

Roughing It. Smoothly[®]

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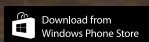
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Roughing It Smoothly®

April 2015 Volume 12, Number 2

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Cover: Motorcoach Country Club
Photographed by Steven Richardson

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Roughing It Smoothly circulation jumps to 78,000 printed and online magazines

Over 23,000 Tiffin owners are now receiving *Roughing It Smoothly* through the U.S. and Canadian postal service. Over 42,000 are now reading *RIS* online. Our dealers are distributing 12,000 copies in their showrooms. *Roughing It Smoothly* is now in its 12th year and is the largest magazine published by an RV manufacturer in number of pages and total distribution.

In each issue you will still find two cards for sending information to the editorial office in Monroe, Georgia. Using the "From the Road" card, we invite you to tell fellow Tiffin coach owners about your experiences and the special places you have discovered in your travels. If the card is not large enough, please type a whole page double-spaced, and mail it to Fred Thompson, Book Production Resources, P.O. Box 1150, Monroe, GA 30655-1150. Be sure to include your name and address, phone number, and email address in case we need to edit or ask for more information. Color prints are welcome and we will use them if we have the space. You can also send your "From the Road" contribution by email to fredthompson1941@hotmail.com And that will allow you to attach images. Images should be at least one megabyte in size. On the subject line of the email, please write FROM THE ROAD. We do not open emails without subject lines.

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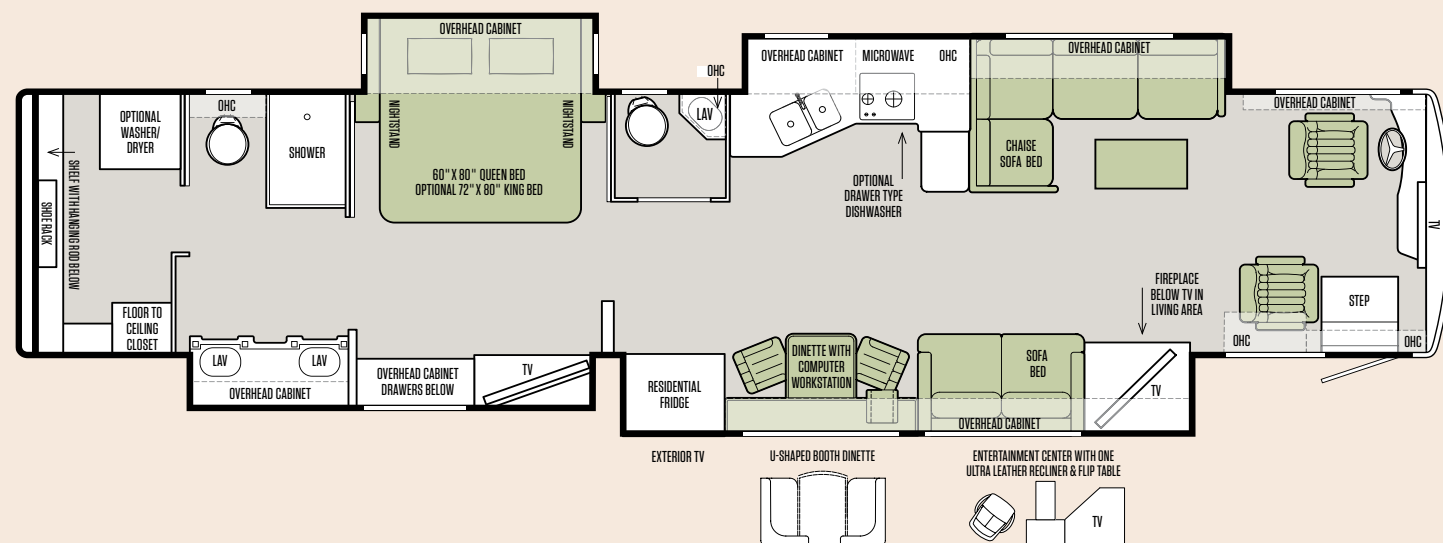
New Subscribers
If you have just purchased a new Tiffin motorhome, your name will be added to our mailing list automatically. If you purchased a pre-owned Tiffin motorhome, send the year, brand, length & floorplan, your name and address, and VIN to *Roughing It Smoothly*, PO Box 1150, Monroe, GA 30655-1150.

Serious Tech Talk
To address your technical questions to Danny Inman, use the postcard bound in this issue, send a longer letter to the address on the postcard, or send an email to RISStechtalk@gmail.com **If you need an immediate answer to a service problem, you should call 256-356-0261.**

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The 2015 Allegro Bus 45OP is now shipping to Tiffin dealers.



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How Good Can It Get?

by Bob Tiffin

In a few months we will begin our 44th year at Tiffin Motorhomes and I do not believe I have ever seen business as good as it is now for the large Class A motorhomes we are building.

As all of you are fully aware, we had a tremendous meltdown in the U.S. economy from early 2008, 2009, and a part of 2010. Many RV manufacturers went out of business. The recovery was slow initially. But the economic turnaround has come full circle and the survivors have had extraordinarily good business for the last 18 months.

We started this company in September 1972 and built our first motorhomes in December of that year. Then we experienced our first economic meltdown in September 1973, just nine months after we began manufacturing our brown and white, aluminum-sided Allegros. We hung on and weathered the storm that continued through the 4th quarter of 1974 when business began to get much better.

The second meltdown began in the 4th quarter of 1978 and lasted until the 2nd quarter of 1982. That one lasted for three and a half years and really tested our staying power.

This final recession that began in the 1st quarter of 2008 was devastating to the RV industry, motorhomes and towables. Many large Class A manufacturers had to take bankruptcy and were unable to recover.

Looking back at the three meltdowns in the economy, our



business expanded greatly after each for three reasons: personal income went up; there were fewer manufacturers of Class A coaches; and each time we signed up the best dealers who had lost their manufacturers and needed to add a quality Class A product to their lineup.

In the first meltdown in 1973, the interest rate and oil prices went very high. We had an almost instant replay in 1978 when the interest rates went to an unprecedented 22 percent.

What is interesting about each recession is how long business remained strong after each one. Following the first meltdown, we had five years of tremendous

expansion, and after the second one we enjoyed a much longer period of growth and strong economy from 1982 to 2008.

After this last recession, that some have called the “great recession,” I am looking for an extraordinarily long period of expansion and a strong economy. I believe the RV business should be good for both the manufacturers and the dealers. Owners are going to see more innovation in the coming years than ever before.

I am basing my expectation on the interest rates, domestic fuel supply, corporate cash supply for investment, and the disposable assets available in the economy to buyers and manufacturers alike. I don't see how things could be any better for the RV industry.





TIFFIN
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**BORN IN RED BAY.
RAISED IN THE WILD.**



At Tiffin, we've spent our lives designing, building and perfecting a motorhome
you can feel good about, wherever the road takes you.

Running on the High Road THE ALLEGRO BUS 45UP

MORE OPTIONS FOR A GREAT FLOOR PLAN

by Fred Thompson

WHEN A COMPANY DESIGNS AND MANUFACTURES A product that is well received, it will wisely begin to reimagine that product to make it more useful and attractive to a wider market. A product's life cycle is important both to the buyer and to the company.

Such was the case when Tiffin Motorhomes introduced the 2014 Allegro Bus 37AP in the October 2013 edition of *Roughing It Smoothly*. The 37AP continued to generate wide interest when it subsequently appeared on the TMH website and in literature at dealerships. When the 37AP units arrived at dealerships throughout the U.S. and Canada, they were sold quickly to enthusiastic buyers. The functionality and flow of the 37AP's floor plan was the major factor in the coach's success.

In the following months, Tiffin often built ten 37AP units

per week. The 37AP followed on the heels of the Allegro Bus 45LP which received a similar reception when it was introduced in March 2013.

The front two-thirds of the 37AP's buyer-endorsed floor plan with its unique spaces and popular options was a game changer. The TMH sales and marketing team were more than pleased with sales when they used a very similar floor plan in the Phaeton 40AH last summer and again in January of this year when they introduced the Allegro RED 37PA—each with different trim levels but with the same customer response.

While the Allegro Bus for several years has been one of the top five coaches in U.S. diesel pusher sales, during the 2014 calendar year its sales increased by 164 units, up from 299 to 463, a 55 percent jump over 2013. The increase affirmed the popularity of

the Allegro Bus' three floor plans: the 37AP, the 40SP, and the 45LP. The Bus moved into the Number 2 slot behind the Phaeton, followed by the Allegro RED in the Number 3 position.*

Then, in the first week of December 2014, Tiffin surprised the industry with two more 45-foot coaches in the Allegro Bus lineup: the 45UP and the 45OP. The 45UP was given a three-touchdown lead over the competition when TMH designers decided to use the 37AP floor plan in the front two-thirds of the coach. What they did with the back third brings fresh design to the forty-fiver. We will feature the 45OP later this year.

The Allegro Bus 45UP Has Excellent DNA

When you are "third generation," you've got DNA or perhaps we could call it "history." As part of the new generation of Allegro

*See page 53.

Buses created over the last two years, the trim level of the 45UP was already in place. Let's take a "tour" through this coach.

Living, Working, and Entertaining in the 45UP

Entering the Allegro Bus 45UP for the first time is quite a grand experience. Although quite separate in their design and purpose, the inviting living room, the practical dinette/computer work station, and the well-designed galley come together to create a spacious living area that is 22 feet long and nearly 13 feet wide when the forward slides are deployed.

With the visual warmth created by the Glazed Canyon Cherry cabinets and the physical warmth of the fireplace, plus the comfort and elegance of the chaise lounge and recliner, this coach will sell itself. The salesperson only needs to unlock the door, invite his guests to come in, and answer a few questions.

The L-shaped chaise lounge measures eight feet along the DS slide-out wall and it's nearly six feet wide when the lounge's extension seating is deployed. The lounge comfortably seats four and favors one of its occupants with a leg lift. The Villa chair by the fireplace reclines, rocks, rotates, and lifts your legs — it's a challenge to remain conscious while sitting in this chair.

When the passenger chair is rotated 180 degrees, it provides additional living room seating. It also has a leg lift, six adjustable positions, and a reclining back. From the tech center in the bedroom, you can program soft background music for a pleasant atmosphere before the party leaves for dinner and the concert. If you are in for the evening, select programs from the entertainment center, programming from your DIRECTV, or a movie from your collection. You will notice the backlighting for the television, a feature that softens the extreme brightness of newer model TV screens. Recessed LEDs in the ceiling of the DS slide-out provide general lighting while directional lights in the base of the overhead cabinets are designed for reading and close-up work.

The 45UP is geared for any entertainment plan. Football season—oh, yes! Let's get started with watching two games on the opposing 42-inch HD, flat panel televisions. If hamburgers are in the plan, move the party outside and watch the game on the patio under Carefree's 20-ft. awning. A night game? Now the ambience really gets upscale with the optional ground effect lighting under the coach, string lights in the awning, and LED porch lights.

If you've invited three couples over for dinner, pop open the twin storage bays and pull out the six-foot table with folding legs and the folding chairs with your monogrammed covers (items that you supply, of course). Take orders and demonstrate your grilling expertise for the steaks while your partner in the galley works on twice-baked potatoes and the salad bowl. A steamer on the induction cooktop has the asparagus ready. The surprise dessert is hidden away in the fridge: strawberry cheesecake.

The term "galley" makes one of your guests conjure up a very small fridge, a two-burner propane cooktop, and a tiny stainless steel sink — like the one in his brother's boat. When he comes



in for the tour, his jaw drops when he stands in front of *your* galley. Eight feet long, over 30 inches deep, 21 sq. ft. of solid surface countertop work space, plus an additional 4 sq. ft. in the island slide-out. An induction cooktop, a convection-microwave oven, a Fisher & Paykel dishwasher, a huge double sink with a high arch gooseneck faucet concealing an extendable sprayer, single lever water control — all with recessed task lighting. Just to the right of the galley, a 20 cu.ft. stainless steel, double-door fridge with a roll-out freezer, and just north of the freezer are two slide-out pantries, each with three shelves.

The galley's storage capacity is unmatched in the Class A coaches built by Tiffin's competition. Three overhead cabinets on both sides of the microwave-convection oven each offer over four cubic feet of interior space. Two of the cabinets have slide-out box shelves. In the island slide-out, three drawers measure 14 × 25 inches by 3.5 and 5.5 inches deep. The drawer under the dishwasher is 21.5 × 23 × 5.5 inches; under the sink, the double slide drawer offers over two cubic feet of storage plus a vertical storage slot for the sink covers. Another stack of three drawers, each measuring 5 × 17 × 5.25 inches, is located beside the fridge.





As your visitor begins to explore, he discovers the cabinets above the dinette with over seven cubic feet of storage, and then the cabinets above the lounge – 13 cubic feet. The innovative design of the dinette/computer work station (often copied by competitors) fascinates most visitors. It looks like a finely crafted credenza – but it’s much more. On the north side of the dining table, a slide-out tray takes care of your keyboard or laptop, and just below that tray you can stash your printer. Personally, I prefer to put my wireless keyboard in the top tray and position the laptop and printer on top of the credenza. Then I store them in the designed space when I am finished for the day. South of the dining table there are two 15 × 14 × 3.5 inch drawers for office materials, plus a 15 × 14 × 10 filing drawer with rails for hanging folders.

When not in use as a business center, the credenza’s 18 × 72-inch solid surface countertop and the 25 × 40-inch table become the place for memorable experiences as your picture window brings in scenery from all over the country while you have breakfast, lunch or dinner. Choose your camping sites with million-dollar views.

Rest and Relaxation

“There’s no place like home,” claims the oft-spoken homily. When you are speaking of your most personal spaces – the bedroom and bath – those words apply double. It’s where we recuperate our bodies, rejuvenate our spirits. Everything in its place.

Let’s begin by noting the full king-size bed with the optional Air Comfort mattress, each side with a numeric control that

takes you from soft to firm, plus a pillowtop to make your bed cuddly. It doesn’t get any better than this. The Watercolor décor features a comforter, pillows, and valance created by Margaret Mia, now in her seventh year designing exclusively for the six brands manufactured by Tiffin Motorhomes.

The six-inch curved cherry molding at the top of the headboard outlines the diagonally tufted taffeta. Six pillows designed with fabrics complementing the comforter add to the richness of the retreat. The attractive blending of cherry and fabrics in the valances positioned over the solid surface countertops of the end tables complete the elegant setting for a restful evening. Three LED lights are recessed into the slide-out’s ceiling to assure even lighting above the head of the bed. When you read in bed, you have a choice of the wall-mounted sconce lights or the lights attached to the bottom of the overhead cabinets. Each of the bedside tables has a 110v outlet and two USB ports.

If you get drowsy while reading in bed without shutting off the lights in the coach, the panel at bedside has switches for the ENTRY DOOR LIGHT, BEDROOM OH LIGHT, READING LIGHTS, SCONCE LIGHTS, LIGHT MASTER (for the whole coach), plus the DOOR LOCK, GENERATOR, and CEILING FAN.

The bedroom’s DS slideout has two chests. The taller chest under the 42-inch television contains a large compartment with two louvered doors that houses the entertainment center, including the in-motion satellite receiver and the Panasonic 100 system. Two drawers and a clothes hamper complete the bottom of the chest. The two-drawer chest under the window contains two 39-inch wide drawers. Both chests have solid surface



countertops. The double cabinet over the exit window boasts 2.5 cubic feet of storage space.

In a major design change, TMH placed a half bath near the rear of the coach after reasoning that guests using the hide-a-bed in the living room would feel more comfortable using the mid-coach full bath right next to their “bedroom.” The purpose, of course, was to eliminate the guests having to walk through the owner’s bedroom to gain access to the shower/full bath.

The shower floor has a footprint of 38 × 31 inches. Except for the ceiling, it is completely constructed with solid surface materials. The walls are accented with handmade tiles similar to the ones used in the galley. The single handle water control is mounted in a triangular pedestal. The polished chrome shower head has a variable spray selector and can be removed from its holster to put water right where you want it.

The full bath has double lavatories created by Tiffin’s skilled craftsmen with solid surface countertop materials. The 56-inch

wide lavatory countertop has a full backsplash. The vanity under each lavatory has over 1.8 cu. ft. of storage. The double mirrors enclose a cabinet 56 inches wide × 21 inches high × 7.25 inches deep. Between the two lavatories is a stack of three 15-inch long drawers. A second wall-mounted cabinet over the toilet provides storage for tank treatments and bathroom cleaning supplies.

The spaciousness of the master bath is created by the large vanity being completely housed in the DS slide-out. Each lavatory has double LED recessed barrel lights. The shower has two recessed LED lights, plus a smaller light mounted on the sliding cover for the skylight.

If you look closely at the 45UP’s floor plan, you will notice two sliding doors nested in the south wall of the master bedroom, one leading to the galley and the other to the bathroom. This carefully concealed double-door design represents a fine piece of engineering and woodworking.

Now for the half bath located in the rear of the coach. Af-



ter making their guests comfortable with easy access to the full bath, the owners will have the quietest and most private facility. Nicely appointed, the lavatory has a full backsplash, a medicine cabinet, a large shaving mirror, and a second cabinet over the window. It has a 3-speed reversible fan with a thermostat. When the outside air is preferable to AC air, you can use this fan as you would an attic fan in your brick and stick house. The thermostat is color coded, but with a little experimentation you can figure out where to set it when the outside air gets too cool.

A very comfortable dressing bench upholstered in Ultra-leather is located under a window and cabinet just across from the half bath. With two drawers underneath and directional lights above, it is a thoughtful and convenient appointment.

The walk-in closet in the 45UP will please everyone. A beautiful floor-to-ceiling chest of six drawers also has four deep box shelves fitted with removable cloth-covered baskets. Opposite the chest on the passenger side, the optional stacked washer and dryer is just a few feet away from the clothes hamper. The 8-foot clothes hanging rod with a shelf above it extends across the entire rear wall of the coach. Tucked into the rear cap cavity and flush with the wall, eight shoe boxes will be a lady-pleaser. Just above the shoe boxes and hidden behind your hanging clothes, you will find a safe (std. equipment) that requires a combination for entry.

Forty-Fivers in the Allegro Bus Brand

After I drove the 2011 Allegro Bus 40QBP on a PowerGlide chassis to Wyoming while working on the Yellowstone story, I later reviewed the coach and wrote, "It was called 'PowerGlide' for a reason." When Tiffin management decided to offer a 45-foot coach under the Allegro Bus brand in the 2013 model year, they knew their own engineers were ready to build the chassis for the new 45LP. The modifications included extending the length of the chassis rails, installing six air bags instead of four, changing the ride-height adjusters, and going to a 315 tire on the front. Extensive road and weight tests proved that the Cummins ISL 8.9-liter, 450-hp electronic/turbocharged diesel with 1,250 lbs.-ft. of torque @ 1,400 rpm was the correct powerplant for the application. The chassis engineering department and the chassis manufacturing plant made it happen and created the beginning of a new success story.

In mid-summer 2014, production of the 45-foot PowerGlide chassis was increased to accommodate the two new floor plans that were quickly moving through design and R&D: the 45UP and the 45OP, both with the 450-hp power plant. TMH marketing and sales wanted to introduce the new coaches in the annual Louisville show the first week of December. Both floor plans were favorably received by Tiffin dealers.

After assessing market demand, TMH in mid-December announced that both the 45UP and the 45OP floor plans would also be offered with a 600-hp Cummins on a Freightliner chassis that was cooperatively designed by TMH and FCCC. The selected powerplant is a Cummins ISX 15-liter, 600-hp electronic/

turbocharged diesel with 1,950 lbs.-ft. of torque @1,200 rpm. Many of Tiffin's owners who have forty-fivers are involved in businesses that require hauling enclosed trailers with heavy cargo. The Freightliner chassis and the 600-hp power plant boosted the towed cargo limit to 15,000 lbs. The base MSRP before options is \$490,000.

The Cockpit

The Allegro Bus dashboard and side console were redesigned in 2014 to accommodate the depth of the dash deck that was shortened for a new cab-forward design. The two-drawer vertical console in the center of the dash was changed to a single larger drawer with two compartments: the top compartment has a second cup holder for the driver that slides forward to expose a deeper lower compartment.

The Tiffin PowerGlide instrument cluster — three large circular dials — was changed to white illumination on a black field, making each instrument gauge very easy to read. An LED display on the center cluster reports numerical data for speed, mpg, two trip meters, odometer, and other pertinent information, all accessed by touching two buttons in tandem or succession.

The PowerGlide's 18-inch steering wheel is designed with two control panels shaped like inverted teardrops, each inset into the wheel's interior curves. The top touch control on either side operates the headlights. The left inset has the touch buttons for the cruise control, while the right inset has controls for the windshield wiper system. On the left side of the steering column, you will find a lever to telescope the column IN/OUT and tilt it to a comfortable position.

Mounted on the wall under the window, the left console begins near your elbow and houses the standard HWH hydraulic leveling system. Optionally, buyers may choose Valid Trueline Air Leveling. Moving forward you will see a battery of clearly labeled toggle switches (window, solar and night shades for the side window, tag dump, air horn, and engine brake), a large cup holder, heated mirror controls, and finally the Allison electronic gear shift panel right at your fingertips.

The dash to the left of the steering column has three toggle switches for engine preheat, auxiliary start, and pedals IN/OUT, plus a parking brake, an AC vent, a headlights master switch, and a dimmer for dash illumination. When the standard 8-way power seats are adjusted in tandem with the IN/OUT movement control for the brake and accelerator pedals, a person of any height can be accommodated in the driver's chair.

To the right of the steering column, the color Triple Vision monitor allows you to watch traffic at the rear and on both sides of the coach. Just below the monitor you will see eight toggle switches to control the step cover, windshield fan, solar and night shades for the windshield (which also serve as sun visors), gen start-stop, map light, docking lights, and radio. To the right of the camera monitor, notice the touch screen for the radio and CD player, plus the standard in-dash navigation and satellite radio (subscription required). Under the touch screen, you will



PHOTO BY CONSTELLATION IMAGEWORKS

see the best designed automotive HVAC controls in the industry along with one 12v receptacle and two USB ports to serve cell phones, independent GPS equipment, or other appliances.

On the passenger side, the dash offers a slide-out writing table. A passenger console just under the passenger's side window has toggles for solar and night shades, step cover, map light, windshield fan, and exterior accent lights.

Driving the 45UP

Cruising at 70 on I-22 near Red Bay, the 45UP got a good workout with a mix of northwest Alabama's hill country and straightaways. The coach absorbed three- and four-percent grades like it was on level ground. On a long grade the coach moved past a couple of 18-wheelers with ease.

The interior quietness of this coach was impressive. We

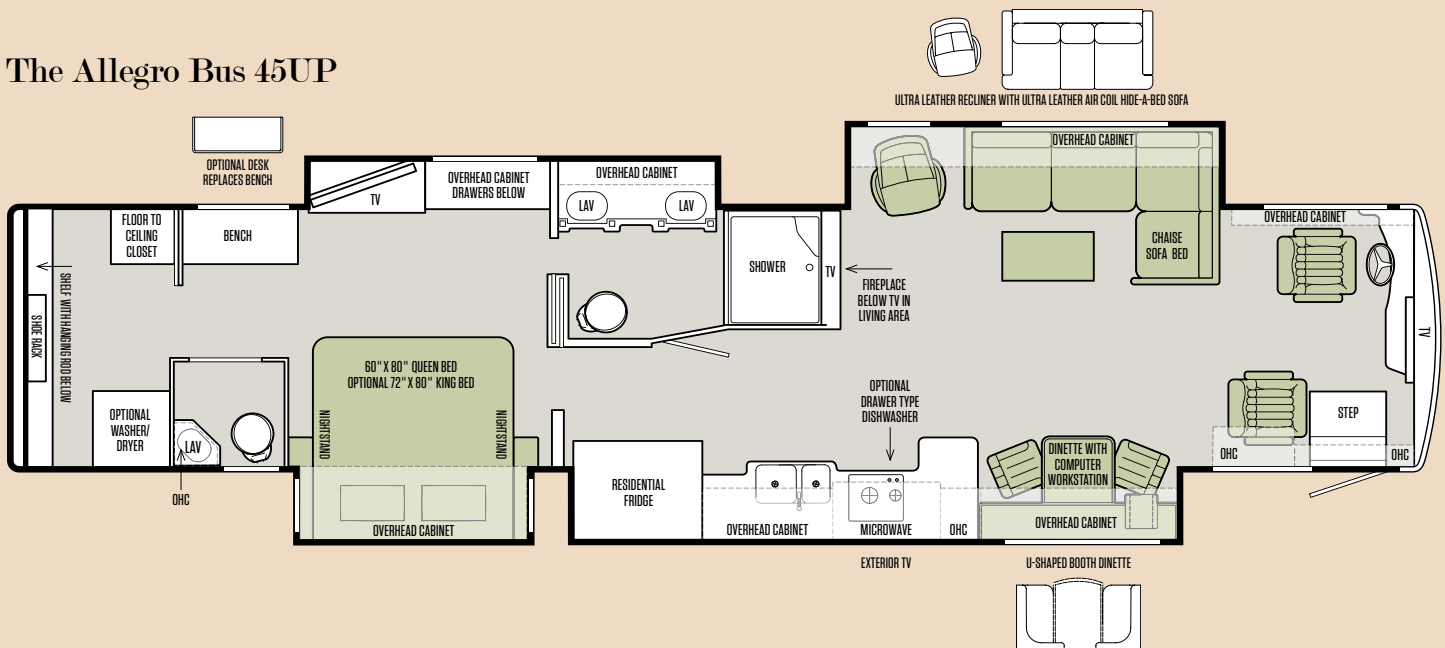
weren't in Carnegie Hall, but you could hear a paper clip drop. The big slide-outs are occasionally blamed for creating noise when you are underway, but that was not the case on this unit.

I really like the "glide" factor on the 45UP. The ride is so good that it is a pleasure (dare I call it fun?) to drive this coach. It beats Six Flags, Disney, Universal Studios, and Sea World rolled into one. I just want to keep going — 600 miles a day wouldn't faze me.

A forty-fiver is a big motorhome. So if you are accustomed to driving a 30- to 40-ft. unit, it may take you a few days of practice to feel comfortable in it, especially if you are pulling a trailer, a pickup, or a full-size car. Having used the Mobileye Collision Avoidance System on an earlier coach, I would recommend it on any 45-foot motorhome. I like all the help I can command. **RIS**

Turn the page for a discussion of the special features in the 45UP →

The Allegro Bus 45UP



SPECIFICATIONS: Model tested 2015 Allegro Bus 45UP, Quad Slide, Base MSRP* – \$408,800. MSRP as tested with options – \$438,732.

