RV, Inc.
- 9 Vogt RV
- 10 Demontrond RVs



Tiffin Earns First Place in Class A Motorhome Category in Motorhome Readers' Choice Awards

In nationwide voting by *Motorhome* magazine subscribers, Tiffin took first place in the Class A Motorhome category. The voters make a subjective choice based on their experience in owning a particular coach. "In addition to bringing home our eleventh Quality Circle award for 2013, we were very pleased to receive first place in the Readers' Choice Awards," Bob Tiffin, president, said upon receiving the award.

Owners Misunderstand Method of Leaving Messages at Tiffin Call Center for Parts and Service

If you have occasion to call the Tiffin Parts and Service Center, please take note of how it is organized. The options are: **1**, dial by name directory; **5**, parts dept.; **6**, service dept.; **7**, dealer claims processing; **8**, motorhome repair status (if you have left your coach to be repaired); **9**, repeat the options. Parts and Service each have seven technicians to answer calls. In the event all of them are on active calls, you will be placed on hold for 5 minutes, after which you will be given the option to leave your name and number for a call-back as soon as the next tech is available. If you remain on hold, you will be given the option to leave a call-back message every 2 minutes.

Snap-On Solar and Privacy Shades Attach to Entrance Door

Full-timers in a 2007 Phaeton, Claudia and Charlie Abbott solved the problem of moving the solar or privacy shade each time you leave and reenter the coach.

Using scrap material that he purchased at a service center, Charlie cut each shade to fit the window in the entrance door. Claudia sewed reinforced edges to each

shade to which Charlie added snap-on buttons. The receivers for the snaps were screwed into the door at points to match the snaps on the shades. Now the shade stays attached to the door when it is opened or closed. The following pictures show the very effective result.



Tiffin Owners Jan and Joe Dabney Discover Another Red Bay

We had a lot of fun while touring Labrador getting the bus driver to stop so that the Tiffin folks could do this photo. The

other people on the caravan just didn't understand what the big deal was. I even bought a Red Bay hat!



ahhhhhhhh.....
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Halo brand
faux leather
from Fabric Services

Halo represents
the best choice
for RV upholstery
available today.
The feel,
the performance,
the value
is unsurpassed.

The luxurious
kid glove sensation
in concert with
incredible durability
provides superior
comfort year after
year.

Accept no substitute!





GOING TO ALASKA?

Ride the Railroad Built 115 Years Ago for Gold Rush Prospectors

PHOTO COURTESY OF CHERYL GLECKNER

MAKE SKAGWAY PART OF YOUR ALASKAN TOUR IN 2014. Book seats on the White Pass and Yukon Route Railroad's Fraser Meadows Steam Excursion, and you'll be in for the railroad ride of your life. It's a four-hour trip that lifts you over the same brutal trail that doomed many would-be prospectors before the rails you will ride were laid 115 years ago. The Fraser Meadows Excursion runs Mondays, Thursdays, and Fridays from the first week of May through the last week of September.

You and cruise passengers arriving on steamships that dock in the adjacent harbor board the train at tidewater elevation. From here, your train climbs 3,000 feet in 20 miles to White Pass summit, pulled by ancient steam-powered locomotives three days a week and by diesel engines other times. After topping the summit, the train continues for seven more miles (14 round trip) through a valley carved out eons ago by a mile-thick glacier. This fully-narrated round trip passes through two tunnels, rolls over sky-high trestles, skirts cascading waterfalls, and makes cliff-hanging 16-degree curves as the locomotives chug up grades as steep as 3.9%. At times, you'll look straight down thousand-foot drops. Depending on the season, you may pass through snow flurries and see ponds iced over or covered with

shiny green silt. You'll pass by a landmark steel cantilever bridge, retired since 1969, that helped WP&YR earn recognition as an International Historic Engineering Landmark, an honor shared by the Eiffel Tower, the Statue of Liberty and the Panama Canal among some 35 others.

The sights, sounds, and thrills are astounding. But there's more, a romantic connection to a fascinating era that can seem almost surreal if you let your imagination work. Looking out your vintage car's window at a rough and rocky trail that's headed up, up, always up, fantasy may let you share the hardships those first real-world prospectors faced making this climb on foot with pack mules and horses. It's like turning pages back to 1897 and 1898 when 100,000 men and women arrived by steamship and poured through Skagway dreaming of striking it rich in the Klondike Gold Fields, more than 500 miles further into Canada's Yukon Territory.

This "invasion" launched in the middle of a depression in 1897 after the *Seattle Post-Intelligencer* headlined its July 17 issue:

Steam locomotive No. 73 rounds the curve at mile 15 on the 20-mile climb from Skagway to White Pass summit. The first wildflower to spring up after a fire, Flowering Fireweed graces the slope below the roadbed. The rails between Skagway and White Pass summit were laid in less than a year.

Text by Norman Spray

“GOLD! GOLD! GOLD!” over a story reporting that 68 “rich men on the Steamer Portland arrived in Seattle with stacks of yellow metal.”

Prospectors, often inexperienced, filled steamers plowing up the inside waterway to Skagway and Dyea. To get to the gold fields, they first had to get their heavy supplies over rugged coastal mountains, then follow a northeasterly inland lake route to the Yukon’s Klondike River.

Many never made it over that first mountain hurdle, failing to negotiate either the steeper Chilkoot Trail out of Dyea or the White Pass trail out of Skagway, both deathly tortuous, especially in dark snowy blizzard months. At least 3,000 horses and an unknown number of gold-crazed people died on the White Pass Trail, victims of natural dangers and their own inexperience.

Of the thousands who came to get rich, only 30,000 or 40,000 actually made it to the Klondike strike zones. Only 4,000 or so found gold and only a few of those became rich, as in *really* rich. In five months between July and November 1898, however, U.S. mints in Seattle and San Francisco received \$10 million worth of Klondike gold. By 1900, another \$38 million was recorded.

The narrow-gauge rails you ride on this excursion were built to help all those wannabe millionaires over White Pass and, of course, to profit from traffic to the Klondike. Less than a year after that Seattle headline started history’s greatest gold rush, London Investor Sir Thomas Tancrede and Contractor Michael J. Heney met by chance in Skagway. In one night they hatched the idea of building tracks over the pass. Tancrede expressed doubt but the Irish-born Heney prevailed, reportedly bragging: “Give me enough dynamite and snuce (blasting powder) and I’ll build a railroad to hell.”

