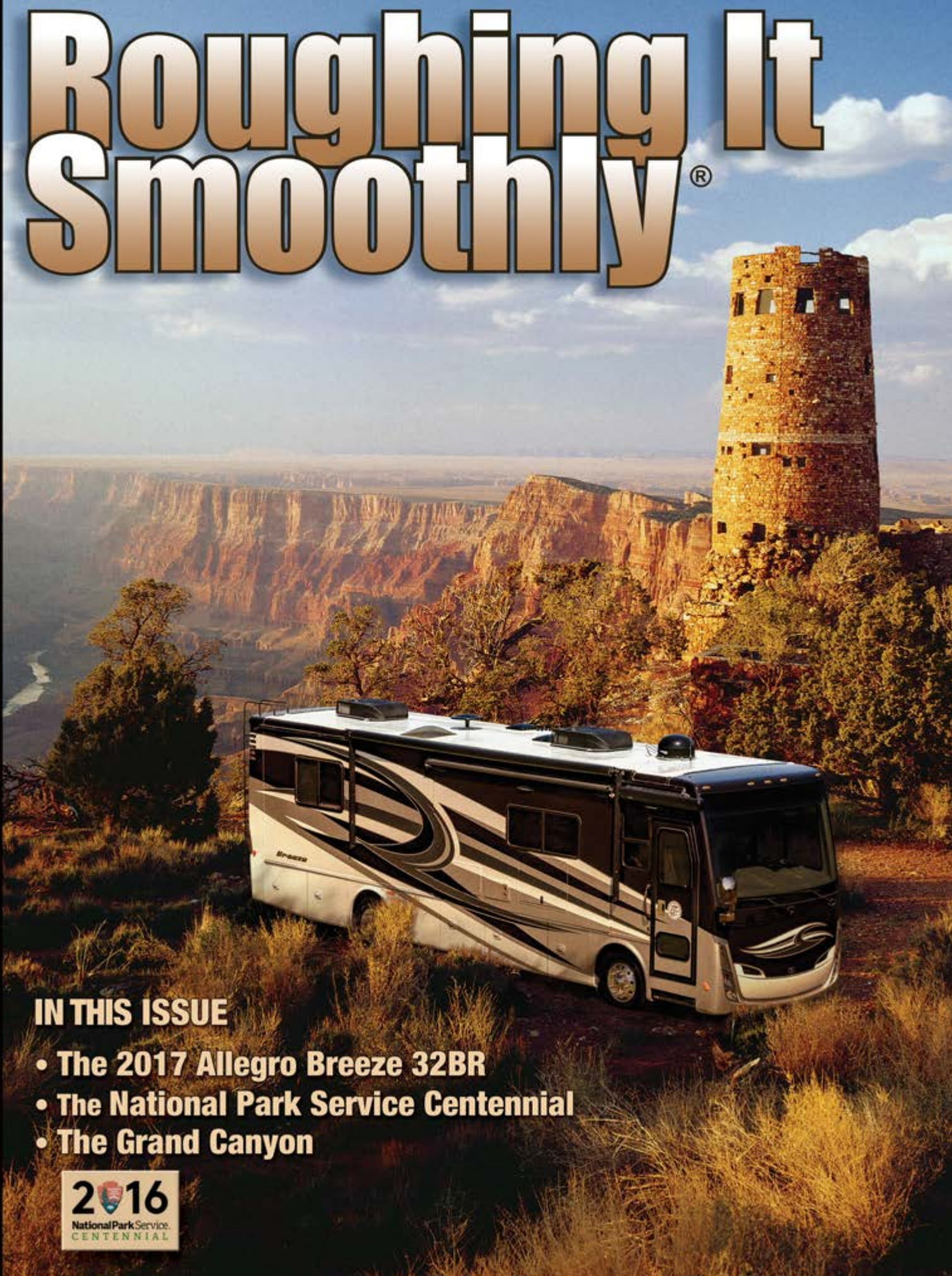


Roughing It Smoothly[®]



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- The National Park Service Centennial
- The Grand Canyon



THE AGENTS OF



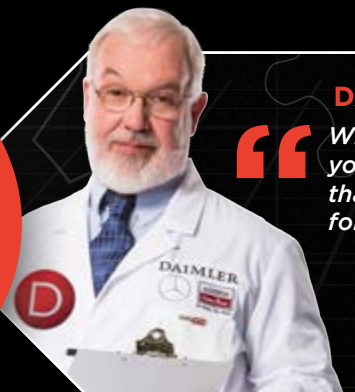
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Roughing It Smoothly®

January 2016 Volume 13, Number 1

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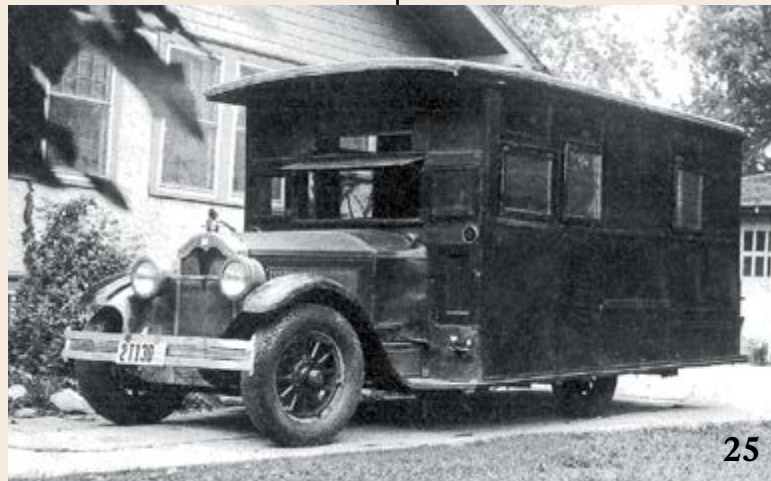
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Departments