STANDARD FEATURES

Structural

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

Automotive

The Tiffin Powerglide™ chassis
Allison 3000 MH electronic 6-speed automatic transmission with two overdrives and lock-up (torque converter)
Cummins ISL 8.9-liter, 450-hp electronic/turbo-charged diesel
1,250 lbs.-ft. torque @ 1,400 rpm
Side-mounted radiator
ABS brakes & two-stage compression engine brake
Aluminum wheels
Six air bags
Emergency start switch
Cruise control
Fog lights
Adjustable gas & brake pedals
18-inch VIP smart wheel
Tilt steering column
Independent front suspension

Exterior

Fiberglass front and rear caps
Dual fuel fills
Full body paint with protective film on front cap
Large one-piece tinted windshield
Heated chrome power mirrors with remote adjustment
Single motor intermittent wiper
Undercoating
Dual pane tinted windows
Deadbolt front entrance door
Lighted keyless entry door system & keyless component door locks
Automatic door awnings
Paramount awning with extended rails to conceal roof equipment
Pass-through basement storage
Lockable swing-out exterior storage doors with gas shocks
Heated water and holding tank compartments
Auto generator start
10 kw generator
Tank monitor pad located at dump station
SeeLevel tank monitor
Hydraulic automated leveling jacks
Six house batteries
Custom full-width mud flap
50-amp service
Power cord reel, 50-amp
Black holding tank flush system
110v exterior receptacle
Water filter
Gravity fill for water tank
Docking lights
Digital TV antenna
Exterior rinse hose with soap dispenser and paper towel holder
Onan® 10kw generator with three low profile roof ACs with heat pumps
Concealed air horn
Luggage compartment lights
Pure sine wave inverter
Low profile in-motion satellite dish
Pre-wired for Winegard Trav'ler satellite dish
Daytime running lights
30-inch wide entry door with deadbolt
Double electric step
Amber patio light on driver's side
Exterior LED patio light on passenger's side
Exterior LED door light
42" exterior television, mounted in slide-out wall
Window awning package
Single handle auto-lockable storage door latches
Three low profile roof air conditioners with heat pumps
2800 watt inverter
Custom full-width mud flap
50-amp service
Power cord reel, 50-amp
Cable ready TV
Water filter

Exterior rinse hose with soap dispenser & paper towel holder
Concealed air horn
Power Fantastic® roof vent with 3-speed fan in galley
Two Fantastic® roof vents with 3-speed fans in bath areas
Color back-up camera
Two side cameras in mirrors activated with turn signal
Quiet A/C roof-ducted system

Driver's Compartment

Front overhead TV
ITC courtesy light in stepwell
12v disconnect switch
Driver side power window
Integrated seat belt brackets
Lighted instrument panel
Adjustable fuel/brake pedals
Villa® 8-way power driver's seat with Ultraleather™
Villa® 8-way power passenger's seat with Ultraleather™ and power leg lift
Passenger seat console box with built-in magazine rack
In-dash navigation system
Contemporary wraparound dash
Color rear vision monitor system with side view cameras activated by turn signals
Satellite-ready radio (requires subscription)
Lighted switches
Power solar/privacy full-width windshield shades
Solar/privacy shades for driver & passenger side windows
Single CD player & AM-FM stereo
Fire extinguisher
Dual dash fans
Computer drawer on passenger side with lock-out rails
Cupholders on driver & passenger side
Two wooden dash drawers
Drawer in step well
12v/110v/phone jack receptacle
Two USB ports in dash & passenger console

Living area/dinette

Dinette with computer workstation & solid surface table tops
12v and 110v receptacles at dinette
Full ceramic tile floor throughout the coach
42-inch flat screen HDMI television wall-mounted
L-shaped chaise lounge with queen hide-a-bed Air Comfort mattress

Kitchen

Polished solid surface countertops with sink covers
Expand-an-island
Solid surface double bowl sink
2½-inch deep lighted toe kick
Single lever sink faucet with built-in sprayer
LED lights above countertop
Residential stainless steel refrigerator with icemaker and water dispenser in door (6 batteries)
Stainless steel convection microwave oven with exterior vent
2-burner induction cooktop with hinged cover
One 3-speed Fantastic® fan
Galley soap dispenser
Solid surface covers for sink
Storage rack for sink covers in cabinet under sink
Cherry cabinetry

Mid-Coach Full Bath

Two medicine cabinets with mirrors & vanity lights
Skylight in shower & LED light
Solid surface vanity top and bowls
Solid surface shower with glass door
Standard flush toilet with OH cabinet
3-speed Fan-Tastic® fan

Half Bath

One medicine cabinet with vanity lights
Two mirrors
Cabinet over window
Electric maserator toilet

Solid surface vanity top and bowl
Full backsplash
One 3-speed Fan-Tastic® fan

Bedroom

Pillow-top queen mattress (60" x 80")
Bed comforter with throw pillows
Solid wood and fabric headboard
Ceramic tile floors
Two nightstands w/ solid surface tops, USB ports, 110v outlets
Two chests of drawers
One chest of drawers in closet
Solar/privacy shades
DVD, Blu-ray system & satellite receiver
Laundry hamper
42-inch flat panel color television
Ceiling fan
Wall safe
Carbon monoxide detector

General Interior

7-foot ceilings
Soft touch vinyl ceiling
High gloss raised panel hardware cabinet doors
Recessed LED ceiling lighting
12v LED lights
Security safe
Adjustable shelving in some cabinets
SeeLevel tank monitor
Carbon monoxide and smoke detectors
Central vacuum system with VacPac
Wardrobe with automatic light
Multiplex lighting system
In-motion low profile satellite dish with DirecTV® receiver
Extraordinaire™ AC system
Electric step well cover
Washer-dryer ready
Aqua-Hot hydronic heating system
Energy management system
Power solar and privacy shades in living room
Manual solar and privacy shades in bedroom
Manual privacy shade only in half bath
Porcelain tile flooring throughout coach, excluding slide-outs
Complete cable wiring interfacing with surround sound and satellite receiver
Surround sound speakers in ceiling

OPTIONAL FEATURES ON THIS COACH

Glazed Canyon cherry wood cabinets
Air leveling system
Second Carefree Paramount awning
Basement electric refrigerator
Dishwasher – drawer type
Exterior ground effect lighting
Heated tile floors
One exterior slide-out storage tray
Fireplace
Six Lifeline batteries
Stacked washer and dryer
Air Comfort Mattress – King
Solar Panel (1)
Air Leveling System

OTHER OPTIONAL FEATURES AVAILABLE

DRIVER SIDE

Ultraleather recliner & hide-a-bed sofa
PASSENGER SIDE

Ultraleather U-shaped dinette

King bed

Queen bed, standard
Air Comfort mattress, queen
Memory foam mattress, queen
Memory foam mattress, king
Cherry wood interior cabinets
Natural cherry wood interior cabinets
Glazed cherry wood interior cabinets
Glazed honey natural cherry wood cabinets
Mobiley™ Collision Avoidance System (available on PowerGlide chassis only)
Rear view mirror with compass
Exterior roof ladder

MEASUREMENTS

Wheelbase – 326"
Overall length – 44' 11"
Overall height with roof air – 12' 7"
Interior height – 84"
Overall width – 101"
Interior width – 96"

WEIGHTS & CAPACITIES

GVWR – 51,300 lb.
Front GAWR – 16,000 lb.
Rear GAWR – 22,000 lb.
Tag Axle – 13,300 lb.
GCWR – 66,300 lb.
UVW – 37,720 lb.
CCC – 12,135 lb.
Trailer hitch capacity – 15,000 lb.

POWER TRAIN

Engine – Cummins ISL 8.9-liter 450-hp electronic diesel
Torque – 1,250 lb.-ft. @ 1,400 rpm
Transmission – Allison electronic 3000 MH 6-speed automatic with 2 overdrives
Tire Size – Front: 315/80R; Rear: 295/80R
Alternator – Leece-Neville 210 amps

CHASSIS

Frame – Powerglide™ chassis
Frame design – Raised rail
Anti-locking braking system – (front) Bendix ADB225 17" vented air disc (rear) Bendix/Spicer 16.5" x 7" drum
Suspension (front) – ZF RL80 IFS rated at 16K custom tuned (air)
Suspension (rear) – Tuthill RD 2300 custom tuned (air)
Shock absorbers – Bilstein, rear / Sachs, front
Leveling jacks – HWH hydraulic

CONSTRUCTION

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

ACCOMMODATIONS

Sleeps – Four adults
Fuel tank – 150 gallons
Freshwater – 90 gallons
Black water – 50 gallons
Grey water – 70 gallons

MSRP*

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

UVW

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

DEALERS

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

PLEASE NOTE

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

Special Features in the Allegro Bus 45UP

STANDARD AND OPTIONAL

The Standard Equipment That You Can See

Standard equipment means *what is included* in the base price of \$408,800 MSRP for the 45UP on a PowerGlide chassis with a 450-hp Cummins engine. We will look first at what you see outside and then as you walk through the coach. Then we will consider what you don't see that is standard equipment.

The exterior window frames visually disappear into the full body paint system, causing the tinted glass to “float” in the frames. Viewed from the outside, the manufacturing method does not expose the tracks in which the windows slide. With a light flick of the wrist, one glass panel slides over the other as you open the window – a feature usually found on million-dollar coaches.

Tiffin's state-of-the-art paint plant in Belmont, Mississippi has set the benchmark in the Class A motorhome industry for outstanding full-body finishes. Beautiful finishes require multiple sanding passes. The eight-step paint system begins with a full-body base coat and continues with three painting stages to create each of the eight designs. Tiffin features premium grade paint sealed with four layers of super clearcoat with ultraviolet protection. All of the layers are applied in 70-foot downdraft paint booths with filtered air systems to create outstanding automotive finishes. The front cap is protected by Diamond Shield's exclusive film coating that comes with its own warranty and is standard on the Allegro Bus.

A 20-foot Paramount awning by Carefree of Colorado is encased in a raised housing that connects the front and rear caps on both sides of the coach. The design adds a dimension of elegance to the 2015 Allegro Bus. Viewed from ground level, the housing completely hides all of the roof-mounted equipment. Adding to the enjoyment of the covered patio, a 42-inch LED television brings full entertainment programming outside. As an option, a second Paramount awning was included to cover the entire length of the passenger side of the coach (\$7,000 MSRP).

Moving inside, the number of *standard features* amazes first-time visitors and leaves the competition shaking their heads. When you slide into the cockpit . . .

The *Villa driver's chair* will swell around you, giving you the kind of support that will make all day drives a piece of cake. The powered seat with an integrated shoulder strap provides 8-way adjustments and your co-pilot gets the same treatment plus a leg lift. While you are in the cockpit, notice the standard in-dash navigation and satellite radio (subscription required). There is much more in this cockpit to point out, so we will come back to it later.

There are four *décor*s including one featuring fabrics by Ralph Lauren; two choices of porcelain tile; four handmade backsplashes and countertops in the galley and the full and half baths; and a solid surface shower with handmade accents and a fold-down seat.

Tiffin uses *cherry for the cabinets*, exclusively for the Allegro Bus. It is standard. Cabinetry and sliding doors, cabinet facings, fascias, judge's paneling, valances, crown molding—all solid cherry! You can choose from six finishes. Glazes are extra.

The 45UP is an *all-electric coach*. The first evidence is the cooktop: gone are the propane gas burners, replaced by an induction cooking system. Induction cooking requires special pots, pans, and skillets, which Tiffin supplies with the coach. See page 16, Induction Cooking.

On the same theme of standard equipment, let's take a quick look at the dinette and galley. Tiffin's interior designers want owners to feel at home – this coach is a residence. You have a *residential size* microwave-convection oven and a Whirlpool 20+ cu.ft. refrigerator – freezer. Water and ice (crushed or cubes) are dispensed through the door where a control center monitors the temps in the fridge and the freezer.

To make the living area of the Allegro Bus *even more residential*, Tiffin included the fireplace, a central vacuum system, and the dinette-computer workstation as standard equipment. Lighting throughout the coach is thoughtfully designed and selective for every activity: reading, listening to music, watching television, entertaining, dining, and cooking.

When something is “as it should be,” we have a tendency to overlook its existence. Leg lifts for three seating positions. The



L-shaped sofa, recliner, and the driver and passenger chairs that cuddle you in Ultraleather™ – all standard. Tiffin designers are focused on comfort.

With **three 42-inch HDMI televisions**, there is no shortage of entertainment inside the 45UP. The mid-section television is wall-mounted in a recessed area that features soft backlighting. With the television mounted over the dash, everyone in the living-dining-galley area will have a clear view of the selected program – even the chef. If it happens to be football season, you can keep up with two games at once. If children are on board, the bedroom can become their entertainment center. Of course, if it's just the two of you, get comfy in your PJs and catch a movie all propped up in bed.

The **technology center** for entertainment programming is located in the louvered cabinet under the bedroom television. 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, Pandora Internet Radio, Vudu, Fox Sports, Picasa Web Albums, and YouTube videos. Your Wi-Fi connection can be supplied by Verizon's 4G network MiFi air card. Verizon claims 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. 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.

Tiffin has done its homework on **satellite reception** wherever you are in North America. Standard equipment on the 45UP, Winegard's RoadTrip Mission In-Motion Satellite TV Antenna™ is an automatic, in-motion, roof-mounted satellite antenna that makes it possible for passengers to watch live television while traveling. Compatible with Dish and DIRECTV, or Bell TV in Canada, the RoadTrip Mission receives all Standard Definition (SD) as well as HD programming for Dish and Bell TV. Of course, you have to purchase receivers and satellite TV programming separately. It has a small footprint on the roof of only 20 inches in diameter and a low profile height of 12.9 inches.

The coach is prewired at no charge for Winegard's TRAVLER Automatic Multi-Satellite TV Antenna.™ Made with certified reflectors used for homes, the TRAVLER is the ultimate antenna providing unmatched performance with no limitations or compromises. Unlike dome antennas, the TRAVLER DIRECTV Slimline™ models provide maximum HD programming (receivers and programming sold separately). With the ability to receive programming from all satellites simultaneously, you can watch separate programming at the same time on multiple TVs in the coach. In motorhomes equipped with more than two TVs, the TRAVLER is perfect for families with different viewing preferences. Compatible with all receivers, including DVRs, the TRAVLER allows you to watch and record from different satellites simultaneously and enjoy the prerecorded program later at any time you choose. TRAVLER antennas retract to a low 10-inch height during travel.

At six locations in the coach, the electrical engineers have positioned **panels of lighted touch switches**, white when ON and blue when OFF. Each panel has 10 controls. For example, the panel facing the step well at floor level has 10 switches pertaining to entry/exit that are at your fingertips when you are leaning in from the outside. They include MAIN CEILING LIGHTS, CARGO LIGHTS, LIGHT MASTER, DOOR LIGHT, and six more. The panel in the galley controls the MAIN CEILING LIGHTS, PS and DS CEILING, TASK LIGHTS (over the cooking area), CEILING EXHAUST FAN and WATER PUMP. The panel on the wall opposite the refrigerator manages the rear slide-outs plus the WATER HEATER (electric or Aqua Hot), ENG PREHEAT, and the exact volume percentage of the fresh, grey, and black tanks, plus the amp percentage for the house batteries. The rear thermostat is adjacent to this light panel. The thermostats for the front and mid-section are located in the cabinet over the passenger seat.

The shades for windows in the living-dining area are controlled from a touch panel mounted on the wall just above the chaise lounge. Windshield and side window shades in the cockpit area are controlled by toggle switches in the dash and side consoles. The one-piece shades for the entire windshield are one of the best features ever invented for safe driving.

A small fob for your pocket or purse automatically activates the secondary sliding lock on the entry door and all of the locks on the exterior storage compartments. The primary deadbolt lock for the entry door is activated by keyless entry buttons mounted in the assist handle. The camera monitor in the dash, primarily designed for driving, can also be used to check the outside perimeters of the coach (sight and sound).

Here's What You Don't See That Is Standard Equipment

Tiffin's state-of-the-art **Extraordinaire™** heating and cooling technology is modeled on residential style systems. It uses adjustable registers for distribution and return air ducts positioned on both sides of the ceiling and down the length of the coach to keep the airflow moving in a circular pattern, maintain-



ing the temperature settings you select on the coach's three thermostats. The three AC units are also heat pumps that warm the coach as long as the outside temperature remains in the high thirties or above.

When the temperature plunges into the thirties and below, the **Aqua-Hot Heating System** kicks in to provide hydronic heat throughout the coach. Aqua-Hot heats a special coolant that is circulated to several heat exchangers to evenly warm the coach. It can use the coach's 50-amp power or the diesel fuel from the primary fuel tank. The system also provides continuous hot water on demand in the galley and the bathrooms. During very cold weather, running the "engine pre-heat" option circulates the engine's coolant through the Aqua-Hot system to warm up the engine for a quick start. And vice versa, if you are in transit, the system passes the engine's anti-freeze through the heat exchangers to warm the entire coach.

To make the coach's cooling and heating systems more efficient, TMH last year began using a **Thermal Wrap**, a foil-backed thermal insulation built into the construction of the walls of all of its brands. On hot summer days, the thermal material reduces the interior temperature in a coach by approximately 10 degrees. Of course, this helps reduce the load on the air conditioners. Conversely, the thermal wrap retains the interior heat in the winter months.

Tucked away in the basement, you won't see the **Central Vacuum System**. Connecting at a baseboard outlet near the center of the coach, one vacuum hose will reach all points from the rear closet to the entrance door. All of the usual attachments come with the system. One special feature for quick cleanup is a "vacuum dustpan" conveniently mounted in the baseboard wall just opposite the cooktop. Keep a small broom handy, flip open the **VacPan**, and away goes the small debris.

Power Control System with a Central Monitor Panel. Most resorts and campgrounds offer a maximum of 50-amp electrical service. With all of the electrical equipment in an Allegro Bus, you can easily exceed 50 amps of simultaneous

demand. Located in the cabinet above the driver, the **PCS-CMP** allows you to set up two 50-amp plans and then prioritize specific items to drop off when you exceed the amperage available. It functions automatically, dropping the least-needed items off to prevent an unexpected shutdown of everything in the coach.

Magnum Energy Inverter. Also located in the cabinet above the driver, this system is very important to the operation of the residential refrigerator if you are dry camping. It monitors the reserves in the six house batteries and auto-starts the generator when the batteries are too low to keep the fridge operating on converted 110v house current. It also serves two of the televisions and several 110v outlets. It is very programmable to the owner's lifestyle.

More on Some of the Special Features

Porcelain Tile Throughout the Coach is offered again this year as standard equipment. After you select your interior décor (Bamboo, Ritz, Watercolor, or Aspen by Ralph Lauren), you can choose between a herringbone design tile with a light gray patterned background or a staggered brickwork design tile with a soft beige background. The advantage, of course, is that you have the same floor throughout the coach, including the bedroom and baths. Many owners add handsome accent rugs that blend with their chosen colors.

In the galley you will notice three features that are standard equipment and included in the base price:

Induction Cooking is standard in the "all electric" 2015 Allegro Bus. This means the galley features an induction cooktop. Induction heating directly heats a cooking vessel, as contrasted with heat transfer from electrical coils or burning gas in a traditional cooktop. Induction cooktops require the use of cookware made of ferromagnetic metal and a complete set is provided with the coach. Induction cooktops are faster and more energy-efficient than traditional electric cooking surfaces. Induction allows instant control of cooking energy. "All electric" also means there is no need for a propane tank.

The **Microwave-Convection Oven** has been a standard feature for so long in the Allegro Bus brand that I sometimes (and I am sure our owners do, too) forget that it is included in Tiffin's base price. TMH uses a residential size unit for the galley which makes convection cooking practical for meats, casseroles, cakes, desserts, and whatever may be on your menu.

The **Residential Refrigerator** in this coach is a 20-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 temperature in both the freezer and the fridge.

Rounding out what is standard on the 45UP, you may be surprised to learn that a **safe** is installed in the rear wall of the coach. Access to the safe, hidden by your clothes hanging in the closet, requires a complex combination. If you forget the combination, a key will open it.



Optional Functionality and Luxury Features in This Coach

On this coach, the selected options represent only 6.8 percent of the final MSRP, which emphasizes again just how much is included in the base price.

The **heated floors** in the bedroom and baths were popular in the 2014 model year and are offered again this year (\$5,180 MSRP). The power and temp controls for each area are in the panel located in the full bath.

In addition to the standard HWH hydraulic jacks, marketing and engineering decided to offer as an option **Valid Trueline Air Leveling** (\$3,710 MSRP), an automatic one-step air leveling system designed specifically for RV applications. Valid uses leading-edge technology to measure along three separate axes of the chassis (across front and rear axles, and then longitudinally) to check for both level and twist. It then accurately levels the vehicle. The flexible control process is automated to ensure operation is simplified for the end user. It also allows for manual leveling and low-speed maneuvering in manual mode.

Optional design features include **glazes** (\$2,940 MSRP) for the cabinet stains. In this coach, Glazed Canyon Cherry was chosen.

When gear is stored in the motorhome's basement, reaching items in the middle can be a project. One of the most

useful options is the **MOR/Stor sliding tray** by MOR/Ryde (\$700 MSRP). The **sliding steel tray** can be accessed from both sides of the coach.

While the forward **Paramount awning** is standard, the second 20-foot awning is optional (\$7,000 MSRP). It extends the patio awning to nearly the full length of the coach.

Not having to haul your clothes to a laundromat, not knowing what was in the washer and dryer before you used it, and sheer convenience has made the **stacked washer/dryer** (\$1,680 MSRP) the most popular option in the Allegro Bus brand. The Fisher & Paykel **automatic dishwasher** (\$1,330 MSRP) is running a close second.

For owners who expect to entertain frequently, the **basement freezer/refrigerator** is indispensable (\$1,540 MSRP). Conveniently rigged on a slide-out tray, it can be used as an auxiliary freezer or a canned drink cooler.

Our test coach had six **Lifeline house batteries** (\$2,940 MSRP), a product often installed on military vehicles for durability and longevity. This option is often selected by owners who dry camp frequently. About 10 percent of Tiffin Class A coaches are shipped with Lifeline batteries. Another option selected by dry campers is the roof-mounted **solar panel** (\$1,232 MSRP).

A "just for fun" option is the **exterior**

ground effect lighting feature. With the activation switch on the passenger console, the co-pilot will get the honor of turning it on each evening (\$560 MSRP).

The final option selected for this 45UP is the **Air Comfort mattress** (\$1,120 MSRP). It has become a very popular and modestly priced option. Each side of the bed has variable firmness selected with a single wireless control.

Options Not Selected for This Coach That You May Want

The **Mobileye Collision Avoidance System** was offered for the first time last year (\$1,540 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, reducing high beams to low, exceeding speed limits, safe following distance, and collision avoidance with pedestrians and bicycles.

The immensely popular dinette/computer workstation on this coach is standard. However, you can order the optional luxurious **U-shaped dinette** (\$2,100 MSRP) with Ultraleather that matches the L-shaped sofa and recliner.

As a safety concern, many owners do not choose to climb onto the roof of the motorhome. But if you are a sure-footed fellow, Tiffin can mount the optional **roof ladder** (\$210 MSRP) on the rear cap.

One **slide-out tray** is specified on this coach as an option (\$700 MSRP). You can order two trays for \$1,260 MSRP.

A **rear desk and chair** (\$700 MSRP) can be ordered in place of the standard dressing bench that is shown in this coach. It has a 110v outlet and two USB ports and is perfect for keeping track of your records, especially if you chose the Ultraleather U-shaped dinette over the dinette/computer workstation.

If you prefer a 92-inch Villa sofa with an Air Comfort hide-a-bed instead of the L-shaped sofa, the optional charge is \$1,260 MSRP. The Ultraleather recliner is standard with either choice.



Ancira RV



ONE CANNOT TELL THE STORY OF ANCIRA RV without first recounting the remarkable career of Ernesto Ancira, Jr. After his birth in San Antonio in 1944, Ernesto's parents returned to Mexico when he was three. His father, Ernesto Ancira, Sr., was an entrepreneur with investments in several businesses. When it came time for high school and college, Ernesto Jr. returned to San Antonio. He graduated at 20 from St. Edwards University with a bachelor's degree in business.

In addition to his degree and early graduation from college, his fluent bilingual skills caught the attention of the Gillette company who hired him for an entry-level management job in Mexico City. "I began my career as a product manager for new product sales development in the Mexican market," Ancira explained. "I took our products to stores that were not stocking the Gillette brands and got them started."

His tenacity in persuading stores to stock Gillette products may have earned Ancira an invitation to join Gillette's training program. Always on the look-out for bright bilingual talent, Kimberly-Clark recruited him to develop their marketing program in Mexico. At 28 with just two years in Kimberly Clark's management group, he was asked to take a general director's position in Brazil. In 1972 Brazil was still very much a third-world country and he was not interested in taking his wife and two young daughters to Rio de Janeiro.

Text and photography by Fred Thompson

While on his way to Kimberly-Clark's corporate headquarters in Wisconsin, Ancira decided to stop in San Antonio to visit with college friends. He learned about a Chevrolet dealership in town that had been in custodial operation by the bank and the deceased owner's estate for a year. The Hispanic community without success had pressured General Motors to make a serious search for qualified minority ownership.

Ancira discussed the situation with the dealership's general manager, Ralph Winton, and invited him into a partnership. He put everything he owned on the line, went to the bank, and with his new partner pulled off the deal. The agreement was signed on May 1, 1972.

"I motivated the sales team and the service staff with new incentives. Everyone was challenged to the max. We generated a lot of excitement, sales soared, and in three months we made the money needed to buy the dealership," Ancira smiled, retelling the story that his family and staff had heard many times. "I felt an incredible responsibility to do well and perform because it reflected on the business talent and ability of the Hispanic community."

The partnership agreement with Winton included a plan to move the dealership from downtown San Antonio to a location that would take advantage of the high traffic perimeter routes that were being built in San Antonio. But land was already scarce at the main intersections.

"Quincy Lee, a leading developer in the seventies, had 40

acres near the intersection of Bandera and Loop 410. It was more land than I thought I needed but Mr. Lee offered it to me for \$1.2 million. I told him I didn't have the money to pay right away, but we shook hands on the deal anyway and he told me to pay him when I could," Ancira recalled.

A few weeks later Lee was offered \$2 million for the property, but he stood by his verbal agreement with Ancira. "I told Quincy I was going to build a dealership on the land and not sell it even if I could make a huge profit because I owed it to him to do what I had said. I learned an important lesson that day about honoring your word. Mr. Lee is one of my heroes."

In the 1970s General Motors had 50 percent of the automobile market. Each dealer was required by GM to spend the majority of his time in developing a single dealership. Multiple dealerships under one owner did not exist. With regard to developing multiple dealerships, two things affected the business paths taken by the company that was to become Ancira Enterprises, Inc.

In the mid-seventies, foreign manufacturers began establishing dealerships in the U.S. without that requirement. They actually encouraged successful dealers to open multiple dealerships. That changed the playing field. U.S. manufacturers acquiesced and began allowing individuals to own more than one dealership. In 1983 Ancira acquired a Jeep-Eagle dealership, the first of many acquisitions to come.

From 1972 through 1978, General Motors entered the motorhome business with a sleek 26-foot coach with exterior and interior design that took the industry by storm. They selected their Chevrolet dealers to market their innovative new product. The motorhome transitioned Ancira-Winton Chevrolet into offering a second product that expanded the travel experience of their customers and would soon create a second division for Ancira Enterprises.

"We opened an RV dealership on Bandera Road in July 1984, near our Chevy dealership. The dealership tapped into a large 1983 model year inventory that the manufacturer disposed of at discounted prices," he explained. "Then, two years later we bought Fred Riley GMC Truck & RV in Boerne. Fred carried 14 brands that we whittled down to eight over the next five years. During that period, we became a dealer for Tiffin Motorhomes.

"We were doing well enough to expand into Temple, Texas where Winnebago had bought a mall with an outdoor facility suitable for RV sales. Winnebago started the mall with the intent of attracting stores such as Cabelo's, so they called it Outdoor America. When they opened, Winnebago asked me to be the dealer and the facility became a fully operational dealership.



Ernesto and Robin Ancira with their daughter April Ancira Thompson, photographed recently as they visited inside a 2015 Allegro Bus 45LP.



The company places tremendous emphasis on social media and internet advertising, indicated in their “.com” sign on I-10. ♦ The corporate staff of Ancira Enterprises, Inc., from left: Ernesto Ancira Jr., President; Joey Blackmon, VP of Auto/RV Operations; Betty Ferguson, Chief Financial Officer; Elizabeth Barrera, Director of IT; Jeanne Starnes, Ancira Enterprises Business Manager; C. Kevin Ketner, VP/GM Ancira RV. *Not pictured:* Greg Spence, Executive VP; Valerie Tackett, VP Ancira Team Services; Kris Benton, Administrative Assistant to Mr. Ancira; Lynn Reininger, Administrative Assistant to Joey Blackmon; Rafael Saenz, Ancira Team Services; Ilona Maggard, Ancira Team Services; Chrissy Palmer, Ancira Team Services; Gonzalo Castro, IT Engineer

Ultimately, the mall did not take off and Winnebago offered to sell the mall for a price I could not refuse,” Ancira said.

When the recession slammed the economy in 2008, Ancira Enterprises closed the Temple RV dealership, but the mall space was rented successfully to several businesses.

At the beginning of 2008, the corpora-

tion employed 800 in its 11 automotive dealerships and three RV dealerships. “We had to reduce the staff by 250 across all of the dealerships. It broke our hearts to lay people off, but the goal was to save the company. At this point, we had already closed the McAllen and Denton RV stores. With this consolidation, we were able to remodel and improve our Alvara-

do facility. We continued to spend just as much on advertising as we had before. We found every possible place to cut expenses. We asked employees to cross train and do more,” Ancira said in a low voice.

“In our RV division, we dropped manufacturers that were not productive. GMAC came in along with credit unions to offer financing for very qualified buyers with large down payments. BOA financed what they had repossessed, but not new,” he said. “Then, Security Service Federal Credit Union stepped in to help



boost our financing for buyers. They now write more retail paper than all the others put together. GMAC, now Ally, came back and started floorplanning.”

“When manufacturers began to fail, we put our own warranties on our towables. When Fleetwood took bankruptcy, they came to the table to assist with whatever they could and we made up the rest. Tiffin Motorhomes never faltered and stood by their warranties 100 percent,” Ancira continued. “Laying off 250 employees was the hardest thing I ever did in my life. In 2011 we started growing again and attempted to rehire previous employees for any new positions available. Some had found positions elsewhere, but we were successful in rehiring many of them.

“Bonding through tough times has played a big role in building this company,” Ancira said. “Over the years, there were the oil embargoes, the S&L failures, and then the mortgage bust.”

“We are a whole company, not 15 separate businesses,” he explained. “When the group prospers as a whole, bonuses go to every general manager. Each month we have four- to five-hour meetings during which we share good and bad ideas. Every general manager participates, but I do not attend. I don’t go because I do not want my presence to intimidate or influence what is discussed. That extends a lot of self-empowerment to our managers. There are no prima donnas, but they decide within each dealership how the business will be operated unless it affects the whole group. At the departmental level, we provide opportunities and tools for key employees to develop and grow. This makes it possible for the departmental managers to learn how an organization functions as a whole.

“Promoting from within the corporation has always been a strong business philosophy here,” Ancira emphasized. “Joey Blackmon’s career is a prime example of an employee starting in a departmental job and rising to the top of this organization.

“I hired Joey in September 1977. He was working as the assistant parts manager for another Chevy dealership, but

because of commitments made to that company he felt he had to wait until March 1978 to join us as parts manager at Ancira-Winton,” Ancira said. “He was promoted to service and parts director in 1980. After assisting with the RV and Jeep acquisitions at the Bandera location in May 1985, Joey was promoted to general manager of our RV store. In ’86 he moved the RV store to our I-10 location. A year later he was promoted to general manager of our Ancira-Winton Chevy dealership. In 1998 he became vice president of operations of all of the automotive stores.