Build it, they did. Quickly organizing in April 1898, they sent their first engine over the first four miles of track on July 21. From there, work got tougher. Most of the roadbed from Skagway to the summit was blasted and carved out of solid granite, using 450 tons of explosives. Men



PHOTO COURTESY OF JIM ROGERS



PHOTO COURTESY OF JED THOMPSON

WP&YR Railroad Steam Engine No. 73 passes Pullen Pond, returning Fraser Meadows Steam Train Excursion passengers who have just completed a 54-mile round trip along the route followed in 1897 to 1899 by Klondike gold rush prospectors. The rails to White Pass were completed in less than a year in February 1899, only a year and a half after word of the gold strike started a “rush” that brought 100,000 prospectors to the area. ♦ Two WP&YR diesel locomotives pull the excursion train beside a stream at White Pass summit, after completing a 3,000-foot climb over 20 miles. The majestic Sawtooth Mountains rise in the background.

often dangled over high, steep cliffs at the end of ropes to cut the grades. Workers on a tunnel at mile 16 endured drifting snow and temperatures as low as 60 below zero. In all, 35,000 men worked on the railroad, some for a single day, some to completion, and 35 died. Against all odds, rails reached White Pass summit in less than a year on February 20, 1899,

only 18 months after news of the Klondike strike reached Seattle. The line was extended to Lake Bennett and the start of the river lakes route to the Klondike by July 8 that year.

The railroad used only steam engines until 1954 when it, like others, began converting to diesel electric power. All operations suspended in 1982 when a

world-wide collapse in metal prices closed mines that were the railroad's major customers. The line reopened in 1988 to operate as the narrow gauge excursion railroad that offers the many trips it does today.

Two steam-powered locomotives, one over 100 years old and one built as recently as 1947, pull the Fraser Meadows Steam Excursion three days a week, usually on Mondays, Thursdays and Fridays. Engine No. 73, a restored 1947 Baldwin 2-8-2 Mikado type with eight big drive wheels, was built as an oil burner but ran on coal until 1951. Now bunker oil fires its boiler. Engine No. 69, the other steam locomotive used for the Fraser Meadows trip, is a Baldwin 2-8-0 originally built for this railroad in 1907. It burns oil today though it was a coal-burner until 1951.

Typically, the steam locomotives pull five passenger cars with around 200 passengers.

The WP&YR equipment roster includes 20 diesel-electric locomotives and 80 restored and replica passenger coaches. In addition, the company still owns the first engine ever to run its rails. That's Engine No. 52, on display at the WP&YR shops. It is visible at mile post No. 2 as the Excursion trains leave Skagway. An old rotary snowplow built for WP&YR in 1898 by Cooke Locomotive and Machinery Company of Paterson, New Jersey is on display at the Skagway depot but seldom is fired up. Also viewable next to the tracks in town is steam Engine No. 195, donated by the railroad to the city museum.

The Fraser Meadows Excursion's first 20 miles is a climb defined by the natural splendor that was so perilous for the first prospectors. Sometimes native wildlife is part of the panorama that unfolds outside coach windows. You might see mountain goats, porcupines and bears, if you're lucky.

It's like entering a different world once the train puffs over White Pass summit. Now the going is more level in the valley created by that ancient glacier. It's a place littered with slabs of granite that geologists say first formed as chambers of magma, cooled slowly over time, then got pushed to the surface by motion of the Pacific and North American tectonic plates that, interestingly, meet at the same White Pass your train passes over. The plutons (enormous granite boulders) were ground down and scattered by the glacier's massive sheet of ice.

That ice is long gone (though at certain times, you may see glaciers on the neighboring Sawtooth Mountains) but the granite remains, much of it covered by a bright green lichen called "Caribou Moss." A favored snack for caribous, this moss is but one of the myriad colors that grace this part of the trip, among them glacial lakes and rivers, some blue, some green, others grey and some glassy. Depending on the time of year, you may spot moose or caribou and fields of fireweed. You're now above the deciduous tree line but, scanning the flora, you'll notice a few conifers like subalpine fir, western hemlock and lodgepole pine. They're very short but it'll be a mistake to write them off as young or baby trees. They actually are tough old-timers, many 200 years old! Growing out of nearly pure granite, often covered in snow in an unfriendly northern latitude at their elevation,

Where to Camp in Skagway

(Parks open May 1 to Sept. 30)

Garden City RV Park, 1-866-983-2378 or 907-983-2378, www.gardencityrv.com or gcrv@aptalaska.net. 100 full hookup sites (30 amp), 25 pull-throughs.


Skagway Mountain View RV Park, 800-323-5757 or 907-983-2378. 51 water and electric sites (30 amp), dump station.

Pullen Creek RV Park, 907-983-2768, pullencreekrv.com. Water and electric hookups; 28 sites with 50 amp. Dry sites. Dump station.

given only a brief growing season and fighting for root space, they've done well just to stay green. They'll be forever stunted as are many in other areas where permafrost limits growth.

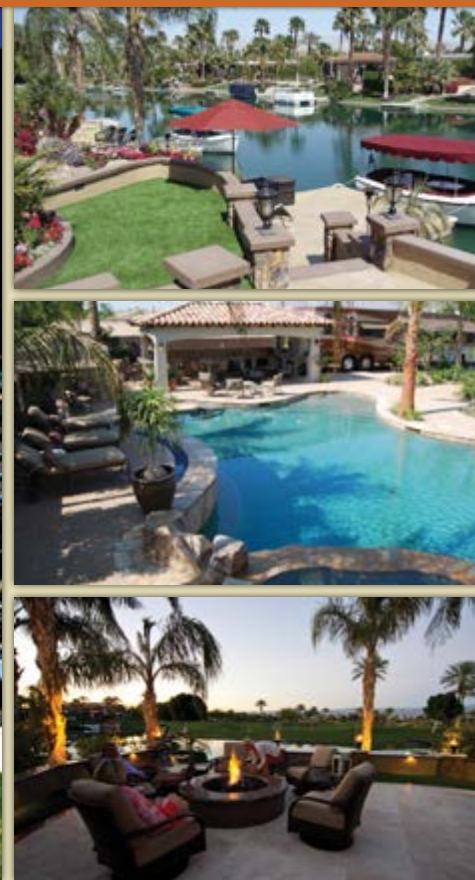
Riding the Fraser Meadows excursion in 2014 will cost \$159 per person. Food is not sold aboard the train, so pack your own lunch. A shorter trip, the White Pass Excursion, returns to Skagway after making the 20 miles to the summit. It is always diesel powered and runs twice daily at 8:15 a.m., 12:45 p.m., and also 4:30 p.m. on Tuesdays and Wednesdays. Cost: \$119 per person. The WP&YR also runs other trips, including a Bennett Scenic Journey which travels 67 miles by train between Skagway and Carcross, Yukon Territory. There's a stop for a delightful homemade lunch in lovely Bennett, B.C., an historic ghost town. Return from Carcross is by guided tour bus.

All schedules are subject to change, so making careful reservations in advance is strongly advised. (800-343-7373 or wpyr.com). Advance reservations are important, too, because some trips may fill early. In 2013, WP&YR boarded nearly 400,000 passengers.

A quick look at a map reveals that driving to Skagway is a not-so-short side trip apart from the classic circular route most motorhome owners plan: Tok to Fairbanks to Denali National Park to Anchorage to the Kenai Peninsula and back to Tok (or the reverse). But Route 2 which you take off the Alaskan (used to be Alcan) Highway to reach Skagway is a designated scenic byway, picturesque and fun to travel. Besides, if you drive all these miles to "do" Alaska, would you really want to bypass Skagway, a quaint, friendly town of less than 1,000 residents that's one of Alaska's most popular tourist attractions? Once in this cradle of Gold Rush history, ride the WP&YR and you'll likely come away agreeing it is, as it advertises, "the Scenic Railway of the World." 

Plant Tours

Monday-Friday at 9:30. Meet in the Allegro Welcome Center 15 minutes before departure. Tour headsets and protective glasses are provided. You'll be on the production lines seeing it up close and personal.



Motorcoach Lots for Sale

In a beautiful setting with a panoramic view of the Santa Rosa mountain range, this motorcoach resort offers the ultimate experience. All of the quality features developed in over 20 previous Outdoor Resorts locations are included. There are 400 beautiful lots including 136 on a navigable waterway.

- 400 beautifully landscaped motorhome lots
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Contact Kerry Johnston

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Motorcoach Country Club, 80-501 Avenue 48, Indio, CA 92201

Scan our QR code and take a tour through the resort.





PLEASE TAKE IMMEDIATE ACTION

Notice of Refrigerator Recall

Attention: All customers with Norcold Refrigerators

There is a recall involving Norcold Refrigerators that are in Tiffin units built from December 1996 to December 2010.

If you have a unit produced during that time period that has a Norcold refrigerator, please immediately call 800-767-9101 and speak to a Norcold representative for the most up-to-date information.

They will advise what you need to do.

This is a very serious recall that could involve a refrigerator catching fire.

Do not delay.

Norcold Recall #10E-049

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT 1.800.767.9101 OR WWW.NORCOLD.COM/RECALL



OFFICIAL REFRIGERATOR RECALL

If your refrigerator is on recall, DO NOT operate it until it can be professionally retrofitted with its proper remedy.

The installation of this safety device will be at NO CHARGE to you.

Action Steps – If you have one of the recalled refrigerators and you...

Currently reside in the RV, you should immediately:

1. Set the refrigerator to "OFF."
2. Unplug the refrigerator through the Service Vent on the outside of the vehicle.
3. Contact your Dealer, a Norcold Authorized Service Center or call 1-800-767-9101 as soon as possible to get assistance.

Do not currently reside in the RV, you should immediately:

1. Set the refrigerator to "OFF."
2. Unplug the refrigerator through the Service Vent on the outside of the vehicle.
3. Disconnect from shore power.
4. Contact your Dealer, a Norcold Authorized Service Center or call 1-800-767-9101 as soon as possible to get assistance.

Failure to follow these instructions can result in fire causing injury or death.

To check your refrigerator's status regarding this recall, or for more information about other Norcold recalls involving older models, go to www.norcold.com/recall

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT 1.800.767.9101 OR WWW.NORCOLD.COM/RECALL

The Tiffin Allegro Club Presents

THE SARASOTA BUDDY RALLY



Come join us under the CIRCUS BIG TOP!

The Tiffin Allegro Club is excited to host their first rally of 2014 at the Sarasota County Fairgrounds on February 27-March 1, 2014. Sarasota is home of many one-of-a-kind attractions. You will have the opportunity to explore, learn, and be entertained in this beautiful area of Florida.

Sarasota is the winter home of the famous Ringling Brothers and Barnum & Bailey Circus. Renowned Niagara Falls and Grand Canyon tightrope walker Nik Wallenda of the famous

Flying Wallenda family also calls Sarasota home. In honor of this circus tradition, the Tiffin Allegro Club will be featuring a circus motif; so come prepared for our theme night dinner dressed as your favorite circus entertainer. You could be a ringmaster, trapeze act, clown, wild animal trainer, or popcorn vendor, just to name a few. Get your creative juices flowing!

The Ringling Museum is home to one of the finest collections of art in the state of Florida. Included at the museum is a self-guided tour of Ca' d'Zan, the waterfront mansion of John



and Mable Ringling. Circus history is showcased in the Circus Museum which includes the world's largest miniature circus. The Ringling Museum is only one of several history, art, and nature museums located in the Sarasota area. At the Sarasota Jungle Gardens, you can walk among and hand-feed the free-roaming flamingos in a zoological sanctuary and garden. Only a few zoos inside the USA allow this experience. Information on the Sarasota area will be available at the rally when you register or you can visit www.mustdo.com. For post-rally fun and good eating, travel over to Plant City for the famous Florida Strawberry Festival! Festival dates for 2014 are February 27-March 9th.

Our Sarasota Buddy Rally is open to all Tiffin Motorhome owners and their friends! You can bring your buddy to this rally even if he/she is driving another brand of coach. We hope to show them the benefits of joining our Tiffin family! This rally will convene at the Sarasota County Fairgrounds on Thursday, February 27th. Move-in times will be staggered and there will be a staging area so you can join up with friends before parking. Sites have 30-amp electrical hookup. Please come in with a full tank of fresh water and empty holding tanks. A dump station and fresh water are available, but you will want to avoid the line and having to unhook your coach. Sunday, March 2, will be move-out day. All coaches must vacate the fairgrounds by noon on Sunday.

We have delicious meals planned, lots of games and fun activities, and fantastic entertainment for your enjoyment! Vendors and interesting, informative seminars are still being added. North Trail RV and Lazy Days RV will be on site with a

Left: John Ringling's home, Ca' d'Zan, was completed in 1926. Visitors can take a self-guided tour. ♦ The courtyard of the John and Mable Ringling Museum of Art focuses on a replica of Michelangelo's David.

display of the latest Tiffin Motorhomes. Service technicians will be available to perform minor repairs and adjustments on your coach. Other representatives from Tiffin Motorhomes will also be on site throughout the rally.

Applications for this exciting rally can be found at www.TiffinSideRoads.com under the RALLIES tab. Don't delay! Rallies usually sell out well before the deadline. Don't take a chance on being left out, get your application in today! We look forward to seeing you in beautiful Sarasota!!

Northwest USA Rally



We are presently finalizing details on a rally to be held in the northwestern section of the USA. This is a beautiful area of our country highlighted by Mount St. Helens, Mt. Hood, and the Columbia River Gorge. This will be the third Tiffin Allegro Club rally of 2014. Sign up for an email notice at www.TiffinSideRoads.com so you will know as soon as this rally is available for registration.