“In the beginning, although I knew we had to succeed to establish our reputation in San Antonio, my greatest motivation was, and still is, to take care of our employees and improve their quality of life,” he continued. “Initially, we came to work to survive, but the real vision came from within, from the employees. They created a business home. In a few weeks we will see our 43rd anniversary. Today we have 11 automobile dealerships and two RV dealerships. Each dealership is a business home for the employees who continue to have the vision to provide the best sales experience and service to their customers.”

The corporation bounced back after the recession with record annual sales. In 2013 corporate sales missed \$1 billion by just \$300,000. In 2014, Ancira Enterprises broke the \$1 billion sales ceiling by a comfortable margin of \$25 million.

“My job today is to help in the selection of key management in each dealership, advise when needed, and provide the operating capital for growth and development,” Ancira said.

Few who are familiar with Ancira Enterprises could miss the presence of a tall athletic blond who is taking a major role in managing the corporation. Ernesto and Robin Ancira’s daughter, April Ancira Thompson, will in the not-too-distant future assume her father’s role as president even though he may continue as CEO, observing with great pride April’s business skills in managing the company. With a bachelor’s degree in finance and marketing from Trinity University and an MBA

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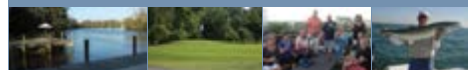


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The Ancira RV sales staff, except as noted, are *back row*: Fred Flickinger; Griz Harkins; Roger Adams, Store Manager; and Gordon Walsler. *Front row*: Cassandra Blackburn, Administrative Assistant; Steve Lyons; Lavoy Volesky; Bob Shipley; and C. Kevin Ketner, VP/GM Ancira RV. *Not pictured*: Trenton Smith; Mitch Yager; and Greg Stevens, Finance Director

from the University of Texas, she is certainly qualified academically. But a decade of training and grooming by her father is probably more valuable than two college degrees. Some day she will be asked, “What is your job in this company?” and she will most likely give the same answer her father gave earlier.

“April has learned the business by working in each store in nearly every department and capacity,” Roger Adams, the Boerne store manager, observed. “Some of the older general managers and department managers have watched her grow up and she treats them like uncles. April has a talent for creating an immediate rapport with whomever she is working.”

“In 2005, by measuring tenures from the assistant managers’ level up through our corporate management structure, the human resources department discovered that these managers collectively had over 1,000 years of tenure with Ancira. Retirement is our primary cause of attrition, but with mentoring we have been very successful in replacing those skills from within the company,” Ancira noted.

Every quarter the company has a luncheon to celebrate employees’ anniversaries, beginning at five years and celebrating every five-year interval to 35 years. “It is important for employees to hear me say how much I appreciate each one of them and how much they do for customers to make

this a viable, profitable enterprise,” he said. “When I make our employees my #1 priority, that makes it possible for them to make our customers their #1 priority.”

Ancira RV now has two dealerships, one in Boerne and one in Alvarado, Texas. The Boerne store is Tiffin’s San Antonio dealer. Kevin Ketner is vice president of Ancira Enterprises’ RV division and now in his 23rd year with the company.

The Michigan native earned a bachelor’s degree in marketing and business administration from Ferris State University’s specialized automotive technology program. “My grandfather worked for Ford and an uncle was employed by Chevrolet in developing concept cars,” Ketner said, “so no one was surprised when I decided to study automotive technology.”

Ketner began his career with a Chevrolet dealership in Elmhurst, Illinois. He went to the manufacturing side of the industry as a district sales manager with Pontiac and began a training course that was supposed to take six to eight months. After just 30 days, he was pulled out of the course and sent to the Houston–Beaumont area as a district sales manager for 22 dealerships.

He was promoted to the wholesale side of the business in 1982 in the Pontiac Motor Division, representing five Houston area Pontiac–GMC dealerships.

“Working wholesale was fun and educational, but retail auto sales was my first preference. Retail sales went all the way back to my high school days and continued through college in Big Rapids, and then with Chevy and Pontiac after college,” he said.

That opportunity came again in 1986 with the Tom Benson organization in San Antonio. “I developed the service organization for a Chevy dealership and then served as general manager for their Cadillac agency in Corpus Christi,” he said.

Ketner’s horizons expanded in 1992 when Joey Blackmon offered him the position of service director at the company’s Jeep store. “I helped launch that store and then became general manager,” Ketner said. “Subsequent launches included the Nissan dealership and two Chrysler dealerships—three launches in eight years.

“Mr. Ancira strongly supports internal advancement for employees if there is a qualified employee available for an open position,” Ketner said. “We built great staffs at all three of the new launches. He sees the internal customer (employees) as No. 1. The employees will make our customers No. 1. He believes if he can make employees’ lives better, he has built a better company. Mr. Ancira doesn’t want you to have a job—he wants you to have a career.”

In the Boerne store, Ancira has four Class A manufacturers including Tiffin, Fleetwood, American, and Newmar. Forest River supplies their Class C product. The company carries a wide assortment of travel trailers from several manufacturers.

“We are selling up to 50 Tiffin coaches a year with Phaeton being the most popular, then the Allegro Bus, followed by the Allegro Open Road. Here is why the Boerne store is so successful,” Ketner said.

- Our reputation in the marketplace. We strive to do everything “the right

way.” When you begin the relationship correctly, then after the sale it will be so much easier to continue with a positive relationship in service.

- Ancira has phenomenal employee retention. When we begin a sales or service relationship with a customer, he knows he will always be able to see the same sales person and the same service advisor and technicians.

- Having a facility that people like to come to is very important, and a product line that is diverse enough to give them choices.

- In marketing our company, we try to make it clear: here is what we do and here is how we treat you.

“You can make an occasional mistake and do a few things wrong, if you do the above things right,” Ketner emphasized. “Fairness is the operative word. Most folks just want what is fair. In our corporate meetings of the 13 companies, Mr. Ancira often says, ‘I want to be able to greet any customer I might meet in a restaurant

and have a pleasant conversation.’”

Ancira RV in Boerne is doing a lot of things right. Their 2014 annual sales were \$37 million. They sold 350 new motorhomes and towables, of which 140 were motorhomes. The company does a thorough job of refurbishing trade-ins to put them in “like new” condition. As a result they have successfully addressed a strong market in pre-owned motorhomes, fifth wheels, and travel trailers.

Ancira RV launched new websites in 2014 for both their Boerne and Alvarado locations. “When customers arrive at our two locations, we figure at least 90 percent have carefully researched our website to identify the units in which they are interested,” Ketner said. “Because of this, we invested in strong landing sites, search engine optimization, Google Top 5 listings, and ‘Ad Word’ campaigns. After a few moments on our site, a chat box pops up and invites the browser to have a conversation with a member of Ancira’s sales team. With a few questions, the salesperson can

help the browser focus on a unit in our inventory that may be exactly what he or she is looking for. Our salesperson’s product knowledge can be invaluable in a successful conclusion to the customer’s search.”

“It is not unusual for us to develop turnkey quotations right on the website,” said Roger Adams, Boerne’s store manager over sales, service, parts, and finance. Adams is a 17-year veteran with the company. “We email a ‘build sheet’ to the web customer who sent the inquiry and a sheet to fill out all of the details about the trade-in, including info on smokers, pets, age and wear on the tires, and interior and exterior pictures of the RV.”

“We often use 24 + pictures of the exterior and interior, for motorized and towable, new and used,” Steve Lyons, a 30-year veteran in sales at Ancira, said. “The more information a customer can get from our website, the more likely we will get the opportunity to talk with him or her.”

Lyons was actually selling RVs for Fred Riley GMC Trucks & RVs when Ancira

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acquired the property and the business. “I sold my first ‘Brown & White’ to the Wenches, rice farmers from Houston,” he laughed. “It’s hard to believe that was 30 years ago.”

“In addition to our website, we do a lot of promos on television and radio,” Adams said. “Mr. Ancira usually does our television promos and over the years has become our best advertising asset because he is so well-known in San Antonio.”

During the March to October segment of the sales year, Ancira RV keeps 10 to 15 Tiffin units in stock. When I visited in mid-February, they had four Phaetons, two Allegro Buses, four Allegro REDs, and three Allegros in inventory.

“Our website is completely searchable,” Adams continued. “We add and pull daily to keep it up-to-date. The software automatically marks a unit as SOLD. Kevin’s administrative assistant, Cassandra Blackburn, has become our key person for updating our inventory. She will be attending a one-week school in Google analytics this spring.”

Adams, who retired as a San Antonio police officer in 1993, became store manager in 2004 after several promotions. “The big thing during my tenure is marketing via the internet. It is really a double-edged sword. Initially, our website brought in local buyers, but now we are selling to buyers throughout the U.S. and overseas. It has not helped our gross profit per unit, but volume sales have boomed.

We are selling shorter motorhomes in Canada, Mexico, Kuwait, Netherlands, Spain, and Germany,” he explained.

The sales staff in the Boerne store went down to six during the recession and went back to 12 recently. “When you are understaffed, you are not taking care of your customers. If you are overstaffed, you are starving your salesmen,” Adams said. “When we hire a new salesperson, we look for someone who is down to earth, who has RVing experience, and who understands that the customer wants a fun experience. The RV is not a necessity. When a new salesperson begins here, all the guys help him. Before the doors are opened each day for business, everyone is here on time, prepped, and ready to greet customers. A new, but well-trained, sales person allows everyone to have more days off, sick days, and personal time with family when needed.”

Sales training is considered an important process that is ongoing. While initial training is done by the sales staff, Service Life in Austin provides professional sales training to new salesmen. The company relies on factory representatives who come periodically to do training in product knowledge. Most of the salesmen have RVs and can walk the walk and talk the talk from experience.

“Our salesmen sell across brands and help each other whenever and with whatever is needed to make a sale,” Adams noted. “We work together as a team. Like

in sports, the team wins, not individuals.”

Fred Flickinger, a 22-year veteran with Ancira, trains the new hire in processing company paperwork, general procedures, corporate philosophy, and being on time. He serves a major training role for the department by being sure that each salesman has manufacturers’ videos, charts, and literature. Mastering the interview process is considered seminal to one’s success in sales at Ancira. It helps the buyer to find the product that satisfies his purpose at a price within his planned expenditure.

Howard Tate, an 18-year Ancira veteran, heads up Ancira RV’s service and parts department. The company has nine service techs. Two are certified, of whom one is master certified. “We use the RVIA Direct Training Program,” Tate explained. “RVIA does a good job setting up training classes online for various components. We also rely on in-house training provided by component manufacturers. Certifications are usually completed in three years.

“The service department handles getting a coach ready for the new owner after a sale has been made,” Tate said. “We do a thorough PDI and then follow through with training the owner to use everything in the coach. The most difficult thing to teach is the use of the satellites and creating specialized set-ups for the inverter.”

The Ancira RV service department does not offer chassis work or tire service, but routine oil changes are provided. In

The Ancira RV sales and service staff *standing*: Howard Tate, Fixed Operations Manager; Lee Gill, Parts Assistant Manager; Brenda Brown, Title Clerk; Jim Pyetzki, RV Parts Counterman; Mallory Green, Acct. Payable; Pat Leonard, Office Manager; Pete Ciomperlik, Assistant Service Manager; Anthony Monday, Make Ready Tech; John Olive, Collision Tech; Gaby Uzzi, Warranty Administrator; Tabitha Sheffer, Billing Clerk; Deanna Chadwell, Business Manager/Controller; Kenny Mayor, Collision Tech; Tim Lalanne, Service Advisor; C. Kevin Ketner, VP/GM Ancira RV. *Kneeling*: Juan Zertuche III, Service Tech; Vicente Razo, Sales Lot Attendant; Glen Bernal, Make Ready Tech; Elpidio Perez, Make Ready Tech; Tim Stahlnecker, Senior Service Tech; Russell Williams, Service Tech. *Not pictured*: Jim George, Service Advisor; Stoney Taylor, Make Ready Tech; Darin Carr, Service Tech; Frank Condel, Parts Manager; Susana Quiroga, Parts Driver/ Office Runner; Katie McDaniel, Inventory Clerk/ Cashier.

2013 they built a million dollar collision center that includes a complete body and collision shop with a 50-foot paint booth. The collision shop can do frame welding repairs to correct wreck damage. The service department designed and built a jig to remove a slide-out from any motorhome and repair it. Removing the slide-out makes it much easier to work on the floor, the slide-out mechanical system, or the slide box itself. The company has 17 service bays.

Technicians are trained to service hydronic heating systems (Aqua-Hot and Oasis), AC roof air, Denso dash heating and air, satellite installs, and installs for Blue Ox or Roadmaster tow systems. The company offers interior repairs to restore a coach to the original manufacturer's design.

Service advisors Jim George, a 13-year employee, and Tim Lalanne, with 30 years invested at Ancira, schedule work strictly by phone appointments. Online appointments are not offered. Service policy includes daily calls to owners to advise regarding the status of an ongoing repair and the receipt of ordered parts.

When a service order is completed, the service advisor goes over the repairs with both the owner and the technician. "We physically examine every issue that is brought to our attention," Tim said. "Jim

or I type the order into our computer program and send it to the dispatch office. Pete Ciomperlik selects the tech to begin work on the coach. Service updates us daily on the progress and we in turn contact the owner."

Repairs are warranted for 90 days or 3,000 miles. Service is open Monday through Friday and a half day on Saturday.

"Several of our technicians have a status of being 'customer preferred' because they take the time to work carefully with

the owner's problems and requests," Tim said. "With a Tiffin product, we get great support on the company's help line. A Tiffin online support tech may say, 'I don't know, but I'll call you back.' And they always do."

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Tiffin Columbus, Indiana Rally

August 17-21, 2015

by Sally Moore

We're off to Indiana! Tiffin Motorhomes & Tiffin Allegro Club will host a rally in beautiful CERAland Park, Columbus, Indiana beginning August 17 with departure on August 21. This serene 345-acre parkland surrounds a 12-acre stocked lake. All sites will have 50-amp electricity and water, picnic table, and fire ring; there is a convenient dump station centrally located for your convenience. Three shower houses and laundry facilities are on the premises. Pre and post stays can be reserved by contacting CERAland directly.

The park offers a host of activities such as an 18-hole miniature golf course, golf driving range, nature trail, disc golf course, and horseshoe pits. Also available are shuffleboard courts, aquatic center, remote control airplane strip, fishing, and tennis courts for all guests. The Columbus area is rich in must-see activities! The city is ranked sixth in the USA for architectural innovation and design and has more than 70 buildings and pieces of public art by internationally noted architects and artists.

Shopping includes two outlet malls, traditional malls, and a huge antique mall along with a vibrant downtown with specialty shops. Several museums can be found here as well as the Corporate Headquarters of Cummins, Inc. Plant tours at Cummins are offered for small groups of 30-40 people. Dates and times must be reserved and travel arrangements made on your own by calling CERAland prior to the rally. The Columbus area also hosts several Farmers' Markets & Wineries. Two unique stores that you will want to visit are Not Just Popcorn serving over 260 premium flavors and shipping product worldwide as well as Zaharakos Ice Cream Parlor and Museum "serving sodas, sundaes, & smiles for over a century."

Our Tiffin rally promises to be fun and exciting with several catered meals, live entertainment, seminars, vendors, fun activities, and best of all—our fabulous Tiffin Service Technicians will be on hand to perform minor service and repairs on all Tiffin coaches! These trained technicians are a wealth of information for you to tap into!! You have made a sizeable investment in purchasing a beautiful motor coach. Take this valuable opportunity to learn all you can about it.

The cost for one coach and two adults is only \$429. We began accepting reservations on Monday, February 2 and we already have a large number of coaches registered. Don't delay if you are interested! Our rallies often sell out! A registration form can be found at Tiffinmotorhomes.com and also at TiffinSideroads.com. Complete the form and return it to the Tiffin Allegro Club as soon as possible. Please give us a call at 256-356-8522 if you have any questions.



Be sure to reserve time to enjoy CERAland's walking trails, lakes, miniature golf course, driving range and aquatic center.

Tiffin Sevierville Rally September 2015

by Sally Moore

The Great Smoky Mountain National Park is the #1 most visited national park in the nation. And we are going too! The Tiffin Allegro Club Sevierville Rally will be held on September 21-24, 2015 (checking out on September 25) at River Plantation RV Resort, Sevierville, Tennessee. Sevierville is just a few miles from the entrance to the national park.

Sevierville, Pigeon Forge, and Gatlinburg are all well known for family entertainment opportunities. Shopping from outlets to antiques; music shows highlighting America's finest country & western, comedy clubs, and ole time favorites; Dollywood theme park; and hiking to Clingman's Dome are just a few of the wonderful activities the area offers. We hope you will be joining us for four nights of fun, fellowship, and entertainment.

Our Tiffin rally will feature 4 nights of camping at the beautiful River Plantation RV Resort located just off the Parkway and nestled along the Little Pigeon River. Sites are big rig friendly and offer 30/50-amp electric, water, sewer, cable TV and free Wi-



Explore the Great Smoky Mountains National Park while you enjoy the Tiffin Sevierville Rally.



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IN THE PLANT WITH JONATHAN



Marty Pardue

Trim Carpenter

A random visit to Bob Tiffin's office paid off well for Marty Pardue. The Belmont, Mississippi native stopped by to check on potential job openings more than 21 years ago and he's never gone looking again.

"Mr. Tiffin knew my grandpa and he had some openings and hired me there in his office," said Pardue, whose brother, Wesley, operates the Red Bay tool room. "We kind of had that connection and that helped me to get in to see him. He has always been very good to me."

Pardue spent several years building countertops and other interior parts. He now places crown molding and trim throughout the motorhomes. "It has changed a lot since I first started," Pardue said. "It's like daylight and dark now compared to back then. Years ago there was just one line and the motorhomes did not include all the intricate detail work that is now in each coach."

"The motorhomes are designed a lot different now and require so many more components than they once did. All of us who have been here a long time have had to learn new and different jobs."

When he's away from the plant, Pardue's hobbies are very much in line with his day job. "I do a lot of carpentry work in my free time away from the plant," he said. "That is something that I have always enjoyed."

"Working at Tiffin Motorhomes has given me a chance to do the kind of work that I enjoy and the people have been good to me," he said. "I didn't know I'd be here this long, but it worked out well for me and my family. It's hard to believe it's been 21 years."

Pardue has three children: Marissa, a 2014 graduate of Belmont High School; Zack, a senior at Belmont; and Nathan, who is in tenth grade.



Debbie West

Forklift Operator

Debbie West has worked at TMH for almost one year. During that time she has transitioned from working in waste management to operating a forklift. "When I first started I was running the cardboard compactor. I liked that, but this gets me outside a little more and I like being outside," she said.

Prior to beginning her work at TMH, West worked as a cleaning and laundry attendant at a nursing home.

"This is a lot different kind of job but I like it," said West, who lives in Iuka, Mississippi.

She had a little firsthand knowledge about the plant before she actually began working here. Her husband, Carl West, works in the sidewalls department at the main plant in Red Bay.

She has two grown sons, John Kent, Jr., and Christopher Helton.

Debbie said that she and Carl enjoy listening to music at the Iuka fairgrounds on weekends and Carl spends a great deal of time in his wood-working shop making cedar bowls and vases.

"I really like working down here," she said. "The people have been very nice and I'm constantly on the move, so that's a good thing. There is plenty to do to keep me busy."

Though her job responsibilities are much different at TMH than they were at the nursing home, she said she has fallen into a role that she really likes.

"You know, it's a lot different kind of job. But, it's been good for me. Working here at the same place as Carl is a good thing, too."

If you are ever at the Iuka fairgrounds on a Saturday night, look for Debbie and Carl West. They will be glad for you to pull up a chair and listen to some good local music.



Jose Caballero

Tile Repair

The job duties for Jose Caballero have changed quite a bit in the 14 years that he's been with Tiffin Motorhomes. When he was originally hired, Caballero worked alone, placing ceramic tile pieces in the Tiffin product line. Over the years, as more and more units began to contain ceramic tile, his duties changed.

"When I first started, we laid tile on 4' x 6' or 4' x 8' pieces of luan that we picked up by hand. From there, we started making the larger 6' x 6' and 6' x 8' pieces," he said. "We were doing five or six units a day."

Eventually, a crane and lifting system were implemented that allowed full ceramic tile floors to be placed in the motorhomes. A water cutter was added to make cuts on the tile, increasing the production capacity. "We do eight or nine units a day now between the REDs, Phaeton, and Buses," he said.

When he's away from the plant, Caballero and his wife, Adrianna Wuotto, who works at Northwest-Shoals Community College, spend much of their time reading and enjoying classical music. "We read everything from the newspaper to the biggest books," he said. "We also like classical music and we go to Memphis and Birmingham or to UNA, wherever there is a concert."

His biggest success, he said, is his children. His daughter Marianna recently graduated from Cornell University and is an environmental and chemical engineer in New York City. His son Arturo is currently a computer science major at the University of North Alabama. "I am very proud of my kids. They have done well," he said.

Caballero said his time at TMH has been a good experience. "The Tiffins have shown confidence in me to do what I know," he said. "I've had a good relationship with the Tiffin family."

Editor's Note: Jonathan Willis joined Tiffin Motorhomes in November 2013. He is the former editor-publisher of The Franklin County Times. Jonathan and his wife, Mandi, are natives of Russellville, Alabama, and have two boys, Ty and Cade. He is a regular contributor to *Roughing It Smoothly*.

Al & Betty Boysen

LIVING THEIR LIVES WITH PURPOSE



As you read this story, Al and Betty Boysen of Tampa, Florida are enjoying their new 2015 Allegro 36LA, one of Tiffin's most popular floor plans that they purchased from Lazydays in March.

Couples retire every day and begin living their dream in a luxury motorhome, touring the U.S. and Canada. RV dealers are excited about the baby boomers and their retirement plans.

But wait . . . the Boysens could be the *parents* of the baby boomers! That's right. They celebrated their 65th wedding anniversary on April 2 and Al will celebrate his 90th birthday on May 6.

Al grew up in Clinton, Iowa during the Depression, and finished high school in 1943 as thousands of young men were being drafted for service in World War II. He joined the Army and served until he was 21 in 1946.

Betty finished high school in 1946 in Morrison, Illinois. They both enrolled at Cornell College in Mt. Vernon, Iowa that fall with plans for careers in education.

"Cornell was a very small college," Betty said. "I think we had 900 students."

In their sophomore year, Al asked Betty for a date to go to a dance on campus. It was the beginning of a friendship that has lasted almost 70 years.

"In early 1949 we pooled our money while we were still in school and bought an old DeSoto with plans to go camping with friends," Betty began with a mischievous look in her eye. "My dad said I could go as long as our married friends served as chaperones."

Al and Betty married in April 1950, just before she graduated.



They moved to DeKalb, Illinois where Al earned a master's degree in psychology and education at Northern Illinois University. Betty followed her career plan into exceptional education and started teaching kindergarten while Al studied for his master's.

Camping has continued to be a part of their lives ever since. "In 1952 we spent the summer in the Cascade Mountains of Oregon where we manned a fire watch station for three months," Betty recalled. "Our gear and food was packed in by mules. The station was a six-hour hike from the vehicle drop-off point. Our water usually ran out before the food, so we had to pack water to the station in five gallon containers."

"Our purpose for being there was to watch for lightning strikes," Al continued. "If we sighted a strike, we triangulated with two other watch stations to pinpoint the exact location of the strike. Because of the remoteness of our location, we had to take survival training."

Al began his teaching career in Villa Park, Illinois, a Chicago suburb where they spent the next five years. He later earned a specialist degree in educational administration and became an elementary school principal.

Al and Betty decided to become foster parents in 1954. Renee came to the Boysens when she was three and stayed with

them until she was 19. "Renee has been married for many years and has a family of her own," Betty said.

Betty received Chicago's Foster Mother of the Year Award that was presented to her by Eleanor Daley, the wife of Mayor Richard Daley. "Our second child was Jim," Betty said. "Jim came to us when he was seven in 1959. He spent four years in the Navy and then developed a home renovations business. He recently retired at 62 and lives in California."

While on vacation in Naples, Florida in 1973, Betty was interviewed for a position teaching the gifted at the elementary and middle school levels. The school offered her the job immediately and promised to find a position for Al if she accepted. "Don't worry," they said. "We'll find a job for him, too."

Al came for an interview and they showed him a big slab of concrete on the sand that was awaiting further construction. "This will be your school when you get here," they promised.

Betty's job was unlike anything she had done in her career. With two co-workers, Betty visited media centers in schools throughout the state to train teachers to use computers to access resources for their classes. "We worked out of Naples and traveled in my Jeep Wagoneer," she related. "My co-workers called it their Jeep Limousine."

After 10 years as an elementary school principal, Al retired in 1983 and bought an Open Road, a 22-ft. Class C. "Since Betty was still working, we did some weekend camping during the school year, and longer trips in the summer," Al explained.

Betty followed him into retirement in 1986. Having both retired at 58 and still very energetic, Al and Betty decided to volunteer their time in Naples schools. "We had a very interesting experience teaching Hispanics who were following the harvests," Betty related. "I began keeping a log in 1986 and have journaled in it every day since I began."

"In 1987 we sold our house and put everything in storage except personal items," Al said. "We then bought our first Class A motorhome, a Monaco gas pusher. Over the next 28 years we owned 12 coaches, including four Tiffins."

"Al really liked to trade motorhomes which on the average we did about every two or three years. About the only thing he didn't trade was me," Betty joked.

In December 1989, the Boysens had a serious interruption in their new lifestyle. Al and Betty had volunteered their time to help build homes for Habitat for Humanity. While putting the siding on a house 40 miles from Naples, Al experienced severe pain in his arms. From the hospital in Naples, he was transferred by helicopter to Fort Myers where doctors performed four bypasses on December 30. Determined not to put their plans aside, the Boysens made a three month tour of Nova Scotia and the Maritimes the following summer.

Two years later they took the "big one" and made a trip to Alaska that lasted four months. "Our route was so circuitous that we logged 16,000 miles by the time we returned to Florida," Betty said. "At that time many of the roads we traveled were unpaved and muddy. Our coach was solid brown. Many gas stations attracted your business by allowing you to wash your coach with a fill-up. We stayed for two months in the national park and saw Denali every day we were there."

One of their most interesting RV trips

was a motorhome-*barge* excursion. “We put our motorhome on a barge,” Al began. “There were 13 coaches on each barge. We loaded the coaches on the barge in northern Alabama and followed the Tennessee west and north through Kentucky to its confluence with the Ohio. Then we floated the Ohio to the Mississippi at Cairo, Illinois. In another week, we arrived in New Orleans.”

“We have done quite a few RV tours that had themes or featured destinations,” Betty continued. “The trips to Mardi Gras, the Calgary Stampede, the Rose Parade and Game, and Klondike Days were some of my favorites.”

On one of their most memorable trips, they invited a South African couple to join them for a tour of several of the western states. “They were fascinated by the giant redwoods in the Muir Woods and would lay on their backs and look up to enhance the experience,” Al said.

“In 2012 we did a Western National Parks tour that included the Grand Canyon, Zion, Arches, Death Valley, Bryce, and Mesa Verde national parks. We stayed two nights in each park. Because we were already well into our eighties, our tour companions referred to us as the tour’s ‘senior citizens,’” Betty laughed.

While volunteering and contributing to programs benefitting mankind, Al and Betty learned about the work of the Carter Center in Atlanta. “We were impressed with their programs in Africa and South America, working with the poorest people on earth to create infrastructure for clean water and irrigation, and monitoring elections,” Al said.

“The Carter Center programs have attracted many medical doctors and PhDs in the social sciences,” Betty added. “We wanted to contribute our time as well and began attending the conferences at the Center. Since there was not a campground nearby, they invited us to dry camp in the parking lot. The Carters are the most gracious, down-to-earth people we have ever met.”

The Boysens offered some reminiscences and highlights from 65 years of travel and camping: “When we began camping,

campgrounds were often just a grassy area to park and you paid \$2 a night. You might get pit toilets and one spigot for drinking water,” Al said, very seriously in case his listeners doubted. “Today we think we are ‘roughing it’ if we don’t have full hook-ups, cable, and wi-fi in a developed resort at \$50 a night. Gas in the early fifties was about 20 cents per gallon. Today, it is at least 11 times that amount and has been 20 times that amount.”

“Camping and travel for us has always been a learning and educational experience,” Betty said. “Al’s hobby was to visit all 50 of the state capitols and all of the presidential libraries. My hobby is the daily log. I can relive 29 years of our travel experiences through the log.”

“We have traveled in an RV to 49 states and all of the Canadian provinces and visited Hawaii by air,” Al said. “We have

Continued on page 76

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Tom Webber

HOW ARE YOU DOING TODAY, TOM? I'M SUPER GOOD!

TOM WEBBER CREDITS HIS SUCCESSFUL CAREER in the RV world to four very special people, three who know him personally and one who trained millions. “My wife, Pat, has always been there for me and shared my dreams and visions,” he began. “Tom McGuire, the owner of All American Coach who first hired me as an RV salesman, worked with me for four years as I learned the right way to sell. And then, Bob Tiffin, whose life, work ethic, and sense of priorities has been a role model to me and hundreds of his employees.

“Tom McGuire gave me 18 VHS tapes by Zig Ziglar that changed my life,” Tom continued. “I will explain more about that later.”

Tom was born and grew up in Toledo, Ohio. His father worked for the Pennsylvania Railroad as a train conductor. “He was the boss of the train. I became fascinated with trains, their speed and power, and traveling on them.”

After graduation from high school, he went to work for Owens-Illinois, a company that developed fiber-optic core glass to create night vision in sniper scopes using moonlight or atmospheric light. Concurrently, Tom enrolled in the University of Toledo to study chemical engineering, but later changed his major to business administration.

Text and photography by Fred Thompson

“In 1967 the Penn Central Railroad was hiring and I got into their locomotive engineer training program,” Tom said. “The job paid well and also offered the integrated time to allow me to take care of my selective service obligation with the Army.”

Fourteen years went by before he realized it, but during that time he met Pat at a progressive dinner organized by his cousin.

“We only dated for six months,” Pat said. “But since we were both 29, we were mature enough to know our hearts and minds to make the right decision.”

“And it was the right decision!” Tom agreed quickly.

Witnessing the results of a catastrophic head-on train collision caused Tom to rethink his career path. The railroad had become Conrail by this time and it offered flexible work schedules, great retirement pensions, and good wages. But in 1981 the railroad began offering employee contract buyouts and he decided it was the right opportunity to make an exit

“I bought a new 1981 Ford F-100 in 1980 and started selling firewood that I bought in bulk and sold by the cord,” Tom said. “I had been in Boy Scouts and Explorers and really enjoyed canoeing and camping, so cutting and selling firewood came naturally to me as an activity and a job.”

Thirty-five years later Tom still owns that F-100 and it has become his hobby as well as an antique show truck.

“I introduced Pat to camping in a tent soon after we got mar-

ried. When we arrived at the campsite, she asked me where she could plug in her curling iron and I said, ‘Try plugging it into a tree.’ She found no humor in my response, but we got past it,” he laughed.

While reading the Toledo Blade one morning, an ad from All American Coach caught his eye. “I went in person to see about the ad. Tom McGuire, the owner, interviewed me at lunch and hired me the next day,” Tom explained. “I was a little surprised, but very pleased that I got the job.”

McGuire became his mentor in learning to run a business, but his first focus was to teach Tom to sell. “The Zig Ziglar tapes were step-by-step lessons that taught positive thinking and motivation, and then how to sell and close a deal,” Tom said.

In four years Tom became a very successful salesman. As his favorite RVs were those manufactured by Tiffin Motorhomes, Tom became known at All American as “the Allegro salesman.” But just as McGuire expected from their mentoring sessions, Tom wanted to buy or start his own business. The opportunity came in 1985 when an RV dealer in Mobile went out of business.

“The business failure made several franchises available,” Tom explained. “At 39 years of age, we sold our house in Toledo, packed up, left our family and friends, and headed for Mobile. We leased the land with a building and began with Winnebago and Fleetwood franchises. We decided to name the business Webb’s RV Center. Pat continued teaching but helped with our business after school and on weekends.”

Clockwise from left: Tom often meets with couples buying a Tiffin motorhome to explain the many options available and how they might complement the buyers’ lifestyle. Here, President Bill and First Lady Pat Murton of the FMCA chapter, Tiffin Travelers, stopped to visit with Tom on their way to the FMCA Southeast Area Rally in Sarasota. ♦ Tom and Pat have lived the Florida lifestyle since they bought a home in Parrish, Florida in 2000, about 40 miles south of Tampa. ♦ With a lanai enclosing their tiled pool, they can enjoy a dip almost year round.



Within a year Tom decided to go all motorized with his inventory and was able to be more selective with the available franchises. In the Class A and C markets, Webb’s RV Center offered Tiffin, Winnebago, Georgie Boy, Fleetwood, and National RV. Coachman provided their Class B inventory.

“We began our service operation with three bays and a small sales office. In 1993 we built a new facility designed for our sales and service operation that had eight bays,” Tom said. “In 1991 and 1994 we were in Tiffin’s Top 10 Dealers.”

Pat retired from teaching to work full time at Webb’s RV Center, ending a 30-year career in her much loved classroom setting.

After 12 years in business, Tom and Pat began to realize how restrictive the business had become on their ability to get away for trips and spending time with their family.

“We went into the business because we loved to travel, yet as business owners that became difficult to do,” Pat said. “We have several godchildren and three generations of family members with whom we are very close, but we were just not finding enough free time to spend with them.”

Late one afternoon in 1996, Tom asked Pat, “How much money do we really need?” Pat shot right back, “Enough for a really nice nursing home when the time comes.”

“We have joked about that many times,” Tom said, “but it really did mark a turning point in our plans. We sold the company later that year and began traveling in a 34-foot Allegro Bay.”

“Our first trip lasted 15 weeks and included many stops to see friends and family, especially the godchildren,” Pat continued. “We wanted to visit every state in the lower 48, but over the years we kept missing one when we totaled them up. We would say, ‘It must be North Dakota,’ and we finally did make all 50 with a stop in Fargo last autumn, just in case it really was North Dakota.”

In 1999, the Webbers decided to pull back on making long, extended tours in their motorhome. The next four years became one man’s search for what he really wanted to do with his life.





From top left: After meeting a chainsaw wood carver in Branson, Missouri several years ago, Tom was hooked on the craft of taking a block of wood and making something beautiful out of it. Tom invited Mike to come to Florida and teach him his skills. ♦ With a fully equipped office at home, Tom is able to plan projects and trips without going to his Tiffin office at Lazydays. ♦ Since Tom took the position of manufacturer's-representative-at-large, Tiffin increased their staff at Lazydays with the addition of Scott DeSotel, field service representative and Beverly Budd, dealer support group. At right: Tom bought his 1981 Ford F-100 in the fall of 1980 to haul and sell firewood. Now it is his hobby and antique show truck and he wouldn't think of hauling a cord of wood in it. To learn more about his truck go to rismag.com.



"Staying home began to sound enticing so we moved to Parrish, Florida in 2000 to be near our godchildren," Tom said. "I took a position with Deutche Financial as their southeastern representative for indirect financing for marine dealerships. After two-and-a-half years, we decided to retire again. We took several cruises, spent more time with family and our godchildren, golfed and fished, and generally lived the Florida lifestyle. But it finally dawned on me that what I really wanted was to return to the workforce. I took a sales position with an air conditioning company for a year and finally decided that my love and passion was the RV industry."



Tom began calling RV manufacturers to see if they needed a manufacturer's rep in any of their territories. One of those calls went to Tiffin Motorhomes and the familiar answer was, "Hello, this is Bob Tiffin. I'm not in the office right now, but if you will leave your name and number, I'll call you back."

During the return call, a conversation ensued to discuss Tom's interest in being a manufacturer's rep. Bob did not have a particular territory to offer but he had come to know Tom quite well during his years at All American Coach and Webb's RV Center. He knew Tom's work ethic and skills and offered him a position as "Manufacturer's Representative-at-Large." Bob asked him to work special shows as well as the Allegro Club and FMCA rallies. Tom also agreed to provide



additional help to Florida dealers in training and support.

That was ten years ago and both men today are certain that it was a good decision. Tom keeps an office in Lazydays' Seffner, Florida location, which happens to be Tiffin's largest dealer. Seven to 10 days a month Tom teaches courses at Lazydays to the largest RV sales force in the industry. These classes include courses in general sales, motivational training, sales training, and the importance of product knowledge. In addition, he works with seven other dealerships throughout Florida.

"An important part of having satisfied customers is being sure they choose the options they need," Tom pointed out. "I often sit down with the salesmen and their clients to help make sure the customer makes the right decisions and doesn't return later unhappy that they missed something they did not know about."

Tom's tenure as manufacturer's representative-at-large was seriously interrupted in late 2005 when he was diagnosed with stage three head and neck cancer. The radiation treatments were painful and debilitating.

"While I was being treated, I received a handwritten letter from Bob Tiffin assuring me that I was in his thoughts and prayers for a full recovery," Tom said. "I was moved to tears and framed his letter and it resides in a prominent place in my home office."

Tom lost his voice for a while during his treatment and recovery. Later when he was asked, "Tom, how are you doing?" His answer was always, "Super good!" Now he can add, "Every day I wake up above the grass is a good day. It is a 'super good' day," he smiled.

"When we married, Tom promised me that I would never be bored," Pat said near the conclusion of our visit in their Parrish home. "He delivered exactly what he promised! He has mastered cars, trucks, trains, planes, and RVs. The most recent addition to 'Tom the Man' occurred at an Allegro Club rally in Branson, Missouri. We watched a chainsaw carver named Mike create wooden bears and other animals while Mike's dog, Miss Tilly, slept nearby. As we walked away, Tom commented on the beauty of the wood grain and what Mike had done to shape it into objects of art. The next thing I knew, Mike came to Florida to share some of his talent with my husband! Tom has since become

quite a chainsaw carver. [Uncomfortable with the term 'artist,' Tom prefers 'carver.'] His works are on permanent display in our local library and several professional offices. Who knows what new and exciting adventures await? Whatever they may be, I am certain they will not be boring. He is a man of his word."

Since Tom began with Tiffin in 2005, the company has added two more employees at Lazydays to expedite the repairs on Tiffin motorhomes. Scott Desotel joined Tiffin in 2007 as a field service representative after having operated his own RV repair business for 28 years in California.

Scott came to Lazydays in May 2014 as a member of the dealer support group. He resolves issues with Lazydays' technicians and addresses the best way to make repairs on Tiffin units.

"I authorize all warranty work on site to allow repairs to

Continued on page 76

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Nova Scotia

SURROUNDED BY THE SEA



IT WAS 7:30 A.M. WHEN WE ARRIVED at the PEI Wood Islands ferry terminal. Our third eight-day segment of a wonderful tour of Canada's Maritime provinces was about to begin. It was a sunny morning, light wind, temperature in the mid-sixties. We were looking forward to the 75-minute trip across the Northumberland Strait to Caribou, Nova Scotia. The gate dropped away and two rows of cars were quickly loaded on the starboard side of the ferry. We were lined up to go first on the port side.

After landing at Caribou, we followed our travel plan for visiting Nova Scotia and headed east on TCH 104 to cross the Strait of Canso into Cape Breton Island at Auld's Cove. The crossing is named the Canso Causeway. You will leave the mainland over a green steel bridge with a big sign above it: Welcome to Cape Breton. Bretoners are very keen on maintaining their identity.

We arrived at Auld's Cove around noon, timed just right for lunch at Pettipas Market. Many give John Pettipas the bragging rights for serving the best seafood chowder in the province. He may be a little eccentric, but the chowder and fresh seafood dinners speak for themselves. After crossing the causeway, we followed TCH 105 into Baddeck where we claimed our reservation at Bras d'Or Lakes Campground.

The Village of Baddeck

Our first reason for visiting Baddeck was to see the Alexander Graham Bell National Historic Site. The museum follows a timeline highlighting his accomplishments: telegraphy; the audiometer, a device to detect hearing loss; his work teaching deaf children; the photophone; the graphophone; co-founder of the National Geographic Society; tetrahedral kites experiments; the first controlled powered airplane flight in Canada; a hydrofoil boat that set the world marine speed record. The museum's hilltop location is prime real estate overlooking the harbor. We were lucky enough to be there on a special day to watch a sailing regatta.

Alexander Graham Bell was born in Edinburgh, Scotland in 1847. His father, Alexander Melville Bell, a noted elocutionist and teacher of speech, was celebrated for creating a new phonetic alphabetic that he called "Visible Speech." Bell used his father's invention to teach the deaf to speak. His almost instant success launched Alexander Graham Bell on a career of humane invention and a lifelong commitment to helping the deaf.

His motivation to teach the deaf to speak was spurred by his falling in love with Mabel Hubbard when she was 16. Mabel at the age of five had scarlet fever and was left totally deaf. She described his appearance as unkempt and said, "I could never marry a man who looks like that." She matured and he shaped up a bit; they married three years later in July 1877.

Text and photography by Fred Thompson

Turn to page 76 for information on two campgrounds and five attractions.
Campgrounds: Bras d'Or Lakes Campground, Baddeck; and Board of Trade Campground, Lunenburg.
Attractions: Fortress at Louisbourg, Cape Breton Miners Museum, Marconi National Historic Site, Lunenburg Farmers' Market, and Grand Pré.

Alexander Graham Bell, Helen Keller and Anne Sullivan

In 1886, Kate Keller, of Tuscumbia, Alabama, read Charles Dickens' *American Notes*, an account of his six-month tour of the U.S. in 1842. Dickens had visited asylums and mental institutions to compare patient treatment in America and England. While in Boston he visited the Perkins Institute and Massachusetts Asylum for the Blind and was amazed at the work Samuel G. Howe was doing with Laura Bridgman, a young girl both deaf and blind from an illness at the age of two. She had come to the school three years earlier from her parents' farm in New Hampshire. Using signs he pressed into her hand, Howe taught Bridgman not only words for objects but also the concept of language.

Kate and Arthur Keller's daughter, Helen, had lost her sight and hearing after being stricken with a fever when she was only 19 months old. Capt. Keller was aware of Bell's work and commitment to teaching the deaf to speak. He contacted Bell and asked for his recommendations. Bell was familiar with the Laura Bridgman case and suggested Keller contact the current director of the Perkins Institute, Michael Anagnos.

Because of her disability, Laura Bridgman had become a permanent resident at Perkins. In 1880 at the age of fourteen, Anne Sullivan left the terrible conditions she had been living in at

the Tewksbury (Massachusetts) Almshouse, came to the Perkins Institute for the Blind, and boldly announced that she wanted to go to school. She had a minor problem with her vision and Perkins accepted her.

In her brief time at Perkins, Anne compressed a 12-year education into six years. Along the way she befriended Laura Bridgman who taught Anne the hand signals for communicating with a deaf and blind person.

Shortly after Anne delivered the valedictory address at her graduation, Capt. Keller wrote to Anagnos about Helen's condition. After an assessment of Helen's needs, Anagnos persuaded Anne Sullivan to become Helen's teacher.

Anne's education at Perkins did not correct her major problem: an inferiority complex acquired from her squalid life in the almshouse that manifested itself in several ways. Alexander Graham Bell became a mentor to Anne and nurtured and sustained her career until 1920.

"It was an immense advantage for [a person] of my temper, impatience, and antagonisms to know Dr. Bell intimately over a long period of time. . . . I never felt at ease with anyone until I met him. . . . I was extremely conscious of my crudeness. . . . Dr. Bell had a happy way of making people feel pleased with



Seated, Helen Keller and Alexander Graham Bell with Anne Sullivan looking on. Anne and Helen visited Beinn Bhreagh several times between 1900 and 1920.

themselves,” Sullivan said in remarks quoted by her biographer.

In the mid-1880s the Bells discovered the Baddeck area while on a cruise. Cape Breton’s lakes and hills reminded him of his native Scotland. They purchased 600 acres on a peninsula and completed a lodge by 1888. A much larger residence was completed in 1893.

“We had already spent several summers seeking a place of salt water, mountains and valleys and cool climate,” Mabel Bell wrote, “far enough from fashionable centres . . . to put out little

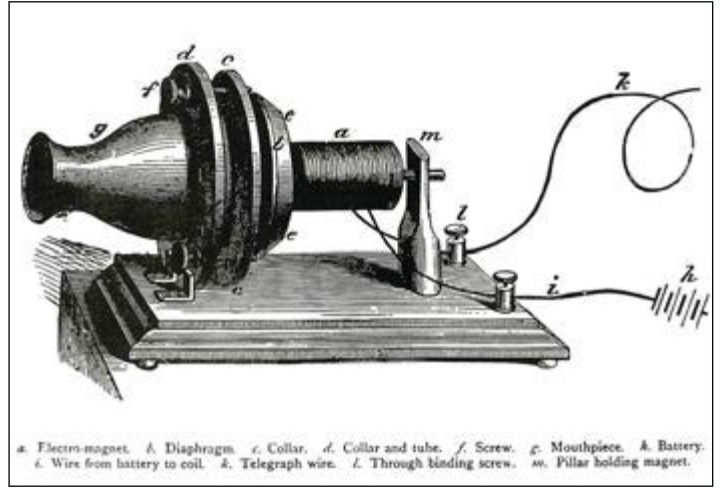
girls in trousers, and live a simple, free and unconventional life . . . we had found it at last.”

Helen Keller and Anne Sullivan visited Alec and Mabel often at Beinn Bhreagh until his health began to fail in 1922. Alexander Graham Bell died on August 2, 1922 from complications with diabetes. Mabel Bell died five months later from pancreatic cancer. They are buried at “The Point” on the Beinn Bhreagh property. The residence is now owned by their many descendants and is not open to the public.

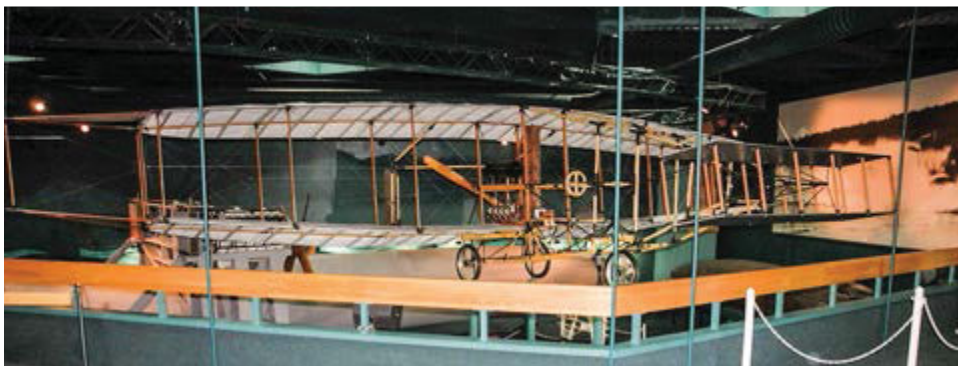
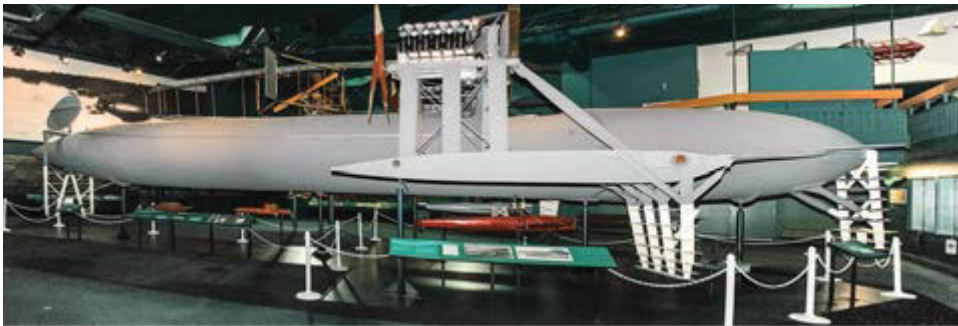
Alexander Graham Bell’s Inventions



Alexander Graham Bell National Historic Site of Canada



Bell’s first telephone (transmitter)



Alexander Graham Bell’s HD-4 Hydrofoil, first tested in the early 1900s, set the water speed record with a top speed of 70.8 mph on September 19, 1919. The original HD-4 was found abandoned on a beach on the shore of the Bras d’Or Lake and is now part of the exhibit of the AGB Museum in Baddeck. ♦ The Silver Dart, piloted by John McCurdy, one

of its designers, made the first controlled powered flight in Canada on February 23, 1909. ♦ Dr. Bell pioneered space-frame construction nearly 30 years before it came into general use. In 1907 he used tetrahedral forms to create a 70-foot observation tower, the strength of which is demonstrated by the men standing on the platform at the top.



A Day and Evening in Baddeck

The village is located on the northern shore of Bras d'Or Lakes. Its name is derived from the Mi'kmaq term "Abadek," meaning a "place with an island near," and that is most likely Kidston Island. Our stroll – and there's only a few blocks of it – took us past artisan studios and shops.

The Antiques Boutique. British & Canadian antiques; vintage china, glass, jewelry, silver, and clothing; ceramic restoration and conservation; jewelry cleaning. 518 Chebucto St. 902-295-9013

Baadeck Yarns. This place is a knitter's dream. Cape Breton Alpaca, handpainted natural fiber yarns, Canadian Merino, and Hemp-Cotton blend. Kits, knitting needles, accessories, books and patterns. Locally knit sweaters and socks. 16 Chebucto St. 902-295-3303

Baddeck and Area Community Market. For social and economic development in the Baddeck area, the market brings together artists, local farmers, artisans, and crafters. This place puts the local talent who do not have a place of business in front of the public. Wednesdays only from 11–2, mid-June through October at the Community Center. 526 Chebucto St.

Amoeba Sailing Tours. Spend 1.5–2 hours under sail on a two-masted sailing ship seeing Beinn Bhreagh, the town of Baddeck, and miles of Bras d'Or Lakes' scenic shoreline. \$25 + HST per person. Roy Bryson and friends built the *Amoeba* over a decade ending on Sept. 6, 1977 when Roy and Elizabeth set sail on the maiden voyage. They sailed the 67-foot schooner to the Caribbean where they worked the ship as a charter, with Roy as captain and Elizabeth as hostess to their guests. Roy died in 2002 and Elizabeth came back to Baddeck where she passed away in August 2006. Captain John Bryson, Roy and Elizabeth's son, now operates the sailing tours. Baddeck Wharf. 902-295-7780 or 902-295-1426. Email: tours@amoebasailingtours.com

The Bite House. Several days before you arrive in Baddeck, make your reservation at The Bite House. Chef Bryan Picard offers a small restaurant with seating for 10 each evening. The restaurant has been featured or mentioned in *The New York Times*, *Huffington Post*, *The Cooking Channel*, and the *Chronicle Herald* to name a few. The five-course menu changes each month. If you have any doubts, see tripadvisor.com 1471 Westside Baddeck Rd., 11km from the village. 902-322-1436. Email: eat@thebitehouse.com

Baddeck Gathering Ceilidh. Fiddle, bagpipes, piano, square and stepdancing at St. Michael's Parish Hall. 7:30 p.m. nightly. July & August. Main Street, Baddeck (TCH 105, exit 9). \$10.

The Gaelic College

If you have a drop of Scottish blood in your veins, you must visit the Gaelic College on Cape Breton Island. With classes primarily in the summer months, the college offers studies in culture, music, language, crafts, customs, and traditions of the immigrants from the Highlands of Scotland. Children and adults study Cape Breton fiddle, piano, guitar, stepdancing, piping, highland dancing, weaving, and, of course, the Gaelic language.

At the time of the Confederation, approximately 200,000 Canadians were native speakers of Gaelic, a number today that has dwindled to fewer than 1,000, most of whom live on Cape Breton Island. Gaelic was the mother tongue of Canada's first prime minister, Sir John A. Macdonald. Now in its 76th year, Gaelic College is nurturing a resurgence of interest in all things Scottish and Gaelic as hundreds of Canadians are learning to speak the language of their forebears.

On the college campus, the Great Hall of the Clans Museum will open on May 19. It will be followed on June 1 with Cultural Demonstrations offered from 10:30 – 12:30 (\$8 per person). During July and August, the Cultural Demonstrations expand into the Blas Math Lunchtime Ceilidh from 12–1 (\$15 per person for salad, entree, dessert & beverage), lunch with different performers each day. The demonstrations usually conclude with a lecture at 1 p.m.

Gaelic College was founded in 1938 in St. Ann's by the people in the local area who wanted to preserve the heritage of the Gaelic speaking pioneers of Cape Breton. The college today is a unique institution that has earned an international reputation for its contribution to the preservation of the Gaelic language and traditional Scottish culture. Students of all ages and abilities travel to the campus from around the world to study under top caliber instructors.

The college is located at 51779 Cabot Trail. For more information, call 902-295-3411 or visit gaeliccollege.edu.

Highland Village Museum at Iona

If you would like to step back a century and a half into a Gaelic village after visiting the college, follow TCH 105 southwest out of Baddeck to the ferry crossing at Little Narrows (\$5.50). Follow 223 from the ferry to Iona and the Highland Village Museum. Situated on 43 acres overlooking the Bras d'Or Lakes, the pastoral setting has 11 historical buildings staffed by craftspeople in period costumes. You can watch and question a blacksmith, a weaver, a woman carding and dyeing wool, farm hands taking care of livestock, and a cook who may have a loaf of bread baking in her brick oven (the aroma was fantastic). 4119 Hwy 223, Iona. 902-725-2272. highlandvillage@gov.ns.ca Jun 1 – Oct 19. 10–5. Adults, \$11; seniors, \$9; child (6-17), \$5; family, \$25. Includes HST. CAA/AAA, show your card and save 20%.

Celtic Colours

From October 9–17 of this year, Cape Breton Island for the 19th season will be home to a unique celebration of music and culture. The Celtic Colours International Festival presents dozens of concerts all over the island, an extensive line-up of community events, and a nightly Festival Club. Over the years, artists have traveled from Scotland, Ireland, England, Wales, Brittany, Spain, Denmark, Norway, Germany, and Cuba as well as from across the United States and Canada to join the finest of Cape Breton's musicians, singers, dancers, storytellers, and tradition-bearers for the annual Autumn celebration.

Since its introduction in 1997, Celtic Colours has grown to become one of Canada's premiere musical events, and a cultural highlight of Nova Scotia's tourism season, collecting accolades from regional music awards to national and international tourism awards. The festival has also been successful in extending Cape Breton Island's tourism season well into the Autumn, and introducing the musical culture of Cape Breton to tens of thousands of visitors from more than two dozen countries.

An artist and schedule announcement will be posted on June 22 at celtic-colours.com. At the website, click on "Plan Your Visit." Keeping in mind scheduled time and the geography of the

island, you can select the programs you wish to attend each day and on successive days. Tickets will go on sale July 6.

The programs and events include Cultural Experiences (a guided history walk), Learning Opportunities (workshops, lectures), Participatory Events (square dances, kitchen rackets), Outdoor Events (hikes, bicycle tours), Visual Arts (events hosted by galleries, guilds), and Farmers Markets (locally grown products, handmade goods).

Don't forget to make a campground reservation when you complete your itinerary and purchased your tickets. Go to celtic-colours.com/about-celtic-colours/ for a brief history.

The Cabot Trail

From Baddeck to Baddeck, the Cabot Trail makes a 185-mile (297 kms) loop around the northern segment of Cape Breton Island. Our goal for the day was to visit the Acadian village of Cheticamp, enjoy the incredible views along the west coast of Cape Breton, check out the campgrounds that offer full service hook-ups for Class A motorhomes, and find a scenic spot for a late afternoon picnic before returning to our Baddeck campground. Just in case we decided by late afternoon that another day on the Cabot Trail might be necessary, we took an overnight bag with the essentials, plus a couple of sweaters and windbreakers.

We considered moving the motorhome to the Broad Cove campground for a couple of nights just to experience the Cape Breton Highlands National Park, but upon checking found there were no sites available for our Class A coach. If you can plan your visit to Cape Breton Island far enough in advance and have plenty of time, three nights at the Cheticamp or Broad Cove campgrounds would be a great experience. It will give you the opportunity to do two or three hikes to waterfalls, a beach, or a mountain top. With 26 mapped trails in the park varying in length from a quarter mile to 10 miles, you are sure to find one that is a good fit for your hiking endurance.

Before we reached the Cheticamp entrance to the National

Park, we stopped for two hours in the village of Cheticamp. The Mi'kmaq have lived here for over 2,500 years. Sir Henry Sinclair may have first set foot in Nova Scotia in 1398, nearly a hundred years before Columbus arrived in the West Indies.

After the Acadian diaspora (see *RIS*, 11:4, 44-51), a few Acadians in 1770 were recruited to operate a fishing station owned by French-speaking merchants from the English Channel island of Jersey. In 1785 they came with their families and settled in Cheticamp. Before they were forced to leave Acadia, they had been successful farmers. On the rocky coastline of Cape Breton Island, they became fishermen and subsistence farmers. But their strong family structure, French Catholic faith, and exemplary work ethic ensured their survival and ultimate success.

From mid-July to mid-August, the village's Acadian heritage

Les Trois Pignons (The Three Gables) was built to house an enormous collection of wool rugs, both practical and artistic. ♦ Demonstrations are offered daily to show the technique for hooking rugs. After completion, small versions of the Nova Scotia flag are cut from the linen base and offered for sale to visitors. *Facing page:* Elizabeth LeFort has been called "Canada's Artist in Wool." *La Crucifixion* is a tapestry in wool completed in 1964. Requiring 11 months of continuous work, LeFort used 520 colors of yarn to create the 5.5 × 10 foot masterwork.



PHOTO BY DANIEL AUCOIN





is celebrated in music, theater, dance, and art. During the week of July 26 to August 2, Le Festival de l'Escaouette offers special programs and events for the Acadian celebration.

A “must see” in Cheticamp is Les Trois Pignons (The Three Gables). Elizabeth LeFort (1914–2005) has been called “Canada’s Artist in Wool.” Taught by her mother, she learned to hook rugs. By her mid-twenties, she was using dyed wool yarn to hook landscapes based on photographs or drawn images. A craft store owner in nearby Margaree Harbour saw her work and bought nearly everything she hooked. Her skill at creating portraits in wool from photographs led to her creating a wool portrait of President Dwight Eisenhower that was presented to him in 1957 at the White House. Many more portraits of dignitaries along with daVinci’s “The Last Supper,” plus historical works depicting events in the history of Canada and the U.S. distinguished LeFort’s career. Now exhibited at the museum, you can appreciate *La Crucifixion*, a tapestry she completed in 1964 after working on it for 11 months. LeFort used 520 colors of yarn to create the work measuring 5.5 × 10 feet. She was awarded an honorary doctorate by the Université de Moncton in 1975 and made a member of the Order of Canada in 1987. We also admired a smaller tapestry, *Tree of Life*, made by Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Léo Muise.