At our rally you will be treated to wonderful meals, informative seminars and terrific entertainment. We are planning lots of games and fun activities. Service technicians will be available for minor repairs on your coach and several representatives from Tiffin Motorhomes will be on site throughout the rally.

When available for registration, applications for this exciting rally can be found at www.TiffinSideRoads.com under the RALLIES tab. We haven't hosted a rally in this area in several years and our rallies usually sell out well before the deadline. Get your application in as soon as it becomes available! We look forward to seeing you in the scenic Northwest!!

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Tiffin Palm Desert Rally, April 2014



Emerald Desert RV Resort

will be the site of our April 2014 Palm Desert, California rally. Check-in day is Tuesday, April 1st with departure on Friday, April 4th. This beautiful resort is located in the heart of the Palm Springs Desert area and is the site of many museums and attractions.

The world's largest collection of flying WWII airplanes at the Palm Springs Air Museum is a living tribute to America's veterans. The Tahquitz Canyon is home

to a 60 foot waterfall, rock art, native wild-life, and plants. The Moorten's Botanical Garden in Palm Springs is internationally famous as an arboretum displaying thousands of varieties of desert plants. Joshua Tree National Park is located nearby and the famous El Paseo shopping district with over 250 shops and restaurants is not to be missed! Be sure to have your photo taken with Marilyn Monroe while in the area!

Registration for this rally has been fast



and furious! Contact the Tiffin Allegro Club if you are interested in attending. If the rally is sold out, we will be happy to place your name on a waiting list. Mike Thompson RV will have several beautiful new Tiffin coaches on display and we have activities and wonderful entertainment planned for our guests. Service technicians will be available for minor repairs on your coach and several representatives from Tiffin Motorhomes will be on site throughout the rally. There will be no vendor displays, but interesting, informative seminars will be held.

This rally will begin on Tuesday, April 1, and conclude on Thursday evening. Emerald Desert RV Resort has a beautiful pool area and we plan to enjoy a "Polynesian luau" one night, so plan to dress accordingly. This is the night for all your tropical attire! The resort features level parking and full hookups including wi-fi and cable tv.

Applications for this exciting rally can be found at www.TiffinSideRoads.com under the RALLIES tab. Remember, rallies usually sell-out well before the deadline. Get your application in today! We look forward to seeing you in beautiful southern California!!

Tiffin Side Roads

Please visit the website for the latest information on the Tiffin Allegro Club! www.TiffinSideRoads.com. This online newsletter is your best source for breaking news regarding upcoming rallies, new and improved benefits to your club membership, and interesting articles on other Tiffin coach members.

Please enter your email address in the FOLLOW box and you will receive one email asking for you to confirm your subscription. Then you will receive updates periodically whenever something new and interesting is published. By doing this, you will be up-to-date on all the Tiffin news!

Recent articles include new cleaning tips, traveling with pets, recipes, new merchandise in the Club office and much more! New chapters are being organized across the USA and Canada. FOLLOW us and stay in the loop!

Allegro Club News
by Sally Moore

TIFFIN ALLEGRO CLUB BYLAWS AMENDMENT

Effective immediately, the chapter bylaws have been amended to remove the wording stating a Tiffin Allegro Club member can only be a member of one chapter at a time. The Board of Directors recognize that many club members travel extensively throughout the year and may winter in locations far removed from their home. Therefore, the Board ruled that members may belong to more than one chapter at a time if they desire. Members will be responsible for paying local chapter dues to each chapter.

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- Sequential arrow alerts other vehicles of driver's intentions

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Inman's Answers

As the editor of "Serious Tech Talk," Danny Inman, 39-year veteran with Tiffin Motorhomes, invites your questions.

Please use the attached postcard and send Danny your questions about your motorhome and its operation, especially those questions that may be useful to all of our readers. If you need more space, address your letter to:

Danny Inman
 Roughing It Smoothly
 PO Box 1738
 Monroe, GA 30656-1738

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, or manuscript.

For answers to urgent questions and problems, call the Parts and Service number at 256-356-0261.

Dear Danny . . .

Wiring Issue on Our New Allegro RED 33AA

We purchased a 33AA on May 31, 2013, from the La Mesa RV dealership in Sanford, Florida. We like the coach! We have a problem with the A/C heat pump on the forward unit.

After running about eight hours, the front A/C compres-

sor seized up while cooling. Airxcel products referred us to a local technician for repairs. He came out and declared the unit a loss, the manufacturer sent him another unit, and he has just completed installation of the new A/C. It cools fine but will not function as a heat pump. The compressor simply will not engage, leaving the heating to the gas furnace; the first strike will not come on, leaving the gas unit to get the job done. The new A/C unit is model no. 4707A879.

Charles E. Huffman
 Melbourne, Florida

Dear Charles,

The model number of the replacement unit should be equipped with the heat pump option. The heat pump's operation is controlled by a black 16-gauge wire from the thermostat to the heat pump. The problem could be the control board in the air conditioner which may or may not have been changed when the new unit was installed. I am afraid you will have to make another trip to the service center to figure out what's wrong.

Propane Gauge Problem

I have a 2012 Allegro RED 34QFA. I just filled the tank. The propane gauge needle is not in view on the tank and the indicator light on the panel inside indicates the tank is empty. Is there a fuse somewhere?

Don & Sandy Emmons
 Garden Grove, California

Dear Don & Sandy,

There is not a fuse other than the one that powers the monitoring panel itself. So if any of the monitoring systems work, it will not be the fuse. First, check for loose connections on the monitor panel. It could also be the gauge on the tank itself which can be removed and changed easily. Worst case, it could be that the sending unit inside the tank is bad, which would require evacuating the LP from the tank, and removing and exchanging the sending unit.

Inverter in Allegro Serves Front 110v Socket

In Vol. 10, No. 4, page 69, you forgot to include that the inverter also supplies power to the 110v wall sockets underneath the dash in front of the passenger seat. I enjoy your column.

Keith Van Ausdal
 Phoenix, Arizona

Dear Keith,

Thanks for the reminder that the inverter also supplies that wall socket at the floor level.

Graphics for 2002 Allegro Bus

I just read your response in "Serious Tech Talk" (Vol. 10, No. 4) to the query regarding 2002 Allegro Bus graphics (decals).

I just purchased a 2002 Allegro Bus that has badly faded and cracked graphic decals that are beyond repair. In your response, you mentioned that replacement graphics were available. Can you tell me where I might obtain these replacement graphics? I have contacted Tiffin's Parts Department and they told me that none were available. I love this section of the magazine. Very informative! Thanks!

Perry Marker
 Bodega Bay, California

Dear Perry,

Because of aging, many of the complete packages of graphics will have to be ordered from the graphics manufacturer, which Tiffin can do for you. Tiffin Parts and Service does have a lot of the graphics from 2001 to present day. However, due to aging the complete packages may be brittle or the adhesive may not be strong enough. Sometimes it is more cost effective to remove the old decals and have the graphics painted on your coach.

Replacing Bulbs on 12v Switches on Phaeton

I really enjoy your "Serious Tech Talk" column. In the latest issue (10:4), your article on replacing bulbs/switches on the console at the entrance door was very interesting. We have a 2011 Red 36QSA that has the same problem. You said to go to rismag.com to see illustrations. I tried that and can only bring up additional material for 10:2 and 10:3. I would definitely like to install the resistor and replace several switches that are burned out. Is there another place that I might find the illustrations you mentioned?

Joe Spousta
 Decatur, Alabama

Dear Joe,

We were late getting the illustrated instructions on the rismag.com web site. But it is there now.

TPMS Sensor Interference

With regard to John Park's problem with several of his tire pressure monitoring sensors not working. . .

I discovered a few weeks ago that wireless thermometer systems can interfere with Truck System Technologies (TST) tire pressure monitor system (TPMS) sensors. I set up a new Oregon Scientific wireless thermometer system in my coach while on a camping trip. When I broke camp to leave, half of my TPMS sensors would not come up on the display. If you unexpectedly lose one sensor, it's reasonable to conclude that the sensor is bad. When you suddenly lose five or six sensors, you know something else is going on. I took the batteries out of the wireless temperature sensors and the TPMS system came up fine.

This week, a friend with a recurring TST TPMS sensor problem confirmed that the TST sensors and the Oregon Scientific thermometers both use the same 433MHz broadcast frequency. He

removed his wireless thermometers and it solved his problem, too.

When there is a conflict in frequency use, I suspect that the degree of interference with the TPMS depends on the age of the thermometer sensors, the strength of their batteries, and the location of the thermometer sensors.

Mr. Park has a Bendix TPMS system, but it is possible that he might have the same kind of interference if he has a wireless thermometer system.

FrankArthur
 Viera, Florida

Dear Frank,

Your analysis that it could be interference from a remote sensor makes very good sense. We have had reports that this has hap-

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pened with the remote shade controls. Unfortunately, we are not familiar with the technology of the tire monitoring systems to make a qualified assessment. Thank you for your input which will be useful to others having similar experiences.

Adding Features to a 2013 Allegro RED

We own a 2013 Allegro RED 34QFA. It replaced our 40-ft. Monaco Windsor which we had for 12 years. I am very happy with the Allegro, its performance on the road, the quiet diesel engine, and the improved fuel mileage (over the Windsor). I have three questions I hope you can answer.

1. Our old coach had a power panel that would tell the number of amps we were using if we were limited to a 30-amp campground service. The RED's inverter switch & display simply indicates we are connected to AC power. Can a display panel be added to show the amps being used?

2. The Monaco had a slide-out tray in the basement. The tray was not an option on the Allegro RED. Is the installation of a tray advisable for this coach and, if so, what is the brand that Tiffin uses?

3. The Allegro RED has infrared devices at each TV that allow the DirecTV receiver to be controlled even though the receiver is in a cabinet in the bedroom area. From time to time, this feature works only in the bedroom. Is there something I can do when the living room televisions do not respond to the DirecTV remote via this infrared device?

David Abrecht
Los Osos, California

Dear David,
Most of these features can be added with aftermarket products. The amp meters for the AC power can be purchased at camping stores and added to the system. We have used several different brands for the slide-out trays including KwiKee and Mor-Ryde. You may have to ask your supplier to special order the slide-out, based on the location and size needed. The infrared repeater control is located in the bedroom

cabinet with the surround sound system and satellite receiver. The repeater control has to be located so that it can send its beam into the front of your receiver. This means that you may have to push the receiver farther back into the cabinet or adjust the position of the repeater control.

Need Paint Info for 2003 Phaeton

I need to re-paint and repair the bottom portion of my 2003 Phaeton, model 38WGH.

The VIN is 4UZA AHAK63CM11949, and the serial number is 380PH000C3 F009147.

The original paint is a Bright Platinum Metallic, and on the small bottle of touch-up (dried up long ago) were the numbers 98P48823-2. Do you have info on this paint, and where I may contact the manufacturer?

Gary W. Coffman
Corona, California

Dear Gary,
The paint used on your motorhome was a Martin Seynour product. That company has been acquired by Sherwin Williams Paints. Your paint number for the Platinum Metallic is 98P-4823.

Owner Solves Two Problems with Steps and Fridge in Allegro Bus

Steve and Cynthia Ecton wanted to correct a problem with steps working intermittently. We have had that problem at various times with our 2005 Allegro Bus. This was caused by dirt and grime collecting in the swivel mechanism under the steps. Sometimes just hitting the area with a rubber hammer will allow the steps to operate for a while. A longer term solution is to spray the area with WD-40 to remove the grime and dirt. Wipe the area off and then lubricate with a heavy duty silicon spray. It is also a good idea to periodically lubricate the moving parts on the sides of the steps with silicon spray, perhaps every 30-60 days.

Tom Cambron complained about his

Norcold refrigerator requiring service. We have found that if the side of the RV is in the sun in very hot weather, the refrigerator will shut down, and the "shut off" has to be turned on with a magnet. If one is in such a hot area, removing the cover from the coils (the cover on the DS outside the RV, held on with two swivel screws) will prevent the coils from overheating and shutting down. There is just not enough air circulation to cool the coils if they are covered in their compartment in the sun under summer desert conditions. We carry a strong magnet to use if we have to start the refrigerator up again. Of course, it is important to observe the coils, and be sure there is no yellow color showing that the coils have burst; then the refrigerator cannot be started under any conditions.

Dan Hopkins
Emery, South Dakota

Dear Dan,
Thank you for relating your experiences and the solutions you discovered.

Install Fill Pipes on Both Sides of Gas Burners

How difficult would it be to install gas fill pipes on both sides of the Allegro coaches? By placing it on the left rear side, there is usually not sufficient space to pull forward far enough to align the rear of the coach with a gas pump. At most stations, you have to turn to the left when you exit the fueling pumps. If there was a fill pipe on the right side, you would have more space to make the left turn when you exit. At least, you would have a choice based on how the fuel pumps and the exit drive were configured.

Wayne Heitzmann
Bay St. Louis, Mississippi

Dear Wayne,
Since gasoline is so much more flammable than diesel, the codes are much more strenuous for where we can locate the fill intake. You cannot put it under a window or a slide-out, and it must be located a specified number of feet from furnace or refrigera-

tor vents. Plus, Ford will not offer a duel fill tank on their motorhome chassis.