Marguerite Gallant (1890–1983) was a second generation Chéticantain who moved to Pennsylvania to work as a maid for the Cahill family. She learned the value of selective collecting from Edward Cahill and came home in 1938 to practice her skill. Household items discarded by her neighbors became a record of

their lives as they struggled from poverty to higher standards of living. After Gallant’s death, La Société Saint-Pierre acquired her collection and moved it to Les Trois Pignons.

We asked the cashier at Les Trois Pignons for a suggestion for lunch and picnic supplies and received a strong recommendation for the La Boulangerie Aucorn’s Bakery. We were not disappointed: freshly baked bread, donuts with several toppings, homestyle biscuits, cinnamon buns, cookies, croissants, pies – you could gain two pounds inhaling the baking aromas. We filled our basket and looked at our map for the nearest picnic table overlooking the ocean. But first there’s a story to tell about the business that put Cheticamp on the map.

For a century, geography preserved their Acadian culture and traditions as well as the French language spoken by the villagers. Their primary link to the world was sailing ships that stopped for trading. A wagon trip through the mountains to Inverness took 15 hours. In 1947 a highway was built to provide Canadians access to Cape Breton Highlands National Park. It also brought Cheticamp into the modern world.

During these years of isolation, rag rugs were made from worn out clothing by cutting the old fabric into strips and hooking it into loops that were pulled through a backing of linen or burlap. Since wool was a commodity they could produce, Cheticamp’s homemakers began to hook rugs using wool yarn. Their designs were created using yarns they had dyed with natural colors. Peddlers saw value in these rugs, acquired them by trading manufactured products, and sold them in larger, more affluent Nova Scotian towns where they made a nice profit.

Lillian Burke was a major player in the story of wool hooked rugs made in the Cheticamp area. As a fine arts teacher in Washington, DC, she was asked by Alec and Mabel Bell to come to Baddeck in 1914 to teach watercolor painting to the Bell grandchildren. Mrs. Bell also sought her assistance in teaching the ladies of Baddeck to make fine lace that could be sold to tourists, but the cottage industry failed after the first year. In 1924, Marian Fairchild, the Bell's daughter, asked Burke to return to Baddeck and develop hooked rugs as a cottage industry. Burke was not pleased with the poor workmanship and lack of interest to improve.

The following summer she visited Cheticamp and found the women who were making rugs in their homes to be very receptive to implementing her standards. She employed Marie-Jane Doucet, a restaurant owner, who spoke English quite well and retained her to manage and assign jobs to the ladies. Burke demanded strict adherence to her designs, the fidelity of the colors, and the quality of the workmanship.

The workers were paid 85 cents per square foot. Burke paid for the wool, the dyes, and the fixatives. The women were paid for their work only after the rugs were sold in Burke's New York store. She added ten percent to her costs to determine the selling price. The second spring Burke took 200 rugs to New York and sold them all. For the next decade into the mid-thirties, the wealthy continued to buy wool rugs from Cheticamp.

The Depression finally reached Cheticamp's insulated economy. When the workers learned she was marking up the price of the rugs far more than they knew, they demanded a raise to \$1.00 per square foot. Burke denied the request and lost half of her laborers. The dissenters formed a co-op that was successful in marketing their rugs in Boston, Toronto, and New York. After the war began in 1939, she never returned to Cheticamp. However, Burke's meticulous standards continued to be the hallmark of rugs created in Cheticamp and that influence is still reflected today.

Following the Cabot Trail Through the National Park



Just four miles north of the village of Cheticamp, you will cross the Cheticamp River and enter the Cape Breton Highlands National Park. At the Information Centre, well informed rangers will help you plan your stay. Daily fees are \$7.80 / \$6.80 / \$3.90 for adults / seniors / youths. If you wish to stay five days or more, you should buy the annual pass that provides admission to 37 Canadian National Parks and eight National Park Reserves. A full-service hookup (EWS) is \$35.30 including tax.

The next 26 miles (42 kms) to Pleasant Bay is one of the most beautiful drives in the world. The mountains challenge the ocean and then shear off into scenic bluffs. The Cabot Trail

guides drivers to overlooks ("look-outs") with spectacular views. Brooks and rivers descending from the plateau cut gashes into the mountains that terminate in beaches a hundred yards in length. We found our picnic table where Trout Brook tumbled under a bridge and into the Gulf.

Corney Brook, nine miles north of the Information Centre, has a very pleasant campground with 20 unserviced sites. There is no potable water. Services include flush toilets, kitchen shelters with wood stoves, and fireplaces at each site. It was originally designed for tents but there is plenty of asphalt for motorhomes. There is unsupervised swimming at the beach and



a 2.5-mile path follows Corney Brook up into the canyon to a waterfall. Self-registration, first-come first-served (see above).

A mile north of Corney Brook the Cabot Trail turns inland to show off the MacKenzie River Valley. About four miles inland you will come to the Bog, a short half mile walk on a boardwalk through wetlands where you will see orchids in the summer. The boardwalk is suitable for wheelchairs and baby strollers. A ranger mentioned that moose occasionally feed in the bog.

Making a half circle across the plateau from the ocean, you will find several look-outs to observe the work of the MacKenzie River as it carved its way through 16 km of the dramatically rugged canyon. It terminates at Fishing Cove. For the athletic and adventurous, a five-mile hike will get you to a small beach where you may try both fresh and salt water fishing. Permit required.

Leaving the highland plateau, the descent into Wreck Cove Point was made possible with the construction of many switchbacks. Originally called Wreck Cove because of ship wrecks, one might wonder if car wrecks could have had anything to do with the name.

We made Pleasant Bay our late afternoon destination and found a very nice room at The Poplar B&B, not exactly what RVers usually do, but improvisation is necessary sometimes. At the Information Centre, we had learned about the Pleasant Bay Whale Interpretive Centre and Capt. Mark's Whale and Seal Cruise (see below) and decided this was a "don't miss" oppor-

tunity. The Interpretive Centre's exhibits and media can almost make you an expert on whales in about an hour. The saltwater aquatic tank contains most of the food chain in a whale's diet. Of the 79 whale species found in the world, 16 can be observed in the waters surrounding Pleasant Bay. Admission: adults, \$5; seniors/students, \$4.

By the time we left the Centre, we were ready for Capt. Mark's Whale and Seal Cruise on the research vessel "Double Hook-up." Mark Timmons, the owner, brings in research students from Dalhousie University in Halifax to provide professional commentary on the excursions aboard the research boat. Fare: adults, \$49; seniors/students, \$44. Time at sea about two hours.

Leaving Pleasant Bay the next day, we were back into the mountains in minutes. We picked up provisions from a small grocery and put down our ad hoc lunch on a picnic table at MacIntosh Brook (see the Park Guide and Map). If you are so inclined for a nice hike, a one hour roundtrip will take you to a waterfall. We passed on this one in favor of a shorter hike at Lone Shieling, where you will find a 350-year-old stand of sugar maples. A refreshing trail leads to a shepherd's stone hut (see above) which is a replica of the original Lone Shieling on Scotland's Isle of Skye. If only that shepherd could have stepped out of his hut and told us about his lonely lifestyle taking care of his sheep.

Anxious to push on in time to see Cape Breton's Atlantic and eastern side by late afternoon, we drove the next 32 miles to



PHOTO BY TINA ROACH



PHOTO COURTESY OF PARKS CANADA

Black Brook Beach (see previous page), enjoying the views along the way but without stopping.

The west side of Cape Breton Highlands National Park presented the mountains coming to an abrupt end in high bluffs with small beaches occurring only where brooks and rivers breached the mountains and emptied into the sea. On the eastern side, the mountains do not always terminate so abruptly.

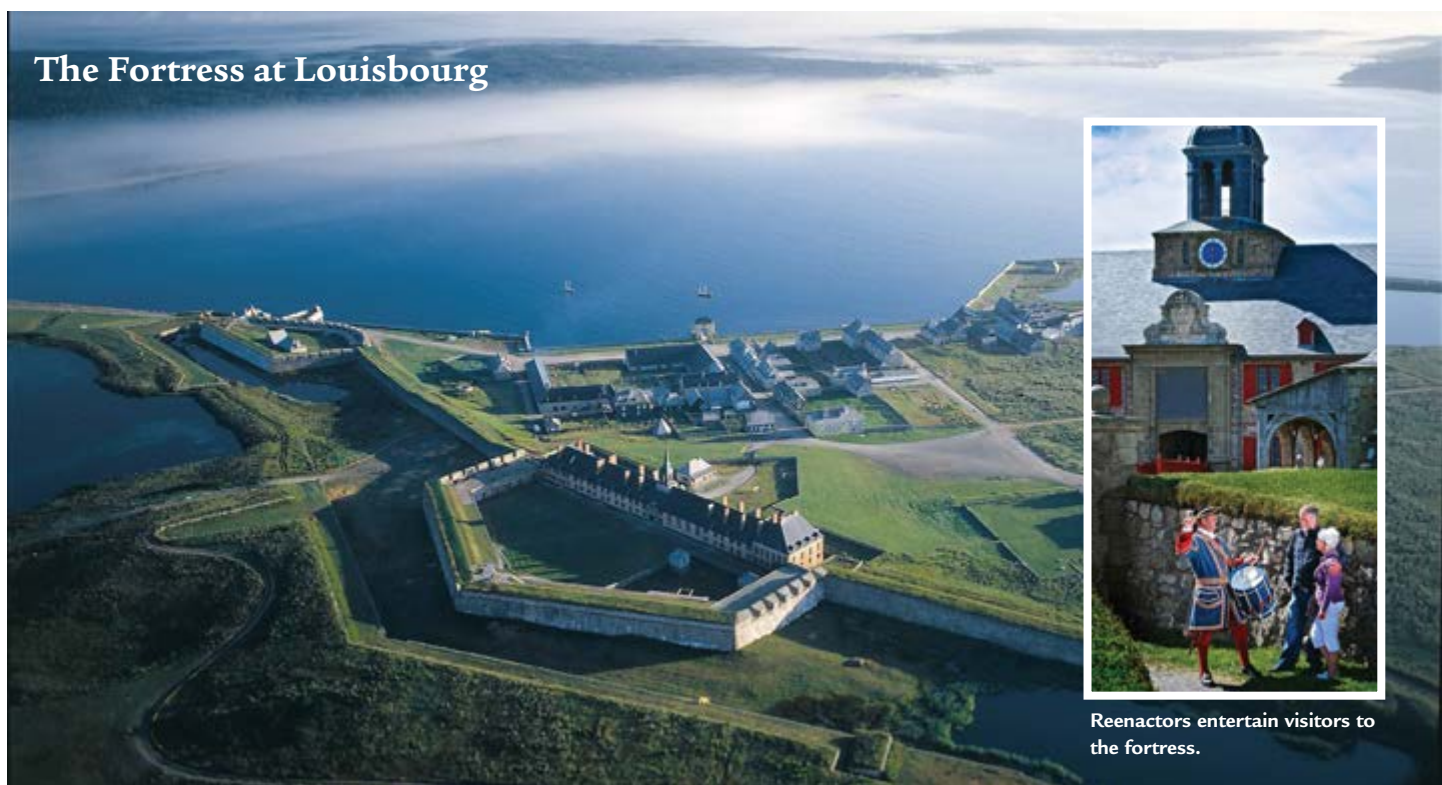
This difference is characterized by Black Brook Beach. You can swim in the salty Atlantic on a beautiful beach and then follow the brook to a waterfall for a refreshing cold shower. A local resident said the beach was crowded only on major holidays. The Broad Cove Campground is less than eight miles away, making it a “must stop” on a return visit in the future, plus it is only eight miles north of Highlands Links.

The campground has 83 full-service hookups and some very pretty sites. If you are in your motorhome, unhook your tow ve-

hicle and spend 15 minutes to select the best site for your coach. Remember that 30 amps is the max offered.

If you are a golfer, then you must spend a couple of days at the Broad Cove Campground. In 1939 the National Park Service retained Stanley Thompson to build a course in sight of both the mountains and the Atlantic Ocean. He was given one of Canada’s most beautiful parks with just one mandate: take advantage of it. Thompson often told his friends that “it’s the best contract I ever got.” Many golfers see similarities to courses in Scotland and refer to Highlands Links as Thompson’s “homage to golf’s Scottish roots.”

We stayed until dark thinking the 55 miles back to our coach in Baddeck would not be that bad a run. However, we were unpleasantly surprised by the poorly maintained road surface. We hope by the time you read this story the province has repaved this section of the famous Cabot Trail.



Reenactors entertain visitors to the fortress.

PHOTOS COURTESY OF PARKS CANADA

In 1713 treaties between several European states, including France, Great Britain, Spain, Portugal and others ended the War of Spanish Succession. In North America, France ceded to Great Britain its claims to Newfoundland and Acadia which the British promptly renamed Nova Scotia (New Scotland). France retained Île-Saint-Jean (Prince Edward Island) as well as Île Royale (Cape Breton Island). The development of Louisbourg as a fishing port, a substantial town, and a colonial capital began immediately. France anticipated future wars and saw Louisbourg as a military base on a very defensible site.

The area populated quickly with officers and colonial regular troops, fishermen of French descent from Newfoundland, and

merchants from Nova Scotia. Others immigrated from France and some from Quebec and Acadia — sailors, artisans, clerks, but few farmers. Louisbourg never became an agricultural colony. Families of the immigrants followed and soon there were schools. Householders brought in servants and some had slaves. Carpenters and masons were attracted as labor was needed to build port warehouses and then homes. The Catholic church sent priests and nuns from dedicated orders. Innkeepers, cooks, bakers, and laundresses came to offer their services. In just three decades the village of Louisbourg had grown to a city of over 2,000 people.

The city was defined by fortifications and a wall with a cir-

cumference of two-and-a-half miles that took 20 years and six million dollars to build. France's apprehensions were justified when a new war with Britain broke out in 1744. Initially, the French garrisoned at the Fortress of Louisbourg took the offensive, but the British marshaled sea power from England and 4,000 militia who were mostly New England farmers and fishermen. Louisbourg was attacked on May 11, 1745 with a land and sea assault that lasted for 46 days. The French surrendered in late June. The townspeople were exiled to France and Louisbourg became a British garrison.

Just three years later in 1748, Louisbourg became a pawn in the negotiations to end the War of Austrian Succession with the Treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle. The British returned Louisbourg to the French in exchange for France's withdrawal from the Austrian Netherlands (modern Belgium). Within months the exiles returned, international trade and fishing resumed, and the population nearly tripled.

Louisbourg barely had a decade of peace. The British realized that with the Fortress of Louisbourg under French control it would be impossible for the Royal Navy to sail up the St. Lawrence River to attack Quebec. After a failed attempt in 1757, British forces assembled early in May 1758 in Halifax to plan and mount a massive invasion against Louisbourg. The fleet included 150 transport ships carrying 14,000 soldiers and 40 warships. The fortress was defended by 3,500 French regulars plus 3,500 marines and sailors from the French warships in the harbor.

The British force anchored on June 2 in a bay three miles from Louisbourg. The battle lasted for nearly two months until the French finally surrendered on July 26. Louisbourg held out long enough to thwart a British attack on Quebec that year. However, the British spent the rest of the year routing French troops and settlements in the territories that became New Brunswick, Prince Edward Island, and Newfoundland. The second wave of the Acadian expulsion began later in 1758. In 1759 the fortress was used as a staging point for General Wolfe's Siege of Quebec that ended French rule in North America.

In 1760 British forces and engineers returned to the Fortress of Louisbourg and destroyed it with explosives. The entire fortress was reduced to rubble to ensure that some future treaty could never return Louisbourg to the French. In 1763 under the provisions of the Treaty of Paris, France formally ceded Canada to Great Britain. The imported cut stone used in the original construction of the fortress was re-used to construct buildings still standing today in Halifax and Sydney.

English and Irish soldiers who served in the second siege settled in the area that became the present-day town of Louisbourg. In 1961, two centuries after it was dynamited to rubble, the government began an initiative to recreate the Fortress of Louisbourg, transforming the ruins into an impressive historical and interpretive site with the King's Bastion Barracks as the centerpiece. A project that has taken 20 years, the fortress is the largest reconstruction of an historical site in North America.

Peggy's Cove

It would be easy to spend several days in Halifax: museums, restaurants, the Maritime Museum of the Atlantic, Halifax Public Gardens—and the city has more pubs and clubs per capita than almost any city in Canada. But we didn't come to the Maritimes to visit big cities. Just a few miles from Halifax we spent two days visiting Peggy's Cove and Lunenburg, hands down two of the most charming villages in Nova Scotia.

Over 200 years ago, six fishermen and their families of German descent became the first permanent residents of Peggy's Cove, after receiving a land grant of 800 acres from King George III. At first their livelihood was a subsistence endeavor, but as it became profitable more families moved into the community.

The fishermen built simple sturdy houses around the cove, and a schoolhouse was added in 1839. St. John's Anglican Church was erected in 1850 and rebuilt in the 1880s. Featuring the Carpenter Gothic Revival architecture, the church is now a designated heritage site. The church is the only religious body in the community, deeply involved with all aspects of the residents' lives from birth to death.

By the mid-1800s the community was self-sufficient with a general store and a post office. Residents traded fish for food and other commodities that were delivered by sea before passable roads provided more convenient travel into the province. Today a few families who have been here for generations still

make their living from the sea, evidenced by their colorful boats anchored in the cove's harbor. Soon after World War II, the revenue from tourists exceeded the income from fishing. The village now depends on tourism for its primary source of income and carefully maintains its rustic, undeveloped appearance.

The homes here are built on granite outcroppings (see below). The fishermen built tight, compact homes to withstand the high winds and storms coming in from the Atlantic. The roofs are steeply pitched to prevent snow build-up in the winter. Heat was provided by a stove. Some of the houses have been ren-





ovated and expanded over the years. The first addition was typically a summer kitchen. More recent additions include porches and dormer windows, but most of the homes in Peggy's Cove have retained their original charm.

The first lighthouse was built in 1868, a wooden house with a beacon on the roof. At sundown the keeper lit a kerosene oil lamp magnified by a silver-plated mirror. In 1914 it was replaced by an octagonal lighthouse 15 meters high, made of reinforced concrete. For many years the ground floor housed a small Canada Post office operated during the summer months as a novelty for visitors who sent postcards and letters with a special cancellation mark in the shape of the lighthouse.

The Peggy's Point Lighthouse, as it is officially known, is still operated by the Canadian Coast Guard and is situated on a granite outcrop immediately south of the village and its cove. Painted in the classic red-and-white design, it is one of the most photographed structures in the Maritime Provinces and one of the most recognizable lighthouses in the world.

A carving over 32 yards wide in solid granite is a monument

to the hard-working fishermen of Peggy's Cove. At the age of 70, William deGarthe used his chisels and power tools to "release the figures sleeping in the rock for over 10 million years." After years of study, preparation, and basic sketches, he began his project in September 1977. He first carved the figure of a fisherman braving a harsh North Atlantic wind. Residents in Peggy's Cove provided deGarthe with inspiration for many of the 30 figures he subsequently carved over six years.

deGarthe grouped the figures into three distinct sections: Work, Bounty, and Grace. Work shows fishermen hauling nets, pulling a dory, and using other tools to catch fish. Bounty celebrates the riches of the sea and is highlighted by a young woman carrying a basket, whom some say is the village's famous "Peggy" who inspired the name of the cove. The section at the far left is Grace, featuring a guardian angel watching over a fisherman and his family.

Sadly, deGarthe died in 1983 before his work was completed. He left behind a work of art that is a tribute to the people of the cove as well as to his enormous talent and perseverance.





Lunenburg

This historic town was designated a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 1995, which ensures protection for most of Lunenburg's unique architecture dating to the mid-1700s. It is the best example of a planned British colonial settlement in Canada.

Lunenburg was one of the first British attempts to settle Protestants in Nova Scotia, an action that was intended to displace Mi'kmaq and Acadian Catholics. The British established Lunenburg unilaterally without negotiating with the Mi'kmaq whose sovereign territory it had always been. The Mi'kmaq name of the village was Mirliguèche.

The Mi'kmaq were members of the Wabanaki Confederacy that raided the town nine times during the French and Indian War (1754–1763). During the American Revolution, American privateers raided Lunenburg twice, in 1775 and 1782. During the War of 1812, the tables were turned as Nova Scotia built or purchased privateer ships to seize American vessels.

Three members of the town bought a privateer schooner that weighed 93 tons, had five guns, and required a crew of 45 men. It was named the *Lunenburg* in August 1814. By February 15, 1815, the *Lunenburg* and its crew had captured or destroyed seven U.S. schooners.

Lunenburg was initially an agricultural settlement. As well-built fishing schooners made it possible for companies to exploit the Grand Banks of Newfoundland and the fishing banks off of Nova Scotia, a marine-based economy became the norm. While wooden shipbuilding declined in other parts of Nova Scotia with the arrival of steamships, Lunenburg shipyards specialized in fishing schooners that remained competitive into the

1920s. The most famous was *Bluenose* built in 1921, a schooner that brought in record catches and won the International Fishermen's Trophy. Her fame became iconic and she appeared on the Canadian dime and on a 50-cent postage stamp in 1929. Sailing schooners were replaced by trawlers in the 1930s and sadly *Bluenose* was sold in 1942 to be used as a freighter in the West Indies. She struck a reef in January 1946 and sank.

Lunenburg's small shipyards made the transition from fishing schooners to trawlers, and even served during World War II as a repair center for smaller warships. After the war, the town continued as a major fishing center. With a touch of irony, the shipyards found a new market for the skills and technology



Bluenose II under sail

PHOTO BY DANIEL J. TOWSEY



preserved from the sailing era. The town became a leader in building large sailing ship replicas, beginning with the *Bounty* in 1960, the *Bluenose II* in 1963, and the *HMS Rose* in 1970.

The *Bluenose II* replica represented the province for three decades. In need of major repairs, she was taken out of service and dismantled in 2010. An entirely new *Bluenose* (also called *Bluenose II* since it was deemed a reconstruction) was built in the same shipyard as her ancestor and launched in 2013.

In the last 25 years, tourism has become Lunenburg's most important industry, with a sufficient number of restaurants and hotels to serve the thousands of visitors who begin to arrive in early June. The Fisheries Museum of the Atlantic is *the place* to spend your time. It is located in the buildings of a former fish processing plant on Lunenburg's waterfront. It is staffed by retired fishermen and their family members who can tell you the story of where and how they harvested the sea to provide us with our seafood, as well as how their own ancestors did it . . . 50, a 100, even 200 years ago.

Start on the first floor with a tour of the aquarium, one of the largest in eastern Canada. The fisheries in Lunenburg shipped North Atlantic cod to Europe as well as to the U.S. You can go eye-ball to eye-ball with the kind of fish you may be eating for dinner. Ever wonder what scallops look like in an aquarium?

On the second floor, the Bank Fishery Age of Sail traces 500 years of fishing the banks off Canada's east coast and the progression of ship design. The Vessel Gallery offers exhibits of schooners and trawlers, including one of the famous *Bluenose*. The dangers of off-shore fishing are explained in the Memorial Room, dedicated to fishermen lost at sea from the port of Lunenburg. The memorial includes lists of the fishermen and the vessels lost.

On the third floor, the Ice House Theatre presents a variety of educational films about many facets of the fishing industry. The Fishing Community room tells the story of "rum running," an exciting and dangerous job. During Prohibi-

tion in the U.S. in the 1920s, Canada's distillers operated under federal jurisdiction with regard to the manufacturing and exporting of liquor. Since they could not ship directly into the U.S., the Canadian distillers sold to French middlemen who warehoused enormous quantities of liquor on two French-owned islands off of Canada's coast. With fishing vessels designed to work in the Atlantic and crews with a thorough knowledge of the sea and coastlines, no one was better equipped to deliver liquor to the thirsty American market.

The fishermen were men of good character who needed to support their families. At \$75 per run and \$150 per man for a successful delivery, the rum runners

had no difficulty getting crews. An American involved in the running trade named Bill McCoy had a reputation for consistently providing a high quality product that was never watered down. When buyers checked his delivery, they would say, "It's the real McCoy!" Decades later, of course, the expression is still in common usage meaning "genuine" or "authentic."

At the waterfront, you can board the *Theresa E. Connor* and *Cape Sable*. The *Connor* was built in 1938 in Lunenburg and is Canada's oldest saltbank schooner. The *Cape Sable* is a steel-hulled side trawler that was built in Holland in 1962 (at lower left). The trawler style of vessel eventually replaced the dory schooners like the *Connor*. The schooners would stay out to

sea a month at a time, while the trawlers average trip lasted eight to ten days. The crew quarters for the schooner were limited and cramped. The trawler's hold could store 300,000 pounds of fish.

A hearty appetite will be well taken care of at the Old Fish Factory Restaurant (above left) on the second floor. Visit their website, oldfishfactory.com to see a full menu for both lunch and dinner. A good MO is to stop by two hours earlier than you wish to dine, make the reservation, and spend the interval visiting the museum. Ask for window seating. Restaurant hours are May-June, Sept-Oct: 11-9. July-August: 11-9:30. Call 902-634-4797 for museum hours. Museum admission fees are \$10/\$7/\$3 for adults/seniors/children.

Grand Pré

Located on an expansive "grand pré" (large meadow), the Grand Pré National Historic Site of Canada has international significance as the site from which several thousand Acadians were deported by the British in 1755. The tragic event changed the course of Acadian history forever, and the site will forever be a place that touches the hearts of all Acadian people.

In the Fall 2014 issue (11:4) of *Roughing It Smoothly*, part two of this four-part series on the Maritime Provinces focused on the history of the Acadians in the Maritimes. A few Acadians are the descendants of French colonists who first came to the Maritime Provinces in 1604. Most descended from about 50 French families who settled Acadia between 1636 and 1650. They brought with them farming techniques learned in France.

A polder is land reclaimed from flooded lowlands. Due to the constant flooding of the Bay of Fundy's coastline, the land was rich with alluvial soil, but too wet for planting and harvesting. Polderization used techniques of dykes, aboiteaux, and a drainage network to reclaim the land for farming. The Acadians developed a community-based management system that is still in use today. They established extended villages along the rivers that flowed into the Minas Basin.

By the early 1700s, this area was the largest population center of Acadia. Grand Pré was its largest settlement. The Acadians formed strong bonds with the Mi'kmaq who soon came to share the Acadians' Catholic faith. After the British took control of Nova Scotia in 1713 following the Treaty of Utrecht, the colonial officials were bitterly jealous of the friendly relationships the French enjoyed with the Mi'kmaq. Oblivious to their own condescending attitude and treatment of the Mi'kmaq people, they seemed unable to understand why they could not expect the same friendly, cooperative relationships that were enjoyed by the French. They demanded that the Acadians and the Mi'kmaq swear an oath of allegiance to George I. The Acadians wanted to remain neutral as they had been successful in doing for the past century.

Governor Richard Philipps informed London in 1720 that the Acadians "will never swear the oath of allegiance, no more than they will leave the country." The British Board of Trade replied, "... we are apprehensive they will never become good subjects to His Majesty... for which reason we are of the opinion they ought to be removed. . . ." Separated by the Atlantic and three-month intervals in reciprocal communications, the issue sim-

mered but did not explode. The Acadian population nearly doubled in a decade. Philipps tried to pacify the crown and his subjects by getting the Acadians to take an oath of allegiance that exempted them from taking up arms against the French, and prohibited them from bearing arms against England. For subsequent British administrators in Nova Scotia, the "qualified oath" of 1730 was not sufficient proof of the Acadians loyalty.

Lieutenant-Governor Thomas Caulfield wanted the Acadians to stay in the country. "If the Acadians leave," he said, "we will never be able to provide food for the English families here. . . ."

The British, French, and the Mi'kmaq were frequently in conflict in the region, but the Acadians steadfastly maintained they were loyal and neutral. However, when French militia from the Fortress of Louisbourg in 1744 made a clandestine attack on Annapolis Royal, some Acadians provided food to the militia as they passed through the Minas Basin area. But maintaining neutrality, the Acadians made no attempt to warn the British of the impending attack. A similar situation in 1747 also raised British ire when they suspected the Acadians knew the French were in the area but did not warn them.

With the tension mounting, many



MEMORIAL CHURCH: An Enduring Tribute

The Memorial Church expresses the Acadians' strong attachment to the Grand Pré National Historic Site of Canada. Built in 1922 with funds raised from Acadian communities throughout North America, the Memorial Church symbolizes the spirit of Acadian nationalism and the deep-seated desire to commemorate the tragedy of the Deportation. Architect René Fréchet of Moncton, New Brunswick, drew the plans for the church which reflect Normandy-style architecture of the 1700s.

Acadians left Nova Scotia for Prince Edward Island and Cape Breton. On the Isthmus of Chignecto connecting Nova Scotia to New Brunswick, the French in 1755 completed Fort Beauséjour to maintain the land route between Louisbourg and Quebec. The distracted British refocused on their primary objective to defeat the French at both Beauséjour and Louisbourg. In May 1755 Colonel Shirley put together an army of 2,000 in Massachusetts and began a two-week march to attack Fort Beauséjour. The French commander at the fort received news of the impending attack and, with only a thousand soldiers to defend the fort, demanded assistance from the surrounding Acadian



READING THE DEPORTATION ORDER

As the British-French struggle intensified, British authorities decided to deport the "French neutrals" from Nova Scotia. On September 5, 1755, Lt. Col. John Winslow read the deportation order to the men and boys of the Grand Pré area who had been assembled at the Church of Saint-Charles-des-Mines.

population. Concerned about their oath of allegiance to the crown, the Acadians asked the commander to "threaten them into service" to give them protection later on if the British decided to execute them for treason.

On June 4, 1755, 400 French settlers, the Acadians, and the Mi'kmaq joined the fort's soldiers to fight the British colonials. The British blocked the port of Louisbourg, preventing the French from sending reinforcements. The battle was over on June 16.

The battle of Fort Beauséjour sealed the Acadians' fate both militarily and politically. The British discovered a significant number of Acadians had participated in the defense of the fort, however feckless the effort had been. Governor Lawrence claimed enough evidence that some Acadians had breached their oath of neutrality, and decided with the Nova Scotia Council to solve the "festering Acadian problem" once and for all. On July 31, he ordered the forcible removal of the Acadian population from the colony.

The British lost no time in making plans for the deportation. On September 5, Acadian men and boys 10 and older were commanded to assemble at 3 p.m. in the parish church of Saint-Charles-des-Mines, Grand Pré. In the painting by Claude Picard, Lt. Col. John Winslow, who is overseeing the deportation from Grand Pré and surrounding villages, stands at a table with the deportation order in hand. The Acadians surrounding Winslow are from the settlements located along the shores and rivers of the Minas Basin: Grand Pré, Canard, Habitant, Landry, Melanson, Granger, Terriot, and others. Troops of Shirley's Regiment and the 45th Regiment of Foot stand at the ready.

The order informed the Acadians that acting Governor Charles Lawrence and the Nova Scotia Council had ordered the removal of all Acadians from the colony. The shock of the



After Henry Wadsworth Longfellow's poem, *Evangeline*, was published in 1847, telling the tragic story to the English-speaking world of the Deportation of the Acadians, many readers wanted to visit the birthplace of the poem's heroine, *Evangeline*. The original village of Grand Pré was gone, but the dykelands remained. In 1917 the Dominion Atlantic Railway acquired the property which was adjacent to its mainline and made substantial investments in developing the park and promoting the history of the Acadians. The statue of *Evangeline* by Louis-Philippe Hébert was erected in the park in 1920.


announcement is reflected in the range of emotions depicted—disbelief, despair, anger, and protest. The Acadians learned at that point they were all prisoners and would be held under guard.

Between 1755 and 1763, more than 10,000 Acadians were removed from their homes in present day Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, and Prince Edward Island. Some evaded deportation, of whom a small number carried on a guerrilla resistance against British forces. They were unwilling to turn over their well-manicured farms to the British for no compensation. To discourage the Acadians from ever returning, houses, barns, mills, and other buildings were burned.

The museum at Grand Pré is one of the best I have ever visited. It is an excellent presentation telling the story of an industrious people who were asked to come to Acadia to settle a new country and expand the opportunities of farmers who were restricted by an ancient feudal system of land control. Following Biblical admonishments, they were happy to live under the government in control as long as they could maintain their neutrality and not be forced to bear arms. They made friends with the Mi'kmaq by understanding the

culture and traditions of an indigenous people who had been there for four thousand years. The Mi'kmaq treated the Acadians as honored guests in their country. The relationship established a model for international understanding that should never be forgotten.

Sadly, the Acadians were caught up in a conflict between France and England that had flared for decades in Europe and then spilled into North America. At great loss of life, their expulsion lasted over a period of seven years. Some managed to escape exile by going into hiding, a few were able to return, but most never did. Over the next 200 years, the influence of the Acadians who were able to remain in the Maritimes has been enormous, far beyond the proportion of their actual numbers in the three provinces.

Grand Pré closed our trip to Canada's Maritime Provinces and left us with a great desire to return for an extended visit to this culture-rich, scenic, and historically important part of North America. 

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Winegard Explains Its TV Antenna Features and Operation

WINEGARD HAS BEEN A LEADER in antenna design, development, and manufacturing for more than 60 years. Tiffin Motorhomes selected Winegard's RoadTrip Mission In-Motion Satellite TV Antenna™ as the standard equipment in the Allegro Bus 45UP. The coach is also prewired for the TRAVLER Automatic Multi-Satellite TV Antenna for optimal signal strength and HD reception. With proven performance and reliability, Winegard has been providing Tiffin its RoadTrip Mission as standard equipment on select models since 2011. This article will examine both the RoadTrip Mission and TRAVLER TV antennas.

The RoadTrip Mission In-Motion Satellite TV Antenna is encased in a low-profile (only 12.9 inches in height), weather-resistant dome on the roof of the RV, and it allows you to watch television programming while the RV is parked or on-the-move.

One of the other big advantages of the RoadTrip Mission is



the complete ease-of-use with its one-button automatic operation. Simply power the unit on by pressing the button on the control panel (about the size of a light switch) located inside the coach, and the antenna will quickly track the programs you want to watch. The unit will automatically move from satellite to satellite as you flip through channels so there is no manual pointing needed. The RoadTrip Mission hooks up to two TVs where different programs can be viewed as long as they are broadcast from the same satellite.

This powerful TV antenna receives standard-definition programming for DIRECTV and high-definition programming for DISH and Bell TV (Canada). Although, the TV antenna is pre-installed in the Allegro Bus 45UP, it is up to the owner to provide a receiver(s) with a satellite subscription. Winegard offers an industry-leading two-year part, one-year labor warranty, and partners with a nationwide network of dealers.

The TRAVLER Multi-Satellite TV Antenna is the premier product for the best possible viewing experience. It offers the strongest signal available because of its certified reflectors, and powers through even the worst weather. Many RV owners opt

to install the TRAVLER because it receives DIRECTV in high-definition which optimizes the HD television sets that come preinstalled in the Allegro Bus 45UP. The HD signal maximizes the picture quality on the pre-installed televisions for crystal-clear images every time. This TV antenna requires the vehicle to be parked while it is in use, but you can easily switch from the RoadTrip Mission while in motion to the TRAVLER when stationary.



The TRAVLER is perfect for families that make TV entertainment a priority or who may want to have the freedom to watch different programs at the same time without any compromises. All of the TVs in the RV can receive different channels simultaneously because the antenna views all satellites at once for maximum programming. This antenna is also great to use with DVRs so you can watch and record programs from different satellites at the same time.

This fully automatic system offers a one-button operation where you just press "Power," and the antenna automatically begins searching for satellites. The power button is located on an interface that also indicates when the unit is on, when it's searching for satellites, and which satellites it locates. When it's time to start driving again, simply turn the power button off, and the antenna will return to the stowed position.

The RoadTrip Mission In-Motion Satellite TV Antenna and the TRAVLER Automatic Multi-Satellite TV Antenna along with all of Winegard's products are designed and manufactured in the U.S. You can check out more information at winegard.com.

Plant Tours

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

Tiffin Dealer Larry McClain Dies in February

Larry McClain, founder of McClain's RV Superstores with locations in Texas and Oklahoma, died on February 27, 2015.

The Recreation Vehicle Dealers Association (RVDA) reported in a memo that McClain was a past RVDA president, serving in that capacity 1973-74. McClain, who got involved in RVDA by attending the first organizational meeting, was also a member of the initial RVDA board.

"Larry McClain was a key leader in the formation of the National RVDA and a driving force in forging unity among RV dealers. He was a terrific businessman who leaves an outstanding legacy in the RV business. Larry was a mentor to many up-and-coming RV dealers and a friend to all who crossed his path," said RVDA President Phil Ingrassia.

He was awarded the James B. Summers award in 1993 and his dealerships received the Top Quality Dealer of the Year award in 1998. McClain was inducted into the RV/MH Hall of Fame in 2003.

A Spare Tire Carrier For Your Motorhome

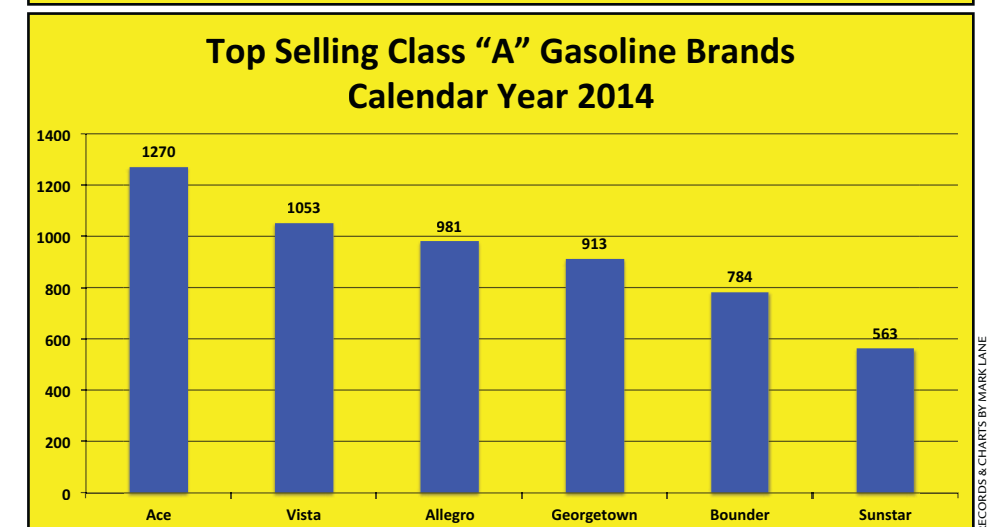
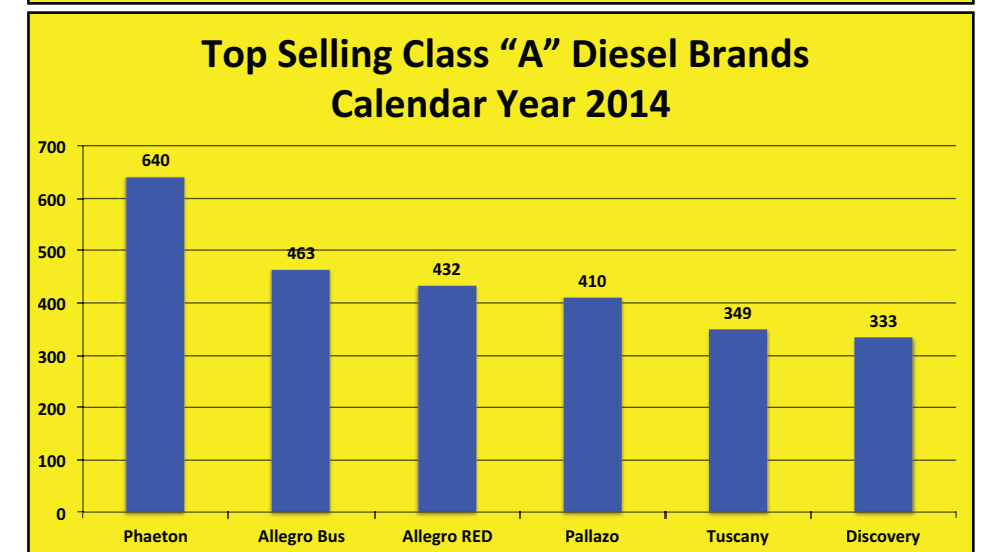
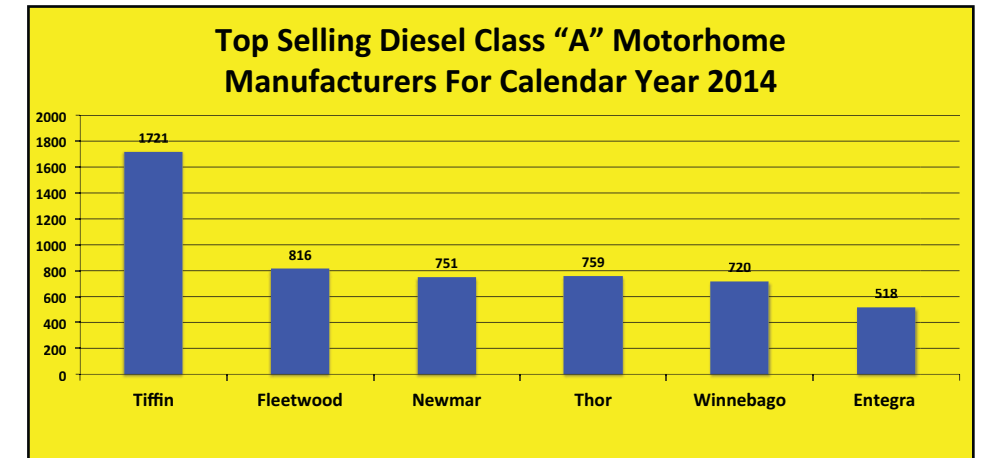
With Roadmaster's spare tire carrier you can get back on the road in no time, keep your tires matched, save valuable cargo space and still tow whatever you want behind your motorhome. Carrying your own spare allows you to control the cost.

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 - ◆ Mounts in a standard two-inch receiver hitch.
 - ◆ Powder-coated for durability and corrosion resistance.
 - ◆ 10,000 pound maximum capacity; 400 pound maximum tongue weight.
- Part number: 195225; MSRP: \$695.

Class A Motorhome Registrations in the United States

The charts below are created from data gathered from 2014 motorhome registrations for new coaches. They do not include 2014 motorhomes in dealers' inventory that had not been sold by December 31, 2014.



Marijuana and Your Pets

by Dr. John Pilarczyk

As we travel through this great country of ours, we may come across a new drug that we will have to acknowledge. Twenty-three states and the District of Columbia have enacted laws allowing the use of medical marijuana. Colorado and Washington have also legalized the recreational use of marijuana.

Marijuana poisoning in pets has become more common as additional states pass laws approving its use. Emergency clinics are seeing an increase in visits involving marijuana intoxication.

Most cases that I saw during my practice involved the pet eating brownies or cookies with marijuana laced into the recipe. The dog would get into the cookies and brownies and eat the whole platter. I have never known a dog to eat one cookie and stop.

The active ingredient in marijuana is tetrahydrocannabinol. If ingested in large quantities, it can cause death in pets.

Symptoms of marijuana poisoning include respiratory depression, high or low heart rate, unconsciousness, and wobbly gait. A pet will appear to be drunk at first, and later exhibit agitation, seizures, and pneumonia. Dogs develop symptoms quickly at very low doses of the drug.

Cannabis has been shown to be helpful in treating chronic pain, nausea, and some other conditions in animals. There are undocumented stories of people's pets suffering from terminal cancer in which they sleep 20+ hours a day; but when given cannabis, they start eating, are more attentive, and actually start to play. However, doses and treatment evaluations have not been fully studied. There has been no research to determine what constitutes an appropriate dose or at what point the drug becomes toxic. Using marijuana in "hit and miss doses" may subject the

patient to unwanted or possibly harmful results, or even death.

As you travel, if you are exposed to cannabis, be careful with its use around pets. Like all drugs, marijuana should be labeled and kept out of reach of pets and children. The literature shows that humans and dogs have certain receptors in the brain that are targets for the cannabis drug. Dogs, however, have a higher concentration of receptors so they become more affected with small doses and develop more severe neurological effects such as ataxia (drunkenness) and seizures.

The growing demand for marijuana has also created environmental issues. Cannabis is being illegally grown in California because it has millions of acres of public land. Growers use rodenticides to ward off rats and mice that eat the plants. This in turn is having an effect on wildlife in the area. Bears, foxes, and weasels have been found poisoned. In addition, massive amounts of fertilizer are used to grow the plants, upsetting the natural flora in these forests.

As more states pass laws allowing the use of marijuana, we will likely see more illegal growing of the plant. While we know it can benefit some animals and humans, there are other consequences that may occur. If you take it into a state where it is not legal, you could find yourself in trouble. The Federal Government still says it is illegal.

Until the Federal Government approves the use of medical marijuana in all states, and validated research is done on dosing and the point at which cannabis becomes toxic in pets, its use will be hindered for improving the quality of life for pets suffering from terminal cancer or other debilitating diseases. Marijuana is not a panacea, it does not cure diseases, and there probably are variations in individual and breed responses.

Veterinarians are not allowed to prescribe marijuana, even in states that permit its use. Only medical doctors can write prescriptions for marijuana.

As of this writing, the state of Alaska has passed a law allowing the use of cannabis. There are limitations such as not allowing more than one ounce on your person and you must be 21 years of age. As you leave Alaska, make sure you leave the drug behind because Canada still frowns on its use.

Remember as you travel with your pet, stay safe, stay informed, and keep your dog on a short leash.

Happy travels,
John & Kay

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

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Interviews from Texas and Florida



John and Ellen Cutler

Hometown: Llano, Texas

Interviewed: Llano, Texas

- John and Ellen have been married for 36 years. They have 4 sons, 2 grand-daughters, 4 grandsons and 2 great-granddaughters.
- They bought a Four Star mini (Class C) in 1978 when their sons were young. In 2011 they purchased a new 42 foot Tiffin Phaeton QTH.
- They both love the wonderful features which include 2 bathrooms, a “man cave” and a “woman cave”. For them the Phaeton is like having a moveable mountain cabin.
- John was a quality engineer in the aerospace industry and Ellen was a payroll clerk for a large investment firm. Ellen became a fulltime homemaker in 1980 and John retired in 2010.
- They purchased a 5-acre lot they named Eureka Ranch in Llano, TX.
- John’s hobbies are building computers & digital photography. Favorite photo opportunity was at Glacier Nat’l Park. You can view many of John’s photos on flickr.com/photos/largeguy1. Most photos were taken on an 11 month, 16,000 mile trip to State and National Parks in western US and Alaska.
- Traveling around the country in their Phaeton that they named “Sense of Humor” was a fantastic experience.
- Last trip was to the balloon festival in Albuquerque.
- Their “bucket list” includes the Canadian Maritimes and Newfoundland.



Bill and Nancy Morrison

Hometown: New Gloucester, Maine

Interviewed: Silver Springs, Florida

- From Maine, they have been married for 44 years with two children and six grandkids.
- Bill and Nancy started camping years ago in a tent, then a Datsun pickup slide-in and 2 motorhomes before purchasing a used 2008 Allegro Bus at LaMesa RV. This is their retirement/travel coach.
- Riding on a Freightliner chassis with a Cummins 425 HP engine, they really enjoy the power and smooth ride of their coach.
- One of their first trips out west was to see all the National Parks.
- On their trip out West they missed Yellowstone due to National Park closures. What a disappointment.
- Being from Maine they like warmer climates so, they travel South for the winter.
- Favorite RV park was at Palm Beach Resort in Arizona where they both enjoyed all the activities, including their favorite....golf.
- RV clubs: iRV2, Good Sam, FMCA, Tiffin RV Network.
- Bill has retired from commercial sales and industrial fleet management while Nancy was in insurance sales, and they are retired landlords.
- As Bill says, “My other activities include golf, watching the World Champion New England Patriots, and golf!”
- Future plans are to go back to Yellowstone National Park and then to Alaska.



Ray Michel and Carolynn Montgomery

Hometown: Chester, Virginia

Interviewed: Silver Springs, Florida

- Ray and Carolynn own a 2008 Phaeton 40QDH with a 360 HP Cummins engine on a Freightliner chassis. This is their first motorhome, which they purchased from a private owner in December 2014.
- They have 4 children and 2 grandchildren.
- They met at the Federal Defense Supply Center in Richmond, VA where they were both employed for 17 years. They recently retired.
- Ray and Carolynn have been camping most of their lives. They love traveling when they are not remodeling their home in Chester VA. Remodeling is a hobby for Carolynn.
- To date, their favorite states include Tennessee, New Mexico, and Florida, and recently they traveled to Colorado.
- Their favorite campground is RV Ranch in Grand Junction, Colorado.
- This year they plan to tour the Northeast then return to Florida for the winter.
- Their traveling companion is their dog Berkeley, a Welch Springer Spaniel, who also loves riding in the Phaeton.
- Now that Ray and Carolynn have a motorhome, their future plans are to keep RVing with family and friends, especially with the grandkids.
- Bucket List locations include more national parks and Canada, especially the Nova Scotia area.

Editor’s Note: Dave has been camping for 52 years in tents to motorhomes. Dave and Terri purchased a new 2008 Phaeton 40QSH. In 2010, they sold their home and purchased a 2.8 acre lot in the Berkshire Mountains (Peru, MA) for summer use. They named their mini-campground “Beech-Wood Acres.” In 2012 they purchased an RV lot at Wilderness RV Park Estate in Silver Springs for use in the winter months. Dave and Terri are now full-timers who are living their dream.



PHOTO BY HILARY MERCER

Riding the Mt. Rainier Scenic Railroad Steam Train

IT GOES WITHOUT SAYING THAT SCENERY IS SPECTACULAR when you ride the rails behind a steam-powered locomotive in the shadow of Mount Rainier. But when the train stops in Mineral, Washington to let passengers visit the Mount Rainier Scenic Railroad's Museum, it becomes obvious this is not *all* about scenery. This trip brings to life a unique chapter in railroading's illustrious history.

At this museum, you step into a turn of the 20th century logging camp, a replica of many where steam powered much of an industry that supplied the timber that kept America building.

Logging companies, you learn, probably bought, operated, *and wrecked* more steam locomotives than any industry not in the business of hauling passengers and freight. Timber companies bought locomotives to move logs felled from the timbered slopes down to the sawmills, then haul lumber from the mills on to the commercial shippers that carried it to markets.

You'll see specialized "geared" type locomotives invented by loggers to negotiate rough, poorly-laid rails up mountains into forests.

The Mt. Rainier Scenic Railroad and Museum (MRSR) has five of these, one from each major manufacturer of this type engine. One is the only Willamette geared locomotive operable anywhere.

You can schedule this steam-themed ride into logging history any day between the season's opening run on May 23 and the last scheduled trips on Labor Day weekend. It starts when you pay \$32 and board a train at the MRSR depot in Elbe, Washington.

Your train chugs seven miles through evergreen and hardwood forests, over creeks and rivers, and around one 3.4% climbing curve steaming to the end-of-the-line destination at Mineral. If weather cooperates and you're lucky, you'll get a look at the famous

mountain itself as you roll over the Nisqually River Bridge. You may spot beaver dams, deer, elk and many bird species, including bald eagles and hawks.

The MRSR, which made its first passenger run in 1981, claims to be the longest-running steam-powered heritage railroad in the Pacific Northwest. It owns nine steam locomotives, five of which are operable. This year, two old standard-gauge steam engines will pull excursion trains, each normally carrying about 250 passengers.

*Learn How
Steam Power
Changed Timber
Production 100
Years Ago*

Text by Norman Spray

One of these, Hammond Lumber Company No. 17, is an 80-ton class Mikado built by American Locomotive Company. It is a 2-8-2 (two small “guide wheels” in front and back of eight large drive wheels) with a saddle tank that holds 2,200 gallons of water and a 1,000-gallon oil bunker. The boiler generates 180 psi. All that might be considered ordinary for an engine built in 1929, but No. 17’s history *is not* at all ordinary.

One could say it’s a fiery tale. It began soon after the engine was delivered to the Crossett Western Company of Wauna, Oregon which owned extensive timberlands just ravaged by the historic “Tilamook Burn.” Through the 1930’s and into the 40’s the engine hauled out timber salvaged from burned woodlands. Hammond Lumber Company then bought the engine in 1942. It got a new name, “No. 17,” but its “ring of fire” had not ended.

Fire destroyed trestles in 1945 that stranded No. 17 in a camp called The Gap. It seemed doomed to rust there, never to run again, the result of a decision not to rebuild the trestles. Fifteen years passed before local mill owner Gus Peterson bought the engine, built a road to the camp site, dismantled the locomotive, and trucked it out piece by piece. He restored old No. 17 and fired her up in 1966 for the first time in 20 years. No. 17 op-

Clockwise from left: Polson #70 “blows down” steam and emits smoke from its stack as it travels under a streaked sky along the MRSR route that takes riders over a major river, across creeks, and through hardwood and evergreen woods. ♦ Here’s what the engineer and fireman see as their train rolls down the tracks. This is the cabin of Polson No. 70, a Baldwin 2-8-2 that has a boiler that generates 180 lbs. of pressure per square inch. The tender holds 4,000 gallons of water and 2,200 gallons of fuel oil. ♦ Polson #70 clanks beneath a mountain under a full head of steam, assisted by Hammond Lumber Company No. 17. On rare occasion, two engines may be assigned to pull tourist cars. Last year MRSR hosted 42,500 passengers, expect that many this year. Cars normally carry about 250 passengers per trip.



PHOTO BY JEREMY ECHOLS

erated on Peterson’s Klamath & Hoppow Valley RR in Klamath, California in the 1970s until that line ceased operation.

After that happened, Tacoma lumberman Tom Murray, an original founder and supporter of the MRSR, bought No. 17 and sent it to the MRSR shops. After reconditioning, it became operable again in 1995. Excepting time out for maintenance, it has since worked pulling passengers between Elbe and Mineral. It is one of only 21 of its type manufactured by Alco and one of only six existing today in any condition.

A Baldwin 2-8-2 operating as Polson Logging No. 70 is the second locomotive that will be pulling MRSR excursion trains this year. Like No. 17, it came to work in the Northwestern woods, ordered by the Polson Brothers Logging Co. of Hoquiam, Washington, in 1922 to haul logs from its “Railroad Camp” to a dump at New London. No. 70 did that for 20 years then was sold, along with Polson’s logging operation, to Ray-



PHOTO BY RALPH ALLEN



onier, Inc. In 1963, rail fan Maynard Laing bought No. 70 and used it at the Puget Sound & Snoqualmie Falls RR Museum. After Laing's death, Tom Murray bought the engine at an estate sale and donated it to MRSR which got it restored and ready for work in 2011. No. 70's tender holds 4,000 gallons of water and 2,200 gallons of fuel oil.

It is the geared locomotives like Rayonier No. 2 and three others displayed at Mineral that ushered in a new era for the logging industry. These geared locomotives were made to power individual wheel "trucks" that swivel. Delivering more tractive power and being more maneuverable, they could climb sometimes-steep grades on poorly-laid, sharply-curving tracks into woodlands that standard rod-type locomotives could not reach.

Most of the geared engines used in western timberlands were made by Lima Locomotive Works of Lima, Ohio; Climax Locomotive Works of Corry, Pennsylvania; Heisler Locomotive Works of Erie, Pennsylvania; and Willamette Iron & Steel Works of Portland, Oregon. MRSR displays one locomotive from each of these companies.

An inventive Michigan logger named Ephraim Shay generally is credited with developing one of the first practical steam locomotives to transmit power to each axle on wheel "trucks" using beveled gears, slip joints and universals. His design, patented in 1881, was built and marketed by Lima Locomotive Works of Lima, Ohio. Between 1880 and 1945, Lima built 2,767 Shay locomotives, some for use on narrow gauge rails and some standard gauge. The Shay on display at MRSR, identified as Pickering Lumber Corporation No. 11, is one of only 24 "Pacific Coast Shay" models built between 1927 and 1940. Out of service for required maintenance this year, it is a 95-ton three-truck engine with 36" drive wheels. It cost the original owners \$26,900 in 1929, just ahead of the Great Depression.

After several key Shay patents expired in 1921, Willamette Iron & Steel Works, which had rebuilt many Shay engines, developed its own geared locomotive based on the Shay design that

At the MRSR depot in Mineral, passengers are invited to stroll through the shop (big building at left) where locomotives and cars are rebuilt and maintained, visit the re-constructed "railroad camp" (red and white buildings) and other equipment used in the old days of logging. Big upright boiler visible at left rear is part of an old steam-powered "donkey" that was used to drag logs down to loading areas as well as load them on rail cars.

incorporated improved features. The three-truck Rayonier, Inc. No. 2 owned by MRSR was the last one of only 33 locomotives of this type built by Willamette, which did not achieve financial success competing with Shay, Climax and Heisler. This No. 2 engine, first built for the J. Neils Lumber Company of Klickitat, Washington, was sold to Rayonier, Inc. in 1949. It weighs 182,000 pounds, has a gear ratio of 2.368:1, and a super heated boiler that develops 200 psi steam pressure. Driver wheels diameter measure 36". It holds up to 4,000 gallons of water and 1,500 gallons of fuel oil.

The Climax geared engine owned by MRSR, also a three-truck model, was purchased by Hillcrest Lumber in 1928 for operation on Vancouver Island, British Columbia. It arrived just as Climax, which had been the second largest supplier of geared logging locomotives (behind Shay), was closing down. One of 1,694 Climax geared locomotives built, it is second to the last and the last one built for standard gauge rails.

The Heisler in the MRSR stable is a 90-ton class "West Coast Special" model developed to compete with the Shay-like Willamette and the "Pacific Coast Shay." It sports "West Fork Logging Company No. 91" markings though it first began work in 1930 for the Kinzua Pine Mills of Kinzua, Oregon. One of 625 Heislers built on a design by Charles L. Heisler, it has 40"-diameter drive wheels, weighs 90 tons, and has a tractive effort of 43,600 pounds behind a boiler that generates 200 psi. The gear ratio is 2:1.

Locomotives, however, were not the only steam engines loggers used in the late 1800s and early 1900s. One of the most important was the "steam donkey" engine, versions of which

are displayed at the MRSR museum. The “donkey” was widely adopted after John Dolbeer of Eureka, California patented a machine that used a steam engine and gearing to turn one or more drums or winches using wire rope that was hooked to logs to pull them from where they were cut, “yard” them, and load them onto rail cars.