Fridge Will Not Cool Below 50 Degrees

I have a 2012 Allegro 34TGA. The Dometic 6-cubic foot refrigerator will not cool below 50 degrees on propane or electric as measured by a digital thermometer. This is the case when the outside temps are moderate and the coach is level. However, the freezer runs consistently at 15 degrees. Is there anything I could check before taking it to a service center for repairs? Thanks for your help.

Brad Patterson
Azusa, California

Dear Brad,
The only thing I can suggest is that you should check the 12v cooling fan on the back of the refrigerator to see if it is running. Also check to see if there is any type of obstruction that would prevent good air circulation behind the coil. If that does not solve your problem, you should take it to a service center.

Inverter Questions on a 2013 Allegro Breeze

We own a 2013 Allegro Breeze 28BR and have experienced some issues with house batteries and the Tripp charger-inverter. Maybe you can shed some light.

First the Tripp charger-inverter has a switch for ON-OFF-AUTO. The unit when we got it was set to Charger ON. I connected a small lamp in the coach using an outlet marked "Inverter." I turned on the inverter switch but the light would not come on. In the owner's manual, the instructions for the Tripp charger-inverter ask you to check the indicator lights or reset the inverter. There is no light on the inverter and the reset did not do the trick. I checked the voltage and got 12.3v on the batteries.

Will the inverter supply power to those outlets marked "Inverter" and the TV when the inverter switch is set to Charger ON?

Is 12.3v too low to make it work? When I switched to Charger OFF and then back

to Charger ON, all the indicator lights lit and then blinked out.

Regarding the charging of house batteries with engine running: We had almost dead house batteries after being gone for six weeks. The power switches were turned off, but yet the house batteries were depleted. I started the engine immediately and waited to see if the house batteries would take any voltage. They did not.

I have also noticed that the house batteries after setting for a few days will read about 12.5v. Is it normal for them to drop down? When I start the engine, the chassis batteries quickly jump to 13.5v. But yet the house batteries, if anything, drop down a tenth or two, or less. I am really beginning to wonder if the engine charging system is charging the house batteries at all. I am using a volt meter on the house batteries and would think the batteries after running the engine for 30 minutes would show some voltage gain.

Craig Farnsworth
Brunswick, Georgia

Dear Craig,
On the Breeze, the inverter should only power outlets related to the entertainment system: TVs, surround sound system, and the satellite receiver outlets. The other outlets in the coach should only be powered by shore power or the generator. In production, we may have inadvertently put an "inverter" label on one of the outlets.

Your inverter should continue to work properly until the voltage gets down below 12 volts.

Regarding your questions about the house batteries and the charging of the house batteries by the engine: 12.5v is normal for a charged battery that is not receiving any additional charge. Once you start the engine or connect to 110v shore power, your voltage on that battery should come up to around 13.5v. If this is not happening when you are running your engine, there is likely a problem with the solenoid, that when activated, allows the alternator to charge the house



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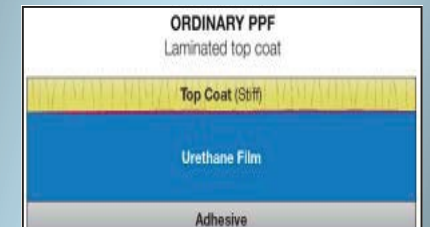
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batteries. This solenoid is located on the passenger side rear compartment behind a removable protective metal plate, and it should be labeled "charge solenoid." After your engine has been running for approximately five minutes, the solenoid should be activated, which ties together your chassis and house batteries to allow the alternator from the engine to charge the batteries.

Storage Compartments Next to Rear Wheels Are Leaking

I have a 2004 Allegro 30DA. Both compartments forward of the rear wheels get wet while driving in the rain. I have tried repairing the seals and locks to no avail. I am thinking that since both compartments have holding tanks above them that perhaps water is being drawn in from the road from around the tanks that then leaks into the storage compartments. Is this a recognized issue or a design problem?

The side yellow marker light is blinking intermittently, usually while moving or perhaps traveling in the rain. Is there a known connector or pinch point that I should check?

Rocky Larson
Toms River, New Jersey

Dear Rocky,
When traveling in heavy rain, the force of the water driven by the tires may sometimes cause the storage boxes to leak. It could well be coming in at the top of the box or through the seams where the box is put together. Try checking toward the top of the box where the box is connected to the sidewall of the motorhome.

Retrofitting a 2011 Allegro with Upgraded Features

I am only 5'2" and have to use a small step ladder to reach into the overhead cabinets. My main problem in our 2011 Allegro 34TGA is the small cupboard beside the microwave. I like to keep coffee, tea, baking items, spices, etc. in it, but I al-

ways have to remove nearly everything to get to one item. Can the sliding pull-out shelf used in the Phaeton be installed in my coach? Can you retrofit a fireplace under my mid-section TV? Can you remove the oven and put drawers in its place? Can you replace the square knobs that hurt my arthritic hands?

Carol Rowland
Bowmanville, Ontario, Canada

Dear Carol,
Retrofitting shelves, sliding pull-out boxes, and replacing ovens with drawers is something that we can do in-house or you can have it done at some service centers that have cabinet shops. The fireplace probably cannot be retrofitted because of the depth of the available space where it would be installed. Door knobs can be replaced at your expense.

Diesel Tank on Phaeton Will Not Fill Completely

I purchased our 2004 Phaeton in 2006. I can count on one hand the number of times I have been able to completely fill the fuel tank. It usually will cut off when it is only three-fourths full. I brought it to Red Bay two years ago and the service tech said he could not find the cause of the problem. Should I take it to Freightliner? What do you think is causing the problem?

Deroy Reese
Brandon, Mississippi

Dear Deroy,
This could be a venting problem or an air lock problem. The filler hose runs from the filler neck on the sidewall of the coach to the upper side of the fuel tank, but not all the way at the top of the tank. When the diesel fuel in the tank begins to foam on the surface, this allows you to keep adding diesel fuel to a point under the surface of the top of the fuel in the tank. If the fuel hose droops below the entry point on the side of the tank, it mimics the tank being full and shuts off. The vent hose should run along the top or side of the filler hose. If the vent droops

and fills with fuel, the air in the top of the tank cannot continue to escape and will cause the top of the tank to airlock which would indicate the tank was full.

If the fuel hose is drooping, it probably needs to be shortened. If the vent line is sagging, secure it up higher with a nylon tie line.

Where Is the Brake Reservoir on the 1989 Allegro?

I have a 1989 Allegro with a 454 Chevy engine. Where is the reservoir for the brakes? I want to change the brake line on the PS wheel. I have already changed the caliper and have put new shoes on both wheels. The PS wheel brakes are grabbing. Two mechanics have told me the brake lines are collapsing. What do you think?