Before the donkey, loggers usually had to cut timber close to water so they could float logs to the mills or log where land was flat enough for horses or oxen to drag logs over greased wood ties, called skid roads.

The early model donkey reportedly used a 150-foot, 4 ½ inch manila rope to winch logs but had no system for returning rigging to the woods for the next log. Men or “line-horses” had to do that. Later models had multiple drums that wound steel cables. Using a loop system, the engine then could return rigging to the cutting area. Most donkey engines were mounted on sled logs so the operators could attach lines to a spar tree and have the machines pull themselves to different locations.

Accidents were frequent in the woods. Steam engines sometimes exploded. Men could be hurt by rigging breaking away from a log and zipping ahead, without warning, with deadly speed and force. An engineer and crew was required to operate the donkey, chop wood to fire the boiler, and haul water for it. Still, the steam donkey made it possible to log, and do it faster, in places previously not accessible. The donkey and its many

versions get credit for making large-scale logging possible in the days before gasoline engines, better felling equipment, caterpillar tractors and other innovations made them obsolete.

Other early-day logging equipment you can see at the MRSR museum includes:

- ♦ A contraption called a “pole road locomotive,” a circa 1925 Fordson tractor (not steam-powered) that has huge wheels with rims cupped to fit over logs instead of rails.
- ♦ A “skeleton” log car with tall stakes to hold logs in place.
- ♦ The first gasoline-powered Clyde “Logger’s Special” locomotive crane built in 1938 by the Clyde Iron Works of Duluth, Minnesota.
- ♦ A RD-8 Caterpillar tractor introduced in 1935 with arched winch arrangement to lift front ends of logs, making it easier to drag them over uneven terrain.
- ♦ And a steam-powered “tree rigged skidder” that has a vertical boiler and two cable winches to load log cars. Mounted on a steel frame, the unit weighs about 80 tons. Last used at nearby Mineral Lake in the 1960s, MRSR historians think it could be the last complete steam unit in the country.

After your 40-minute layover at Mineral, your train loads for the return to Elbe. You’ll get back about two hours after departing. Most likely you’ll have new appreciation for how geared locomotives and steam power helped loggers produce the timber an expanding nation needed, when it needed it. ➔➔

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LIFE IN A LOGGING CAMP

Living and Working in the Woods: Interesting, But Not Always Rosy

LOGGING CAMP LIFE CHANGED AFTER STEAM LOCOMOTIVES were put to work in the woods (See accompanying story). Stables for oxen and horses were replaced by shops and rail yards. People were added to lay rails and keep steam engines and donkey machines operating. But much remained the same. Up to 40 men and some women, both married and single, might occupy a camp.

They lived in usually-rustic housing, often in remote areas. And they ate, really ate, as in huge portions. Those who worked hard 10-hour days in the woods -- the riggers, fallers, buckers and others -- consumed an average of 8,000 calories a day, burning some eight to 12 calories every minute, their jobs were so physically demanding.

Ride a Mount Rainier Scenic Railroad steam train to its museum at Mineral, Washington, and you can see how these camps looked. Buildings from actual old-time logging camps have been set up to replicate a “camp” here.

This camp is a re-assembled version of one known as “Railroad Camp,” operated for years by Polson Logging Company. However, it also has historic buildings hauled in from other logging company camps.

When your train stops in Mineral, you’ll see a group of buildings painted red with white trim, colors in Polson’s original “Railroad Camp.” The largest of these buildings is the MRSR restoration and repair shop, once used by St. Regis Paper Company to repair logging trucks. Volunteer workers and staff rebuild and restore locomotives using skills and tools common since the early 1800s.

In front of the shop are six small logging camp buildings. Two are from the West Fork Logging Company and the St. Paul & Tacoma Lumber Company (both later became part of St. Regis Paper Company). These two “skid shacks” were built in the 1940s to house unmarried loggers. They were mounted on tim-

bers under the floors, making it possible to drag the buildings to a railroad flat car for transport to the next logging site.

Four buildings from Polson’s Camp 14, built in the 1920s, sat on railroad flat cars for easy moving from site to site. One of these once housed a long table and benches where loggers ate. Also in this camp is a cabin for “flunkies,” the name for the women who stoked fires, cleaned, served tables, and sometimes cooked for men in camp.

Whether the cook was male or female, that person was essential to the camp’s success. Good cooks kept loggers happy, some preparing meals as good as those in the best hotels. If a cook was bad, that was really bad – so bad that disgruntled loggers sometimes quit to look for work in a better run camp, meaning where the food was better. Usually the cook got up at 3:30 to 4:00 in the morning to have breakfast ready before 6:00. The only talking allowed at the table in some camps was to ask for food to be passed and most meals were eaten in about 12 minutes, according to a University of Washington Libraries report. The same report cited a 1930s survey that found that foods frequently served in camps included corned beef, ham, bacon, pork, roast beef, chops, steaks, hamburger, chicken, oysters, cold cuts, potatoes, barley, macaroni, boiled oats, sauerkraut, fresh and canned fruits, berries, jellies and jams, pickles, carrots, turnips, biscuits, breads, pies, cakes, doughnuts, puddings, custards, condensed or fresh milk, coffee, and tea. One suspects they must have had to run a train to town now and then just to keep groceries in the store house!

Bunk houses, usually 10 by 24 feet, often were built on skids for easy loading onto trains headed to the next logging site. The typical bunkhouse slept up to 16 men (who had to supply their own bedrolls) in two-tiered wooden bunks. Kerosene lamps were used for lighting, dim though it was. A pot-bellied stove in the middle of the room warmed the place and dried wet clothes. Lice and bugs were common unwelcome invaders.

Loggers working 10 to 11 hours each day had little time for anything other than work, eat, and sleep. They sometimes played card games in the evenings that might turn to serious poker on payday. If the loggers could get to a town with a bar on Saturday nights, they often did.

Some logging companies made housing available for the few families who lived in the camps. Their children sometimes attended one-room schools set up in camp. Frequent moves to remote areas meant the kids had little chance to develop friendships or engage in social activity until they got to high school.

At the MRSR, work is on-going to restore camp buildings and build displays that tell the stories and cover the lore of life in a logging camp. They are as much a part of logging history as the rare locomotives and early-day equipment displayed on these grounds.



PHOTO BY ANTHONY KOOPMAN

These two logging camp buildings actually were used in the woods. They are from the West Fork Logging Company and the St. Paul & Tacoma Lumber Company.

WHAT TO DO WHEN THE TRAIN RIDE ENDS

THE MT. RAINIER SCENIC RAILROAD AND MUSEUM TRACKS pass within minutes of the western entrance to Mount Rainier National Park, a 236,381-acre reserve that covers 369 square miles, is home to its namesake 14,410-foot high mountain, and hosts nearly two million visitors a year.

Headwaters of six major rivers begin on slopes of this great mountain, an active volcano. The park contains over 25 glaciers, many waterfalls, and most (97 per cent) of its lands are designated wilderness areas. For more information on attractions, facilities, fees and services, visit: nps.gov/mora.

The Mount Rainier Visitor Association (360-569-0910; mtrainier.com) can help you plan a visit to the national park and to nearby attractions including restaurants, shopping, historical places, and seasonal activities. Some that might interest you:

Mineral and Mineral Lake. Steam logging made Mineral, now a picturesque hamlet on the shores of Mineral Lake, a boom town at the beginning of the 20th century.

Steam locomotives hauled huge old-growth logs from the woods to the lake, which served as a holding pond feeding the huge Mineral Lake Lumber Mill. Other steam trains transported the lumber the mill produced to major railroad junctions in Tacoma. When the mill burned in 1922, it was not rebuilt. Economic decline resulted. However, some remains of the mill can still be seen along the shores of the lake.

Nestled in a corner of the Cascade Mountain Range, Mineral Lake is today a place of beauty, offering lovely clear-day views of Mt. Rainier. Fishermen know it as one of Washington's best for trout that often go over 11 pounds. It is stocked with Rainbow, German Brown, Triploid Steelhead and Brood Stock. Cutthroat trout and crayfish are natural inhabitants.

Alder Lake. If fishing, boating, and water sports are your thing, you could find rewarding a short drive northwestward up Washington Hwy. 7 to Alder Lake Park. This park surrounds Alder Lake, a Tacoma Public Utilities reservoir formed by Alder Dam near Eatonville, Washington. Excellent campgrounds are available (see information above right).

Northwest Trek Wildlife Park. This 725-acre park, also near Eatonville, is home to more than 200 animals native to the Pacific Northwest. Visitors get a chance to see many of them when they take a tram ride through a 435-acre free-roaming area occupied by herds of bison, bighorn sheep, mountain goats, elk and others. The tram is driven by a trained naturalist who narrates the 50-minute trip. There's also a forested walking path that passes grizzly bears, bobcats, wolves, eagles and other native wildlife.

If you've had enough of astounding natural beauty and steam logging lore, you're only 56 miles from Tacoma, 65 from Olympia, and 83 from Seattle.

RV Parks Near Mt. Rainier Railroad

The Lion's Den. On the shores of Mineral Lake. 60 water and electric spaces. 360-492-3152; minerallake.com/services_lionsdencampground.html

Eastcreek Campground, Elbe. Water and electric. RVs up to 45 feet. 360-492-3104; eastcreekcampground.com. E-mail: eastcreekcampground@live.com

Monthaven Resort, Ashford. 16 full hookup sites. 20/30 amp. 360-569-2594; mounthaven.com; or E-mail: Mounthaven@Live.com

Mineral Lake Resort, Mineral. Six sites with electric and water. Max length 30 feet. 360-492-6367; minerallakeresort.com. E-mail: minerallakeresort@gmail.com

Tacoma Public Utilities Alder Lake Park, Eatonville. 173 sites in four campgrounds around lake; 37 full-hookup-individual sites plus 20-site group area with full hookups, 74 water/electric. Reserve for dates May 15 to Sept. 15; first-come, first-serve rest of year. 888-226-7688; mytpu.org/tacomapower/parks-recreation/alder-lake-park/

Rainier National Parks Campgrounds. Three campgrounds with limited facilities are available within the Mt. Rainier National Park, western entrance to which is only minutes away from the MRSR. All offer water but no electric power. They are: *Cougar Rock Campground* in Southwestern section: 173 sites, dump, RV length limited to 35 feet. *Ohanapecosh Campground* in southeast corner of park: 188 sites, dump, RV length limited to 32 feet. *White River Campground* in northeast corner of park, 188 sites, max length 32 feet, no RV dump. Reservations must be made for stays between Memorial Day weekend and Columbus Day. Information: 360-569-2211; To reserve: recreation.gov/camping.

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The Life and Times of Tiffin Motorhome Owners

Maybe It Was Serendipity

Do you believe in fate? Kismet? Forces beyond our control or comprehension? Personally, I didn't. But a recent instance concerning our Tiffin Allegro Open Road 30GA and the latest copy of *Roughing It Smoothly* had me doing some serious thinking on the subject.

My husband and I left our home in Finksburg, Maryland, in our Allegro Open Road on February 1, looking for some warmer weather by way of two weeks in New Orleans for all things carnival and Mardi Gras. After a fabulous, fun-filled time in New Orleans we headed west for San Antonio, still looking for those warmer temperatures.

On our first day back on the road, our steps on the RV stopped working. They wouldn't come out, and wouldn't retract completely either. My husband strapped them up, so they wouldn't decide to extend while going down the road, and we started using a little one-step stool we had with us to assist with the long leg reach to get in and out of the rig.

We spent our first night after leaving New Orleans at Lake Fausse Pointe State Park in south central Louisiana. After dinner my husband and I both relaxed to do some reading, he with an e-book on his tablet and me with the latest copy of *Roughing It Smoothly* which I had plucked out of the mail just the day before we left home. In our conversation over dinner, we puzzled about where to get our steps fixed so far from home.

And then, I got to the dealer profile story in *Roughing It Smoothly* that featured Scotty's Camper Sales in New Iberia. Scotty's Camper Sales? In New Iberia, Louisiana? That's just a 45 minute drive from the campground! My husband was just as amazed as I by the coincidence (Fate? Kismet?)!

The next morning we called Scotty's, explained our problem, and they said, "Bring it on in." They saw us immediately, replaced the failed motor in our steps, and had us back on the road within an hour.

Thank you Scotty's Camper Sales—to Walter and Ryan for the quick diagnosis and repair of the steps on our RV, to Mary and Tina for the assistance in locating your company, your hospitality while our steps were being fixed, and to Ethel and Scotty

for sharing grandchildren stories and pictures with us.

We sing the praises of our Tiffin Allegro Open Road every chance we get to anyone who will listen. And now, we will also sing the praises of Scotty's Camper Sales every time we regale family, friends and fellow-campers with our experiences on our 2015 trip in search of warmer weather! Or just to anyone we know who will be traveling in their vicinity. We love *Roughing It Smoothly*. And keep those Dealer Profiles coming!

Carolyn & Bill Cheezum / Finksburg, Maryland

Still Roughing It in Our 1993 Allegro

We have a 1993 Allegro (basement model) and one of the last aluminum-sided Allegros off the line. We have been in every state including Alaska, all over Canada, all over Mexico including a winter in Belize, and a loop through the Maritime Provinces. I am 81 years old. We have seen a lot and we are still going and looking. I could name all of the parks and all of the things my wife and I have seen and done, but *Roughing It Smoothly* would not have enough space to print it. If you see an old 1993 Allegro go by, be sure to wave.

Bob & Dot Moran / Hueytown, Alabama

Our First Motorhome: A 2003 Phaeton

We just recently purchased our first RV ever from La Mesa in Tuscon, Arizona. Our 2003 Phaeton 35RH has a 330-hp Caterpillar engine and a 6-speed Allison transmission.

This has been my dream for a long time. I am 72 and retired. I spent 41 years as an over-the-road truck driver, behind the wheel of an 18-wheeler big rig.

The Lord willing, Margie and I are going to see the things (or at least some of them) you don't see behind the wheel of a truck. Please add us to the mailing list for *Roughing It Smoothly* and wish us luck on this new adventure.

Alfred (Al) & Margie Otto / Menasha, Wisconsin

Dear Al and Margie,

We certainly do wish you all the best. You will find many Tiffin owners in the campgrounds where you will stay throughout the U.S., and it will be easy to make new friends. We hope you will stop in Red Bay, Alabama and take the tour of the assembly plant that is offered every week-day at 9:30.

Fred Thompson, editor

RVing for 25 Years, Then Finding a Home

We have been RVers for over 25 years. We are now enjoying our 2013 Phaeton 40QBH. Our favorite destinations are national parks. During our search for a retirement area, we discovered

Pahrump, Nevada. Just 45 minutes west of Las Vegas, Pahrump offers a quiet and relaxed lifestyle when we are not on the road. We have three of the top-rated RV parks, two local wineries, and beautiful weather.

William & Vicki Gladsjo / Pahrump, Nevada

Our Favorite Park: Williston Crossings in Florida

We bought our 2015 Allegro RED 38QBA in August 2014 and have made a trip once a month since. Our favorite RV park so far has been Williston Crossings RV Resort in Williston, Florida. We enjoy experiencing whatever the small towns have to offer. Our last trip was a New Year's visit to St. Augustine to see how our oldest city celebrates New Year's Eve. That town is worth multiple visits. We stayed at the Indian Forest Campground.

Kevin & Alexa Billups / Palmer, Alaska

Family Reunion at Pismo Coast Park

We love to go to Pismo Beach, California. My son and his family,

my brother-in-law, and my nephew and his family all have motorhomes. We caravan to Pismo Beach and park together. Our favorite place is Pismo Coast Village RV Resort. It is close to the ocean and town. It is 230 miles one way from our home to the park. We will be there again in August. A fun time for all of us.

Steve & Vera Botelho / Newark, California

Two Single RVers Meet & Marry

Jim is from Texas and I am from Washington. We met two years ago in Minnesota while workkamping at the sugar beet harvest. I was full-timing in my brand new 2012 Allegro Open Road 32CA. He fell in love with me, my 32CA, and the full-timing lifestyle. He proposed the following year at the beet harvest. We ordered a 2014 Phaeton 40QBH, drove to Washington, and got married this past July. Jim sold his house in Texas. We have crossed the country a couple of times already. We bought the Phaeton in Memphis. We have been to Key West twice and workkamped in Arizona last winter.

Jim & Debbi Elza / Livingston, Texas

LET US HEAR FROM YOU

A separate postcard is enclosed for "From the Road," a fun part of the magazine for readers to share their motorhoming experiences. If you choose to email us at: fredthompson1941@hotmail.com, be sure to put "Roughing It Smoothly" in the subject line of your email. If your communication requires an entire letter, mail it to us at: PO Box 1150, Monroe, GA 30656-1150. Please don't just list the places you have been. Make a story of it and tell us about the people you have met, interesting experiences, and unusual places. We welcome your pictures. Please attach high resolution images if you email. "From the Road" contributors will receive a free tee shirt while supplies last. —Fred Thompson, editor

HWH The Look of the Future!

Single-Step Air Leveling

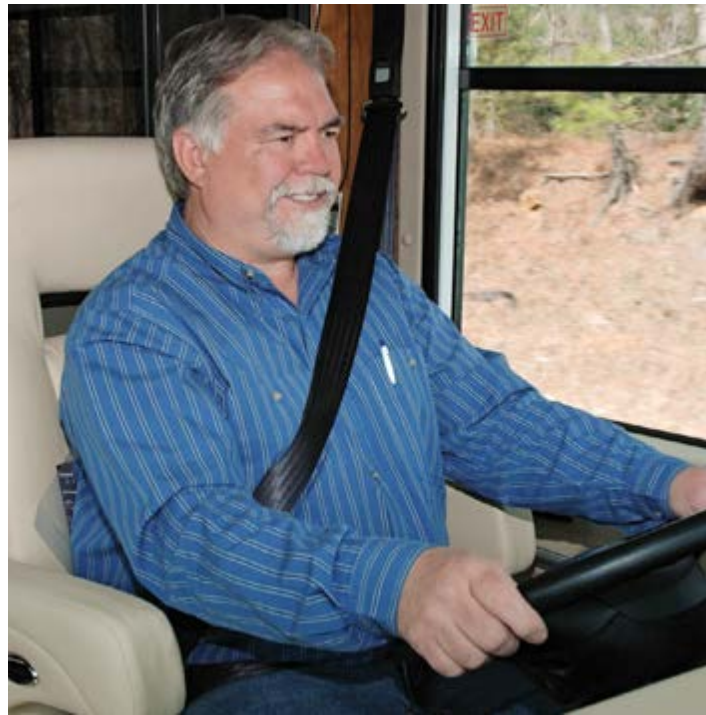
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Inman's Answers

As the editor of "Serious Tech Talk," Danny Inman, a 40-year veteran with Tiffin Motorhomes, invites your questions.

Please use the enclosed 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 1150
 Monroe, GA 30656-1150

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.

In the Q&A text, we abbreviate "passenger side" as PS, and "driver side" as DS.

Dear Danny . . .

Cruise Control Indicator Light Too Dim

On our 2014 Allegro Bus 40SP, there is a green light in the graphic display on the speedometer face when the cruise control is activated. On our Bus, the light is very dim and hard to see at all during daytime driving. I have the instrument panel lights

turned up to full brightness, but that does not help during the day, especially when the sun is bright.

I have a similar graphic icon on my car that shows up very good during daytime driving, whether or not the cruise control is activated.

Is this a problem with my particular Allegro Bus or is the dim green display inherent on all 2014 Allegro Buses? If it is inherent and you agree it is too dim, I hope TMH will consider a stronger green light in future models.

Rick & Nancy Curd
 Bradenton Beach, Florida

Dear Rick & Nancy,

The green light on the Bus very likely emits the same number of lumens as the light in your car. With tinted windows and hoods over the instruments, cars have far less ambient light to interfere with the brightness of the lights in the instruments. The large amount of light coming in from the huge windshield and side windows interferes with the brightness of the lights in the motorhome's instrument cluster. Can we find a source for brighter instrument lights? We will have to research that one.

Several Concerns in a 2014 Phaeton 40QBH

It is dangerous for the driver to operate the navigation and radio from his/her seat. It would be much safer if the person in the passenger seat could operate both.

The sound from the outside television dominates the inside living area? When the outside TV is on, I cannot listen to my shows inside, or even have a quiet area to read a book. Can the inside area be insulated from the outside TV's sound?

I have always wanted a dishwasher in my motorhome. Well, I finally got one and so far it does not work. After running it, you can see that water was in the dishwasher, but it does not clean the dishes. Our dealer's service department has not been able to fix it and our warranty is up on March 7, 2015. Any advice short of driving all the way to Red Bay?

Sandy Duncan
 Pasadena, Maryland

Dear Sandy,

With the dash being so wide and the driver and passenger being so far apart, it would be impossible to mount the navigation-radio display in a location that is conveniently accessible to both. We recommend the navigation software be set-up for your destination before you leave. If a change has to be made en route and the driver has to make that change, it is best to pull over in a safe place and reprogram it. It's great when couples can work as a team—one as the driver and the other as navigator. Hopefully, in the future there will be a system for the passenger to operate the software from the passenger seat. The radio has several touch options that make it easy to use without diverting the driver's

attention. Before you begin driving, you can download your preferred music from iPod or select Pandora or XM programming.

As for the dishwasher, the technician at the Tiffin dealership should take advantage of TMH phone support while he is working on your unit. Fisher & Paykel can also provide troubleshooting support by phone. You should document the fact that the difficulty with your dishwasher began before the warranty expired.

Your concern about the speaker volume from the outdoor TV is not an issue we have been asked to address. We will have to do some research on the sound overlap.

Side Camera Mounted in Mirror

This is a product suggestion. Integrating the side view camera into the mirror is not a good idea. My coach has the camera mounted on the side of the motorhome. After a trucker knocked off my right side mirror, I was still able to drive safely with the side view camera until I was able to have the mirror replaced.

Bob Griffin
 West Melbourne, Florida

Dear Bob,

You bring up a good point if the mirror does get knocked off.

However, the camera location mounted in the mirror provides a better view of the lane beside you and allows you to make adjustments in the camera's view to remove the so-called "blind spot." There is a trade-off either way.

Atwood Jacks Not Working on 2005 Allegro Bay

The Atwood leveler jacks on my 2005 Allegro Bay have stopped working. I was told by the TMH Service Center that the Atwood electric jacks are no longer available. The Service Center phone technician was not able to provide me with the labor and cost of the replacement jack that Tiffin is now using. Could you help me with this problem?

Ron Peterson
 Waco, Texas

Dear Ron,

The service center in Red Bay will not replace an electric jack with a hydraulic jack because of the intense amount of labor and modifications it requires. They will replace a 2005 electric jack with an upgraded version of the electric jack being built today. The cost for labor and equipment for a complete set is approximately \$3,500.

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Replacing Batteries on 2006 Allegro FRED

Our 2006 Allegro FRED is in storage and all the batteries are dead. Which battery should be replaced first in order to start the engine and get the house batteries recharged? Where is the chassis battery located and how do we get to it?

Jim & Loydean Ricard
Olathe, Kansas

Dear Jim & Loydean,
The two chassis batteries are located on the PS outside rail behind the front wheel. To say the least, it is an inconvenient location, but obviously a replacement can be done whenever it becomes necessary. You should replace the chassis batteries first and then attempt to charge the house batteries. Your house batteries are in the stepwell and can easily be checked. Hopefully, you can determine the age of the house batteries from your maintenance records. It is quite possible they need to be replaced, too.

Transfer Switch Chattering

I own a 2013 Allegro RED QBA38. I had the transfer switch/surge protector changed over and have used it twice since then. The motorhome has been parked for a month and connected to shore power. As I walked past the motorhome, I noticed that the transfer switch started to make a chattering noise. I turned off the shore power and then turned it back on and the chatter ceased. I don't want to leave the power connected. What should I do?

Ronald Weimer
Thibodaux, Louisiana

Dear Ronald,
First, disconnect any incoming power from the shore or generator. Then, remove the cover on the changeover box and check for loose connections or anything obstructing the relays in the box. If nothing is found, plug in and see if it holds and the chattering has gone away. If the chattering persists, either the printed circuit board or the complete box itself will have to be replaced. Before you re-

place the board or the box, check to see if you get the same results when you move your coach and use another power source.

Gas Escaping from Black Tank in Breeze 32BR

After we bought our 2012 Allegro Breeze 32BR, we noticed a bad smell periodically. We thought it could have been propane gas, but others said it was gas from the black tank. We had a vent installed on the roof to let the gas escape and it immediately made a difference. Now, off and on, the smell is back, but not as bad as before. It seems to come from the vanity under the bathroom sink. Can you suggest what is causing the odor and how to get rid of it? Thanks much!

Mary Walker
Payson, Arizona

Dear Mary,
In the cabinet under the bathroom sink there is a vent cap in the main drain line that may be leaking, allowing odor to enter the motorhome. This vent is supposed to allow air to enter but not escape. Replacing the vent cap should solve your problem.

Eliminating Mold & Mildew in a Damp, Cold Winter

We live 50 miles north of Seattle where we have lot of rain, mist, and cold weather in the winter. I would like to share our way of storing our 35-ft. Allegro Bay for the winter. For approximately \$800, we constructed a PVC pipe frame 14-ft. wide, 40-ft. long, and 17-ft. high and covered it with a large tarp.

We drain all the water from the plumbing system and tanks and plug the coach into 110v shore power. A small electric heater in the coach keeps the temp between 45 and 52 degrees.

I then take a bag of BBQ briquettes and place 6 to 8 on paper plates throughout the coach, plus several in the cabinets with the doors remaining open. I also put several briquettes in the fridge and freezer with the doors closed. I replace the bri-

quettes every two months.

When spring comes, there is no mold, mildew, or characteristic storage smell. When I open the drapes, there is no moisture on the windows. I hope our technique will be useful to our fellow campers.

John & Jane Veary
Marysville, Washington

Dear John & Jane,
Thanks for telling us about your solution. It is very innovative in a climate that is so challenging.

That "J 1939" Code Again — Letter 1

We are having the same problem with the "J 1939" fault code that Roger Hannay described in the Winter 2015 issue of RIS on page 64. When it first occurred, I called Freightliner and was advised that it was a loose connection under the dash. I took it to a Freightliner dealer, but the code error did not replicate itself and the technician found only a "loose" battery connection. The tech hooked up their diagnostic software to my coach's computer, but the error code never happened again. I have driven only 100 miles since the visit to Freightliner with no reoccurrence of the code error. However, we are planning a longer trip soon and would like to see the code error correctly identified and resolved before the computer shuts us down on the road. I have visited other online forums that discussed the same "J 1939" error code. Can you determine if Freightliner is working on this problem?

George Ruple
North Olmsted, Ohio

Dear George,
All of the microprocessors in the vehicle must communicate compatibly with one another. The "SAE J 1939" is the protocol that allows the microprocessors in each component to all work together and communicate. If the code appears, it usually indicates a communication error or a fault within two or more microprocessors, which could be as simple as a loose connection. There should be a failure code

identifying the defective component that is causing the "J 1939" error to appear.

That "J 1939" Code Again — Letter 2

With regard to the "J 1939," we had an experience similar to Roger Hannay's (12:1, 64) on our 2007 Phaeton on a Freightliner chassis, but the "J 1939" fault code was not apparent. While driving, all of the gauges went crazy along with a continuous beeping noise. I pulled off on a ramp and called Freightliner, CAT, and Tiffin. No one had a clue as to what caused the problem. The system settled down, and with no other choice I continued the trip to our home.

Several weeks later on a trip to Chicago, the same thing happened as we approached St. Louis. In nearby Troy, Illinois, we found Truck Centers, Inc., a Freightliner dealer. RV technician Dan Green contacted Freightliner in Gaffney and they determined the problem was in the dash. All of the gauges are connected in series with a total of eight jumper cables. One of the jumper cables was loose enough to cause a flaky connection which affected all of the gauges. The technician replaced all of the jumper cables and solved the problem. Newer Freightliners now have only four jumpers. I hope this will help those who had the same disconcerting experience.

Don Sturms
Flippin, Arkansas

Dear Don,
The flaky connection is a good example of how an insignificant problem can interrupt the "J 1939" communication protocol and cause several microprocessors to shut down.

Electric Entry Step Opens Against Curb and Jams

My wife and I purchased a 2014 Phaeton last June and we are extremely happy with the coach. We would like to see a minor problem corrected. There is no sensing feature to keep the entry step closed when

the coach is parked close to a curb. Our previous motorhome, a Winnebago Journey, had this feature and it prevents the step from jamming itself against the curb and not retracting.

Roger & Diann Vincent
Wildwood, Missouri

Dear Roger & Diann,
We have not found any information about a sensor that prevents the step from coming down if there is an obstruction. I will do some more research through our dealers who also sell Winnebago's and see if they have knowledge on this.

Connecting Bedroom Speakers to TV

We have a 2013 Allegro RED 38QRA. There are two speakers over our bed connected to the dash radio. Is there any way we can connect those two speakers to our bedroom television?

Don Guidry
Vidor, Texas

Dear Don,
It would be almost impossible to get to the wiring in the slideout where the TV is located and tie it in to the wiring in the ceiling that serves the two speakers over the bed. The best solution to get more speaker volume would be to add a sound bar to the television.