Earline Mitchum
Bonneau, South Carolina

Dear Earline,
When you open the front hood and you are facing the rear of the coach, the reservoir is mounted to the firewall on the right-hand side. It will be a round canister about six inches in diameter and about eight inches tall. It takes care of the power steering and the brakes.

Removing Spots from Under the Protective Film

I have a 2005 Allegro Bay that I purchased in September 2012. On the front cap there is a clear film that goes from one side to the other. This film was clean when we purchased the motorhome. Now we are seeing spots *under* the film that look like soil or bug juice. Can this film be removed without damaging the paint? Does Tiffin have a new protective product that can be applied after the front cap is cleaned and waxed?

Donald E. Wright
Alvin, Texas

Dear Donald,
Removing the film without damaging the paint is a 50-50 proposition. If there is any damage caused by the removal, it can

be repaired. We now use Diamond Shield which can be installed here in the Red Bay Service Center or at many locations throughout the U.S. Call 888-806-5862 for their locations.

Just Ask Someone Who Owns One

Six months ago Mr. and Mrs. George Williamson purchased a 27-ft. Class B motorhome with a Mercedes-Benz engine, and brought it to our house for us to admire. My wife and I told them it was very nice, but we suggested they would soon find it was too small and not really comfortable for long trips.

Recently they went looking for a larger motorhome at Demontrond in Houston. The salesman let them take a 38-ft. Thor on a test drive and they brought it by for us to look at it. They really liked it, but we didn't. We showed them our 2011 Pha-

eton and told them about Tiffin's reputation for quality and excellent service. Now they are in the process of buying a new 40-ft. Phaeton.

George & Delores Letsos
Galveston, Texas

Dear George & Delores,
That's great! Thanks for the help and support. We always appreciate the kind words of our current owners.

Entry Awning Works Intermittently

I have a 2012 Phaeton 40QBH. The awning over the steps will go out, but it frequently will not retract. Could you direct me on how to check a wiring or motor problem? I love to read *Inman's Answers*.

Floyd Waite
Prescott, Arizona

Dear Floyd,
First, check behind the switch for loose

wires. Then with the awning out, check for loose connections at the motor. You should also check with a voltmeter for 12-volt power getting to the motor, and reversing when the awning is going in and out. If all of this checks out, you may have a weak motor that will have to be replaced.

Removing Carpet and Replacing with Tile

We have a 2004 30-ft Allegro Open Road. We want to know what we have to do to remove the carpet from the "living room" and replace it with either laminate wood or snap-in tile. Do we need to change the rollers on the dinette slide-out? What kind of flooring do you recommend? We will also be removing the vinyl tile in the kitchen and bath.

Exlaus & Barbara Parker
Eastham, Massachusetts

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Dear Exlaus & Barbara,
Replacing the carpet with laminated wood or interlocking snap-in tiles is a very time consuming job, and not a project that we accept at the Tiffin Service Center. If you decide to have a private contractor handle your project, the rollers on the slide-out will have to be changed and the slide-out adjusted to accommodate the height of your new floor.

Driver's Window Fogging on Phaeton

We own a 2005 Phaeton. The small side windows next to the driver are fogging. I do not see any damage to the windows or the frames that could cause this. Is this something that must be repaired in Red Bay? That's an expensive drive from Minnesota.

Kenneth & Paulette Kusie
Andover, Minnesota

Dear Kenneth & Paulette,
It would not make sense to drive to Red Bay just to have a window replaced. You can measure your window, place an order at the Tiffin Parts Department (256) 356-0261, and have it shipped directly to you. You can install it yourself or have a local RV service center do the installation.

Servicing a Coach That's in Storage for 7-8 Months

I own a 1996 Allegro Bus, live in Ohio, and leave my motorhome in storage in Texas for 7-8 months a year. It has a fiberglass roof that McKinney RV installed a few years ago and Bruce Deaton did a full body paint job on it. Since we use it for our winter home, I only drive it about 50 miles a year. My questions are: (1) What kind of service needs to be done with this kind of use? (2) Would the rig be okay if I just left it at the motorhome park versus storing it in a pole barn structure for seven months?

C.W. Wolford
Jackson, Ohio

Dear C.W.,
Even though you do not use your motorhome for extended periods of time, you

should have your refrigerator, furnace, ACs, and LP systems checked and serviced annually. Since you don't drive it very much, you should keep fuel stabilizer and additives in the fuel to prevent moisture and mold build-up in the tank. While the coach is in storage, if possible it would be advisable to keep a low-amp battery charge on your house and chassis batteries. Also keep a close watch on your tires which will be subject to dry rotting. It would be helpful if your engine and generator could be started once a month and run for about 20 minutes each. As far as storage, it is always better to keep the coach under roof. The sun can be your worst enemy, especially in hot climates.

Headlights Not Bright Enough on 1985 Allegro

I own a 1985 27-ft. Allegro. We travel several thousand miles in it each year, but I have to plan all the driving time during daylight hours. The headlights just don't light up the road anymore. If we are running late getting to a campground, I have had a family member shine a big flashlight through the windshield to get into a campsite safely after dark. The lights work; they are just not bright enough. How do we get new light fixtures to replace the original equipment? Your help will be appreciated.

Martin Galasyn
Dalton, New Hampshire

Dear Martin,
On your 1985 Allegro, we used standard automotive sealed beam headlights. They are available at automotive stores like NAPA. Remove the headlight and take it with you to the parts house to match it up correctly with a new one.

Multiple TVs in Coach Do Not Receive Same Channels

Just the two of us travel in our Tiffin motorhome. When we stay in an RV park that does not have cable, I program the TV by the dinette and the bedroom TV to receive the broadcast channels in the area

(we don't have a satellite receiver).

On our last trip I decided to program the TV over the dash. It was interesting to discover the TV over the dash received several more broadcast channels than the other two units. This makes no sense to me. I would like to know why this is the case and determine how I can get all of the TVs to receive the maximum number of channels available in any given area.

Jack Brown
Gainesville, Florida

Dear Jack,
All of the TV signals come from the same antenna and the same booster system. The only possibility we could think of is that the cable continuity is stronger on the front TV. First, check the coax connection to the TV to be sure it is tight. If that is OK, check the splitter box behind the booster to be sure the cables going to each television are tight.

Owner Sets Up By-Pass Switch for Lighted Entry Panel

Before delivery of our Allegro RED 34QFA, I decided I did not like the idea of the entry switch lights being on constantly, particularly with no way to change the bulbs in each switch. Altering this arrangement was one of my first "Make-It-Ours" chores. I bought a matching ON/OFF switch from the Tiffin parts department and used it to control the current through the 12-volt feed wire to all the switch lights. I installed it in the location of the battery cutoff switch on the panel. There was enough factory wire to let me move the battery cutoff switch to a new switch location I made just below the switch panel. By separating the battery cutoff switch, we are less likely to hit it by accident. More importantly, we only turn on our lighted switch panel when we are going out in the evening, and none of our switch lights have burned out... yet!

We love our Allegro RED, our fifth motorhome and our first Tiffin. Shortly after delivery, we drove it through Can-

ada and Nova Scotia with no problems. Thanks for a great product and outstanding owner support.

Bob Sherrill
Tucson, Arizona

Dear Bob,
Thanks for sharing your solution with other Tiffin owners.

Need Model Number for a Dometic Part

I recently discovered why the wiring to my Dometic awning was exposed in the support track on the side of the motorhome. The plastic cover was missing. I called Dometic for a replacement cover. To ship the part, Dometic requires a model number for the awning support, but there is no number on the support. We may have a "Catch 22" here.

Dometic stated that Tiffin should have the part number on file with the awning that you ordered for my motorhome (VIN 1F66F5DY7CDA00395). The Tiffin Service Center was unable to come up with that part number. I hope you can help.

Bob Landheer
Grand Rapids, Michigan

Dear Bob,
The part number for the Dometic awning hardware is 8952001.400. The plastic wiring cover part number is 3312492.014U. If you need other parts, go to www.eDometic.com and look under "Service Parts," where you will see a breakdown for awning parts and numbers.

Broken Latch on Allegro Bus Windows

I have a 2013 Allegro Bus 45LP. Two of the plastic latches on the new style windows have broken. What could be causing this problem?

Gordon Maxwell
Livingston, Texas

Dear Gordon,
The style window that we are using on your Bus is also used on the 2014 Phaeton and 2012-2014 Zephyr. This window was designed so that the frames are flush with

the exterior walls. This allows us to paint the exterior frame so that it appears to be part of the wall, producing a very streamlined effect. If you do have a problem with the glass, it can be removed and replaced without removing the frame.

To open this window, be sure to press

the thumb latch completely down, then pull the handle straight out toward you, and then slide the window. When you close the window, it is very important to press the thumb latch down firmly while closing it. This should prevent any damage to the plastic mechanism in the future.

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PRESIDENT'S CORNER *Continued from page 4*

vestments we have ever made. In 2007 we began producing our own fiberglass flat panels for the exterior walls. We know from experience that if you can create the necessary quality, it is always better to manufacture it yourself.

These upscale brands required us to greatly enhance our interiors. Again, it was time to reinvest. We installed high efficiency CNC routers capable of forming Corian into creative countertops and various wood products into the pieces needed to build room modules, doors, bed headboards, and the components for our galley and bathroom cabinets.

In 2004 we purchased a 50-ft. CNC router with two gantries to cut out the sidewall patterns. This greatly enhanced our ability to build sidewalls accurately and to use more laminates with attractive wallpaper finishes.

That same year we opened a plant in Vina to make our own raised-panel cabinet doors. We decided to use hardwoods exclusively, which significantly improved the quality of our cabinets.

The following year we introduced ceramic tile on our floors. The major challenge to building a ceramic tile floor was cutting the perimeters accurately to accommodate the slide-out mechanisms and the holes for the wiring, plumbing, toilets, step wells, and passenger/driver chairs. Making the cut-outs was time consuming, and required great skill in making accurate measurements and the ability to make the cuts with hand tools.

DEALER PROFILE *Continued from page 26*

percent of our customers are within a 100-mile radius of our store. The 25 percent beyond that radius are from sales generated by our website. We hope to see those customers come back to us for service, but realistically we know that our core business is within that radius as far as developing a loyal customer base.

TRAVELING WITH PETS *Continued from page 41*

heartworms if he/she is on medication year round?" The answer is simple: your pet could have spit the medication out without you knowing it, or if you started your pet on the heartworm medication at an age older than 2 months, it may have later larval stages in its tissue. If so, that first blood test would be normal, but a later blood test would be positive.


Another reason you should have your pet checked for heartworms is because research is showing some heartworms have developed a resistance to medication. Just like antibiotics resistance, this is a very low number of cases, and more research is being done on this problem.


It definitely is not worth stopping the medication. The price for stopping is too great. Keep your pet on heartworm medication. Winter will be over before you know it and spring will bring more traveling.

Safe Travels,
John & Kay

We solved the problem with a CNC water-jet router with a 50-ft. bed. After the tile floor is assembled on a flexible laminate base, it is moved with a multi-suction cup lift onto the 50-ft. bed and positioned with two computer reference points. The 50,000-psi water jet guided by a layout on the computer accurately makes all of the cuts. It was a huge investment, but it improved the quality and success of our ceramic tile floors.


As we have often noted in this business, one investment leads to another. The exceptionally smooth finish of our fiberglass brought on full body paint. To paint 12 motorhomes per day required quite an investment. In 2004–05 we bought a 22.5-acre facility that included five buildings totaling 250,000 square feet. It is located six miles from Red Bay in Belmont, Mississippi. The largest building houses our state-of-the-art paint facility with 15 down-draft booths, all of which can handle our largest coaches. The other four structures include the prep building (sanding), service building (sidewall repair), a general warehouse, and a chassis parts warehouse. It represents our largest reinvestment.

The conclusion of this story is that the motorhome factory today requires a huge investment in buildings, equipment, and high quality materials and components with a low failure rate. As we go forward to produce new motorhomes, we are committed to reinvesting our resources in the best materials, the latest technology, and highly trained employees to build the best motorhomes available in today's market. 

"In our first year, we had five travel trailers and 10 boats in our beginning inventory," Chad continued. "In that year we did a half million in sales. Now we are doing over \$30 million in motorized, towables, and boats. We are searching for a practical plateau where we are profitable. We want an owner at each store. And we will never turn a customer into a number." 

KEY WEST *Continued from page 40*

There are two ways for visitors to reach Fort Jefferson:

- (1) The *Yankee Freedom III*, a twin-hulled catamaran that makes the trip in two hours, leaving from the Key West Harbor. It is concessioner for the National Park. The roundtrip fare of \$150 includes breakfast on the way to the island and lunch after you arrive. The *Yankee Freedom III* will be docked for about four hours. Visitors may take a self-guided tour of the fort, hike outside the fort on Garden Key, and try snorkeling. Gear is provided for snorkeling or you can bring your own. A 30-minute lecture is provided by the staff. Call 888-212-5009 for reservations or go online at www.yankeefreedom.com
- (2) Key West Seaplane Adventurers, located at the Key West International Airport, flies two charters each day to Dry Tortugas. The tour takes four hours, including 40-minute flights each way on a DHC-3T DeHavilland Turbine Otter Seaplane. The cabin accommodates 10 passengers. Complimentary snorkeling equipment and coolers with soft drinks. Call 305-293-9300 for reservations or go online at www.KeyWestSeaplaneCharters.com 



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