Replacing Norcold with Residential Fridge

We purchased a pre-owned 2010 Allegro Bus 36QSP and love it. The Norcold gas-electric refrigerator was standard equipment. If we have to replace the Norcold in the future, we are thinking about going to the Red Bay service center and replacing it with a residential refrigerator. What modifications have to be made to install the residential unit and approximately how much does it cost if the work were done today?

Albert Larcher
Sun City Center, Florida

Dear Albert,
The Tiffin Service Center can replace a



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Thin Spider Web Lines on Edge of Roof

On our 2008 Phaeton 36QSH, I have noticed very thin lines that resemble a spider's web (approx. 6 x 6 inches) along the DS edge of the roof above the bedroom. Is this normal aging of the fiberglass or is it a problem that should be addressed? By the way, we love our coach!

Monte Hunter
Lufkin, Texas

Dear Monte,
Hairline cracks in fiberglass as it ages are very common. We have had some issues with the roof corners that may need to be addressed on your coach. If the unit is inspected here at the plant and we find that it is a structural issue, we will repair the roof at no charge.

No Problem, Just a Nice Compliment

The Prince Edward Island article in the Winter 2015 issue reminded me of our Canadian trip in 2012. We had just taken delivery of our new 2012 Allegro RED a few months earlier in Tucson, and this was our first long journey. I was worried that some "new coach" malfunction might interrupt this bucket list vacation.

We spent seven weeks and toured Montreal, Quebec, New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, and Prince Edward Island, rolling up just over 6,200 miles by the time we returned to Colorado. While the sightseeing was wonderful, I was particularly pleased that our new Tiffin performed flawlessly. In fact, I sent a letter to Bob Tiffin saying that I guessed he routinely received complaints, but I wanted to give him a compliment. To my surprise, Bob called to personally thank me!

When we ordered our Allegro RED 34QFA, we wanted to add a few items that were only available on the larger

Tiffin coaches. We selected the 34QFA because it would barely fit in the 35-ft. motorhome garage I built at our Colorado residence. All of our requests were approved with nominal charges. Our belated thanks for allowing us to get these changes made.

February marks our third year in the RED. At 20,000 miles, it has not been back to any Tiffin dealer for a problem. I have followed closely the recommended maintenance schedules. When our copilot electric seat switch got temperamental, Tiffin sent a new switch without charge. The RED is our fifth motorhome, but our first Tiffin. If we ever get tired of this particular unit, I will buy another Tiffin. Thanks to all of you at TMH for a great product. Keep it up!

Robert M. Sherrill
Tucson, Arizona

Dear Robert,
We appreciate your kind remarks and feedback about your coach. We hope you will have many more years of enjoyment in your Allegro RED.

Uneven Tire Wear on 2002 Allegro Bus

We own a 2002 Allegro Bus that we purchased new. I have replaced the tires several times (255-80 x 22.5). I was in the trucking business for 40+ years and do all my own tire work.

The Michelin tires on the steer axle wore choppy. The rear tires were never a problem. I have had two sets of tires on the RV over the years. I also had two sets of the same tires on my tractor steer axle and the front axle of my trailer. They did the same thing. I now have a third set of tires on the steer axles of the RV. I am trying something different by changing the air pressure to 105 PSI when the tires are cold. When I check them later in the day, the air pressure is approximately 115 PSI. In two years I have put 11,000 on these tires and I am already seeing a little wear on the edges—which is the same way the choppy problem began initially. I con-

tacted Michelin but received no satisfaction or consideration. Recently I have noticed several coaches similar in size to our Allegro Bus are using 275-80 x 22.5 or 275-70 x 22.5 tires.

Now, this question occurs to me: Is there enough room in the steering wheel well, especially when turning the wheel, as well as clearance in the rear wells, to accommodate these larger size tires on the 2002 Allegro Bus? I know the larger tires will carry more weight, but will they correct the choppy tire problem?

William T. Huck
Mesa, Arizona

Dear William,
Normally, the rear tire well will accept a larger tire size. However, the front well will be too tight with the larger tire without doing significant fiberglass modification. We are not familiar enough with uneven tire wear to solve your problem. Our suggestion is to find a tire store that is competent with this size tire that can also do a first class alignment on your coach.

Changing the Oil on a 2011 Allegro Breeze

To gain access and change the engine's oil filter on my 2011 Allegro Breeze, it is necessary to dismantle the bed. The dirty filter must be carried through the coach to get it outside for disposal. Could a kit be devised to allow the filter to be moved to the back of the engine and remounted for easy access?

John Butler
Melbourne Beach, Florida

Dear John,
Unfortunately, there is not a kit that allows you to make the modification on this engine. On the 2013 engine, Navistar moved the location of the fuel and oil filters so that they could be serviced from underneath the coach.

Back Corners of Dining Table Should Be Rounded

We have a 2012 Allegro 36LA that we love.

The first time we dropped the table top to convert it to a bed, the back corners at the wall punctured the seat cushions on both sides. Obviously, the corners were very sharp, but this could easily be corrected by rounding the corners with a sander during fabrication. I hope this suggestion will prevent this problem from happening to other owners with dining booths.

Ron & Georgia Padgett
Jacksonville, Florida

Dear Ron & Georgia,
This problem has since been corrected. Thank you for the input and we apologize for the inconvenience it caused you.

Compressed Air Supply on the Allegro RED 33AA

I read in the most recent edition of *Roughing It Smoothly* that all 2015 Tiffin diesel pusher motorhomes have a connection

for compressed air. My dealer tells me there is no connection for compressed air in the 33AA. Please advise where it is located. Are there any precautions that must be followed in making the connection? Does it provide sufficient pressure to inflate one of the tires on the coach?

Mark Oetken
Ft. Myers, Florida

Dear Mark,
The compressed air connection is in the compartment immediately forward of the left front tire. It is a brass slip connector. You can buy a 50-ft. air hose at most auto parts stores. With the engine running, you will have all of the compressed air you need to fill the tires on your coach and tow vehicle. In your blue owner's bag, you should find a Michelin tire inflation guide. Use it along with your owner's manual that explains how to weigh the

coach to determine the proper inflation for your tires. The chart shows the PSI at cold pressure. Each day before you start driving, be sure to check your tire pressure cold. During the day, driving will elevate the pressure above the chart settings, which is okay.

Making the Dash Air Work in the Summer Heat

I have owned two TMH diesel pushers and driven them a combined 125,000 miles. In the heat of summer, the "dash air" will not keep the coach cool. It would be very costly to run the generator to cool the entire coach with the roof air conditioners. My solution worked well in both the Allegro Bus and the Phaeton. Simply closing the door leading into the rear bedroom blocks the engine heat from coming up front and makes a tremen-

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dous difference. The “dash air” will then do the job on its own.

Jule Raymond
Clearwater, Florida

Dear Jule,
Thanks for your suggestions. I am sure your solution will work well for others who give it a try.

Resetting the Control Limits on a 2008 Phaeton Windshield Shade

I have a 2008 Phaeton. The electric windshield shade is not working correctly. For a year it would raise and lower in 12-inch increments. Tiffin parts and service emailed a PDF of the instructions for the MCD shades. I tried following the reset protocol with no success. The shade went up and will not come down. Can you help me or ask someone to walk me through resetting the control limits?

George Van Syckle
Seminole, Florida

Dear George,
The information the plant sent should be correct. Sometimes our techs have to try two or three times to get it reprogrammed. You can also go to the MCD website and use their troubleshooting procedures guide. This will give you an extra check to verify what we sent. If all else fails, call our service department and speak with one of the techs at 256-356-0261.

Replacing Decals on a 2004 Allegro

In 2004 we purchased a new 30-ft Allegro. We have enjoyed our “get-aways” so much. Our coach is in need of a good wash and polish job. The decorative decals are peeling. What do we do? What is your recommendation for making the outside of our Allegro look pretty again?

Linda & Fernando Ledesma
Glendora, California

Dear Linda & Fernando,
Replacement decals are available through the Tiffin parts department. Removing them is a tedious process. I suggest you check into having a local body shop remove

the decals and replace them with paint, which, of course would be permanent (9:1, p. 53). If you like the unit and plan to keep it for a while, then replacing the decals with paint will be a good investment.

A Cycling Red Light on the Breeze’s Dash

In my 2012 Breeze 32BR there is a red light and red button next to the headlight switch. There is no reference in the owner’s manual to either item. It cycles on and off while I am driving. When the red light comes on, pushing the red button turns it off. What is the function of the light and switch? I am a professional pilot and cycling red lights in my cockpit are a big deal. Thanks.

C. J. Stephens
Windsor, California

Dear C. J.,
The red light is the indicator light that tells you the air bags are not in travel mode.

The red button is the computer reset. Instead of pushing the reset button on the right, push the button on the leveling control that says “travel.” This will reset the air leveling to travel mode, the green light on the pad will come on, and the red light on the dash will go off.

12v Power Outlet Needed on Left Side of Dash

Many owners operate and position a GPS device on the left corner of the dash near the pillar. I added a 12v power outlet in the dash to the left side of the steering to avoid draping the 12v power cord across the dashboard. This might be something you should evaluate.

Allen Van Dusen
Jackson, New Jersey

Dear Allen,
I think you have a good idea for a practical modification. I will pass the suggestion on to our engineering department.

Lighting Up a Back-In Site After Dark

Occasionally, I arrive at a campground after dark and find all of the pull-through

sites taken. I own a 2012 Allegro Bus equipped with the standard backup lights built into the tail light assembly. They are inadequate for illuminating a dark site while backing.

After taking the tour through the Tiffin assembly plant in Red Bay, I realized there is a large hollow area in the rear cap of the Allegro Bus. I figured it would take one if not two of the LED patio lights placed above the engine compartment to really light up the rear of the coach. After purchasing two of the patio lights, I wired them to a 12-volt battery and using tape experimented with different placements on the back of the coach with respect to the graphic paint, ladder placement, and the existing tail light locations. Working at night, I used the rear view monitor to evaluate how well the light was dispersed with each of the selected placements. The attached picture shows the placement I selected. The added illumination for backing is fantastic.

I originally considered tying the two patio lights to the rear backup lights but nixed that idea because it required having the engine running and in the reverse gear to turn the lights on. I then tied the two installed lights to my PS rear docking light. When I am backing or need the added light at the rear of the coach for other reasons, I flip the dash switch for “Dock Lights” and get excellent rear lighting. It took about eight hours to complete the installation. The most difficult part was running the wire from the rear dock light to the rear cap. I believe all coach owners would appreciate this feature. If it were incorporated into the manufacturing process, it would be relatively inexpensive and very helpful.

Gary Wittekind
Cocoa, Florida

Dear Gary,
This is a great idea. However, to meet safety requirements and prevent the lights from coming on at night when you are traveling, we recommend that you

hook it into the back-up lights so that the lights will be activated only when the coach is in reverse.

Mouse Infestation

I have a 2014 Allegro 36LA and discovered a mouse infestation recently. The telltale signs were on the PS from the lower front kitchen drawers back to the rear bathroom vanity on the DS. It looked like the water/drain/plumbing chase was their pathway down that side. I checked all the lower storage areas and could not find a connection where access could have been gained. There was no evidence of mice anywhere else in the upper cabinets, floor/carpet, driver’s area, or bed/cabinets around the coach.

Do you know of an access they could have used? I know they don’t need much and I am looking for something not completely sealed, possibly missed by the factory. Can mice gain access through the rooftop? Thank you for any possible ideas you can provide.

Ron Messenger
Reno, Nevada

Dear Ron,
You’re asking the \$64,000 question. You will have to go over every square inch of your coach. Obviously, anywhere that has wires, piping, or vents would be your first place to look. Just because you found feces in a drawer doesn’t mean they entered the coach near that area. They can and will enter through any hole or opening ¼-inch wide. Looking for an opening that small will be quite a challenge.

To check underneath your coach, you will need to have your motorhome on a lift and even then a ¼-inch opening is difficult to locate. Another likely place for mice to enter is through the walls near the engine or generator. Look for wires that have been chewed. Mice love the taste of the insulation if it’s made from soy.

I have a 2008 Phaeton. Mice can gain entry to the main floor from the bottom of the slide-outs where all the wiring has

to move in and out when you put out or draw in your slide-outs. They can invade and make a nest in generators which can result in costly repairs.

The entry points for the water hose and the 50-amp service are covered with flex style rubber seals. Mice can push on the

flexible rubber and gain entry. It also gives an entry point for ants and bugs, especially if the hose has sweat and/or dew on it. Ironically, both the water and bugs provide sustenance for the mice. One more area to consider is the exit for the sewer hose. You can seal this and other areas with steel wool.



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As you mentioned, another spot which many ignore is the roof. Mice cannot climb a smooth, slippery wall but they can climb trees to reach the roof and slip through a roof vent or possibly the refrigerator vent. The best way to eliminate mice is to stay away from forested areas, high grass, stone walls, and fields. Mice need camouflage from predators such as foxes, hawks, raccoons, coyotes, and house cats.

After you have sealed every entry point you can find, set traps *outside* your coach unless you are sure you have a mouse inside. Putting bait in your motorhome is an invitation for lunch. From the majority of feedback, my best recommendation is to spread chunks of Irish Spring soap bars in the basement, under your coach, around the generator, near the engine, on top of your tires when parked, and any place where you see mouse evidence. Keep the soap away from heat sources. Quarter the soap and scrape the hardened chunks once a month to help spread the odor. Good luck! Dave McClellan, Hapy1Luky2@yahoo.com

For more information, refer to my article in the Spring 2013 issue of *Roughing It Smoothly*, 10:2, page 47. "Mouse Proofing Your Motorhome: A Never Ending Battle."

Replacing TVs on a 2004 Allegro Bus

We have a 2004 Allegro Bus that we just purchased. We would like to know the best way to remove the front and rear televisions and replace them with flat panel TVs.

Dwaine Buer
Atwater, Minnesota

Dear Dwaine,
On the TV above the dash, the outside trim ring should be removed to access the screws that hold the TV in place. On each side of the TV is a cabinet door. Open the doors and remove two screws (about 3 inches long) on both sides of the TV. Then the trim ring will pull off. At the bottom of the TV, remove two screws and

the TV will slide out. For the bedroom TV, you will see four wood trim buttons. Remove them and the four screws. This will allow the face plate to come off, exposing the large screws attached to the TV. Remove those two screws and the TV will slide out.

Where Is the Battery Charger?

I have been wondering about the location of the "battery charger" ever since I purchased our motorhome. We have a 2008 Allegro Bay 35TSB. Since the charger information booklet was included in the blue bag with all of the other maintenance and operation booklets, I assume it must be somewhere in this motorhome. Please tell me where it is and which batteries it charges — house, chassis, or both. This is not the most serious question you will receive this month; but if it does not exist, I would like to install one for each set of batteries. I really appreciate the factory support that is available to owners. I have used phone support several times.

Gary Demke
Red Cliff, Alberta

Dear Gary,
There should be a combination converter-inverter in the outside storage compartment next to the front door. It only charges the house batteries. The engine batteries are charged with the alternator on the engine.

Corrosion on Supporting Structure for House Batteries

I have a 2010 Allegro RED 38QRA that I purchased new. Over the last three years I am seeing repeated buildup of corrosion on the posts, brackets, tray, and bottom shelf supporting the four house batteries. There is no corrosion on the battery terminals. From a local auto store, I have acquired brushes, cleaners, and recommended sprays and several times removed all evidence of the corrosion. After I cleaned and dried everything, I painted all metal parts with exposed metal. Nev-

ertheless, the corrosion reappears. I frequently check the water levels in the four batteries. I unplug the AC when we are not using the coach for days or weeks at a time. All of the 12-volt systems work well. The engine batteries and compartment still look like new. Your suggestions to solve this problem will be greatly appreciated. I read and enjoy every article you write. Thanks!

Bill Potabi
Rio Rancho, New Mexico

Dear Bill,
Most of the things you have already done are the same things we would have suggested. However, if you are having to add water to the batteries frequently, there could be an overcharge situation from your converter that would cause the batteries to expel acid into the compartment.

Running the Generator While Traveling

Is it okay to run the generator and the rooftop air conditioners while traveling down the highway?

Jim Johnson
Lexington, Mississippi

Dear Jim,
In the hot summertime, running the generator to keep your coach cool is okay. Once the fuel tank gets down to one-quarter full, the pick-up tube in the fuel tank will shut the generator off. This device, of course, is to keep you from running out of fuel. Just fill up when the gauge gets to the quarter mark, which is a good practice anyway.

Defective Filler Necks on 2008 Allegro Bus

We have been motorhoming for 25 years and purchased our 2008 Allegro Bus new in 2009. We noticed after a year that fuel was leaking from both filler caps when the tank was full. At first it was minor but by the end of the second year it was a major problem. Our Tiffin repair shop recommended new filler caps. Our Spartan service shop changed the rubber fill

hoses and clamps between the filler neck and the tank. Neither repair solved the problem. By the third year, the leaks were intolerable and the only solution was to partially fill the fuel tank.

Then, while attending the Good Sam Rally in Atlanta, a Spartan factory representative informed me that Spartan had recalled defective filler necks around 2007-08. Spartan had resolved the problem by switching to a new supply vendor. Evidently, the filler necks are two pieces of metal soldered together. Poor workmanship caused the fuel to leak through the joints. We missed the recall. Our Tiffin dealer apparently did not know about it and the Spartan service shop also missed it.

I called the Tiffin service center to get replacements, but they declined to supply them. I called Spartan, who also declined,

but they sold the replacements to me at dealer cost. I installed them in the coach a year ago and have been leak free ever since!

George Barone
Morris, Connecticut

Dear George,
After doing some research, we found that Spartan did have this problem with a limited number of the fuel tank filler necks with defective soldering. No recall was made, but a service bulletin was sent to Spartan service centers. After the warranty period expired, the defect was not covered under warranty. However, it is not an expensive repair.

Xantrex versus Progressive Dynamics for Converters

In the Winter 2015 (12:1) issue, Lyle Barnum reported repeated problems with the

converters in his 2011 Allegro Breeze. You indicated TMH was not seeing a high percentage of failures with converters used in the Breeze. I have experienced two failures of the Xantrex XADC6012 converters in my 2010 Allegro 32BA purchased in January 2010. The original converter (SN P10015388, mfg 5/2007) failed under warranty in Jan. 2011. The second unit (SN P10012408, mfg 4/2007) failed Jan. 2013. At that point, I purchased from TMH a Model PD9260C built by Progressive Dynamics. It is still in use. Perhaps Mr. Barnum (and maybe others) having trouble with Xantrex converters should switch to the Progressive Dynamics converter.

Floyd Robertson
Gray, Tennessee

Dear Floyd,
I did not realize that we were having so

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much difficulty with the Xantrex unit. We changed over to Progressive Dynamics in model year 2012 and so far we have had very good success with these units on the Allegro and the Allegro Breeze.

Porch & Awning Lights on Same Switch
We just purchased a 2015 Allegro 31SA. We have taken two lengthy trips and really enjoy our RV.

I have a minor problem. The porch light and the string light on the awning are on the same switch. The porch light washes out the string lights on the awning and makes watching the outdoor TV difficult. I want to rewire the lights with two separate switches. Can you explain how to do this?

Bill Farris
Loudon, Tennessee

Dear Bill,
On the 31SA, considering the way the wiring is run in the walls, it would require far too much time/labor to pull additional wiring to create the option for a second switch. It is doable but it is not cost effective and we would not advise the change.

Fueling Pressure at Truck Stops & Wind Sensor on A&E Awning

I recently purchased a 2009 Allegro Bus 43QRP. The fuel spurts back out of the fill port before the pump can shut off. To relieve the pressure, I removed the fuel cap on the opposite side but that did not help. I understand truck stops have high volume output pumps (25 gpm+). However, my previous motorhome did not have this problem at truck stops. At Mom & Pop filling stations, I do not have this problem. I inspected the tank vents and did not find any restrictions. Is there some way to improve the tank vent system on this unit or could the problem be unique to this particular coach?

The A&E awning on this coach has an issue retracting under windy conditions. The dealer has checked it three times and finds nothing wrong with it. I called A&E,

but they do not have any schematics or sequence of operations that they provide to the public. They referred me back to the dealer. The dealer's technician had just returned from A&E's training school. He explained that the wind sensor is not a wind sensor at all, but a temperature sensor. Here is how it is supposed to work: Generally speaking, high wind is associated with a drop in temperature. As the outdoor wind speed increases, the dry bulb temp decreases, so they are inversely proportional. When the sensor records the drop in temperature for a couple of minutes, it sends a signal to the controller which in turn energizes the motor and retracts the awning. This may work fine in the north, the northeast, and the mid-west. However, I am in the desert southwest where the wind can increase with no decrease in temperature. Quite the opposite, when the wind picks up in this part of the country, it usually feels hotter. Therefore, can this high wind retraction system be retrofitted to the old-style rotating cup anemometer that has been around for years and is truly a wind sensor? If that is possible, will the existing control system be able to interpret that input?

Ollie Reamy
Las Vegas, Nevada

Dear Ollie,
With regard to filling your tank, the backfeed is not a problem unique to your coach. With that amount of volume being pumped, any sway or curve in the line could cause a backfeed. We did improve the system with a redesign in 2012 by bringing the filler neck above the floor line and that seemed to relieve the problem. Unfortunately, this is not something we can retrofit into your coach.

For the last four model years, A&E has supplied a true wind sensor, and not a sensor that depends on a temp decrease when the wind increases. You are the first owner we are aware of who has encountered this problem. I suggest you go to

the A&E operator's manual for a contact number and ask their customer service if they can supply a retrofit sensor for your 2009 coach. They should also be able to recommend a RV service center in your area to swap the sensors.

Sliding Windows Are Very Difficult to Open

We are retired and have a 1985 Allegro that we really enjoy. It has become increasingly difficult to open the sliding windows. What can we use to lubricate them and make them easier to slide? I enjoy reading your column in the magazine.

Kenneth H. Myers
Columbus, Ohio 43223

Dear Kenneth,
To help your windows open and close really well, clean the window tracks out with a damp cloth and maybe even a Q-tip to get all of the debris out. If you have a small vacuum cleaner, that may help, too. Then go back and lubricate the tracks top and bottom with a product called Plexus which is a plastic cleaner and protectant. This product can be ordered from our parts department in Red Bay at 256-356-0261.

When the On-board Computer Tells You the MPG

My first question relates to the average mpg which is displayed on the dashboard speedometer on our 2014 Allegro Bus model 37AP. After driving about 12K miles the average mpg displayed 11.0. However, the actual fuel consumption calculated the old fashioned way typically runs 7-8 mpg. I realize that some of this discrepancy can be accounted for by running the generator and using the Aqua Hot heating, but an average drop of 3-4 mpg for these uses seems excessive. Are there other factors in play that could account for the difference?

Also, is there a way to reset the cumulative average mpg displayed so that it can be used to clock the mpg for a specific trip?

Finally, when we first picked up the coach, the average mpg displayed was 10.4, but it has gradually improved to 11.0 after 12K miles. As the engine is broken in, does the mpg normally get better?

Gary Killian
Las Cruces, New Mexico

Dear Gary,
There is new firmware available for the 2014 and 2015 Allegro Bus motorhomes on the PowerGlide chassis that will correct the error in the average fuel economy calculation. It takes into account the fuel used for the Aqua Hot and the generator. This update currently can be made only in Red Bay.

To reset the average fuel economy, display the fuel economy screen. Push and hold the left button to reset the average fuel economy reading. See page 7-9 in the PowerGlide Chassis Owner's Manual.

Typically, the mpg will improve as the engine breaks in.

Aftermarket Installation of Solar Panels

Is it possible to install 125-watt or larger solar panels on my 2013 Allegro Bus 40QXP to maintain the batteries fully charged? Will the solar panels work with my existing inverter and battery charger? What is the approximate cost of the panels and installation if the work is done at the Tiffin Service Center?

Edward Davis
Jackson, New Jersey

Dear Edward,
Adding solar panels is frequently done today. The addition of the panels will not affect the existing inverter or battery charger. A 150-watt solar panel and controller will cost approximately \$1,300 including installation.

Strength of On-Board Phaeton Air Supply

I have a 2009 Phaeton 40QTH. I notice that it has an air pump fitting in the bay below the driver. Does the air pressure have enough "oomph" to inflate RV tires? Currently, I should have 105 psi in the front and 95 psi in the rear tires. I get conflicting opinions. It will be good to hear from the authority.

Donald J. Parrish
Winter Park, Florida

Dear Donald,
With the engine running, the air pressure supplied on a Phaeton should be around 120 psi. It comes off the same supply for the brakes and the air ride system. The gauges in the instrument cluster will show how much pressure you have.

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OWNER PROFILE *Cont'd from page 31*

been fortunate to have traveled throughout the world, visiting six of the world's seven continents by sea and by air. Our travel by sea was occasionally on the *Marco Polo*, which earlier had been a Russian icebreaker. Since it did not dock in major tourist harbors, we had to fly to meet it wherever it happened to be when we booked passage. I will soon be 90 and Betty is 86. We are grateful to be so healthy at our ages. Good genes, I guess. My

dad lived to be 106 and camped with us after he was 100."

Al offered a little advice about full-timing. "Try it out in a travel trailer or less expensive motorhome for a year or two. Don't sell your house first. Both of you have to love the lifestyle. If one does and the other doesn't, you both will soon be miserable. And, as we Tiffin owners like to say, 'Keep on roughing it smoothly.'" **RIS**

TIFFIN MANAGEMENT TEAM *Cont'd from page 35*

begin immediately. I usually spend at least half of my workday in the bays working with the techs. Tom and I both work with the Lazydays sales staff to train them on our equipment. The more accurate their product knowledge is, the better they can explain it to customers," Scott said.

Beverly Budd joined the Tiffin dealer support group four years ago. Beginning in 1979, Beverly worked for 10 years as a flight attendant with Eastern Airlines on most of the airline's U.S. routes.

"I met Don in La Guardia Airport in 1980 and we married in

'82. Don's job required relocation to Mobile where my new career path led to the broadcasting and publishing industries. Tom, Don, and I were members of Sertoma [Service to Mankind], a civic club helping those with hearing loss. When we moved to Tampa, Tom was trying to fill a position here and called me."

Beverly serves as a liaison between Lazydays and Tiffin for parts orders and warranty records. "I keep track of each warranty repair," Beverly said. "My computer records go to Tiffin's permanent files in Red Bay. I also manage the Tiffin parts inventory on site here at Lazydays." **RIS**

Visiting the Fortress of Louisbourg

Hours: May 16 to October 12, 2015
9:30-5, daily.
October 13, 2015 to May 22, 2016
9:30-4, M-F.
Admission: July 1 to Sept. 7, 2015 (peak season)
Adult, \$17.60; Senior, \$14.95
Youth, \$8.80
April 1 to June 30, 2015, and
Sept. 8 to June 30, 2016
Adult, \$7.30; Senior, \$6.05;
Youth, \$3.65

Other Places to Visit Near Louisbourg

Cape Breton Miners Museum

On a 15-acre site one mile from downtown Glace Bay, the museum focuses on the geological development of the Sydney coal fields, mining techniques, and early labor history. Retired coal miners take visitors on a 20-minute excursion into a 1932 "room & pillar" mine. The miners' village reveals domestic life in three wood-framed homes.

Admission: \$13 adults
17 Museum St., Glace Bay, Nova Scotia
Call 902-849-4522 for hours and season

Marconi National Historic Site

This site honors the work of Guglielmo Marconi who proved it was possible

to send messages across the Atlantic using electromagnetic waves instead of wires. The site shows the remains of the original Table Head station. The exhibits present Marconi as a brilliant young inventor, a tireless physicist, and a man more comfortable in the solitude of his yacht's seagoing lab than as an international celebrity.

Hours: July 1 to September 1; 10-6.
Admission: Suggested donation, \$2.50
15 Timmerman St., Table Head
Glace Bay, Nova Scotia

Campgrounds Where We Stayed

Lunenburg Board of Trade Campground

This campground has the most unlikely name for a place to park your coach and hookup. But the businessmen in Lunenburg saw the need for a nice place to take care of people like us. They have 22 sites with full service (30 amps); 23 sites EW; and 10 unserviced sites. Free internet and wi-fi. Municipal water & dump station.

11 Blockhouse Hill Rd. From Hwy 103, take exit 11. 902-634-8100, 888-615-8305. \$28-42.

Bras d'Or Lakes Campground

8885 TCH 105 (just south of Baddeck)
Baddeck, NS BOE 1B0
902-295-2329
brasdorlakescampground.ca
Rates: 30 EWS, \$45; 50 EWS, \$53; 15% HST
Lake, pool, gravel sites, Wi-Fi, pull-throughs available.
See rvreviews.com RIS rates it 7.5 overall.

Visiting Grand Pré

2205 Grand Pré Road
Grand Pré, Nova Scotia
Hours: May 16 - June 26, Tue-Sat, 9-5
June 27 - October 12, Daily, 9-5
Admission: Adult, \$7.80; Senior, \$6.55
Student, \$3.90
grandpre.com

Lunenburg Farmers' Market

Every Thursday is Market Day, 8-12. Over 40 local vendors offer fresh seasonal produce, grass-fed meats, free-range eggs, fresh and smoked fish, plants, fresh flowers, cheese, breads, wine, preserves, honey, maple syrup, and more. It is worth coming to Lunenburg just to visit this farmers' market.
Lunenburg Community Centre,
17 Green Street. 902-277-1697.



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