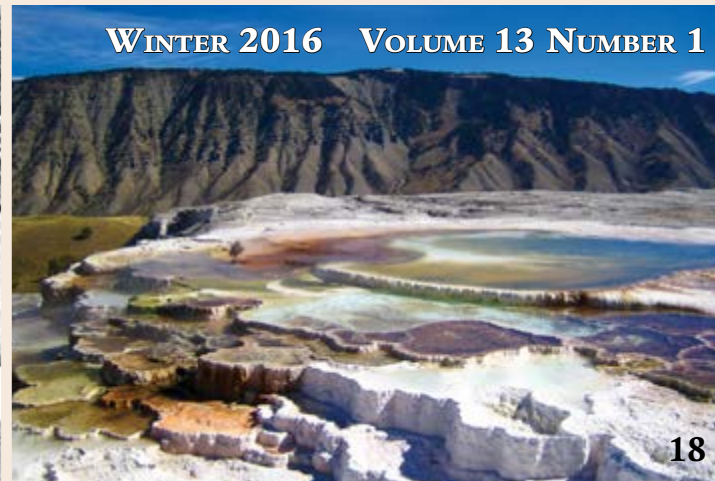
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Tiffin Motorhomes and *Roughing It Smoothly* magazine will honor the National Park Service during its centennial celebration this year, leading off in this issue with a 9-page feature story on the NPS. During 2016, our travel stories will focus on our national parks.



Roughing It Smoothly circulation jumps to 80,000 printed and online magazines.

Over 26,000 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 13th 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 ad-

dress 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.

Change of Address

Please use a standard change of address card from USPS and send to *Roughing It Smoothly*, PO Box 1150, Monroe, GA 30655-1150. You may also change your address online by sending your email to risncoa@hotmail.com First, enter your old address as it appears on your magazine label (we must remove your old address before we can add a new one). Second, please enter your new three-line ad-

dress including the zip code. **We do not accept phone calls for changes of address.**

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 RIStechtalk@gmail.com **If you need an immediate answer to a service problem, you should call 256-356-0261.**

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.

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IMPORTANT SAFETY RECALL

NHTSA RECALL #15V-612
Modification of Exhaust System on 2010-2012 Phaetons built on a PowerGlide Chassis

This notice is provided to Phaeton owners in accordance with the requirements of the National Traffic and Motor Vehicle Safety Act.

Tiffin Motorhomes has decided that a defect, which relates to motor vehicle safety, exists on the following models of Phaeton motorhomes:

- 2010 40QTH
- 2011 40QBH, 40QKH, and 40QTH
- 2012 40QBH, 40QKH, and 40QTH

These Phaetons are built with 2010 EPA-Certified engines on a PowerGlide chassis. It has been found that the exhaust pipe is mounted too close to the underside of the floor. A heat shield and insulation that was previously installed on these coaches may fail and allow excessive heat to contact the floor of the coach which can result in a fire.

Tiffin Motorhomes will remove the existing side inlet DPF exhaust configuration, and install a new end inlet DPF exhaust configuration on these coaches to provide greater clearance between the exhaust tube and the floor. This repair will be made at no

cost to owners. The repair will take approximately 12 hours to complete.

Please do not attempt to repair this yourself. This repair requires significant modification to the exhaust system and one of the storage compartments. Due to the complexity of the repair, Tiffin Motorhomes believes it will be in the owner's best interest to come to the Tiffin Motorhomes Service Center in Red Bay, Alabama, to have the modification made. However, we are aware this may not be possible for everyone and have approved three service facilities in other locations to make this repair. Please call Tiffin Motorhomes Chassis Department to discuss your particular situation, so the best course of action can be advised.

The contact information for TMH Chassis Dept. is:
Nathan Davidson: (256) 356-8661, ext. 2173.
nathan.davidson@tiffinmotorhomes.com
Ricky Brown: (256) 356-8661, ext. 2122.
ricky.brown@tiffinmotorhomes.com
Heath Thorne: (256) 356-8661, ext. 3385.
heath.thorne@tiffinmotorhomes.com

If you were the original owner of one of the above named Phaetons, but you no longer own it,

please contact the Tiffin Motorhomes Warranty Department with information you can furnish that will assist TMH in locating the present owner. Please call Jeannie Madden at 256-356-8661, ext. 2176 or email at: jeannie.madden@tiffinmotorhomes.com

Within a reasonable amount of time after you have tendered your vehicle for repair, if you are unable to have the defect remedied without charge at the Tiffin Service Center in Red Bay or a service facility approved by Tiffin to make this repair, please contact the Tiffin Warranty Department at 256-356-8661, ext. 2205, between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 3:30 p.m. Central Time, Monday through Friday. You may also wish to notify the Administrator, National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, 1200 New Jersey Ave. SE, Washington, DC 20590, or call the NHTSA at 888-327-4236 (TTY:800-424-9153), or go to their website at www.safercar.gov.

Federal regulations require that any vehicle lessor receiving this recall notice must forward a copy of this notice to the lessee with ten days.

Tiffin Motorhomes regrets any inconvenience this action may cause, but feel certain you understand our interest in motorhome vehicle safety.

Tiffin Opens New Chassis Line and Continues Expansion of Cabinet Shop

by Bob Tiffin with Gary Harris

Solving production problems is just part of operating a manufacturing plant. It's always a good problem when demand for your product requires you to expand your manufacturing capacity. However, a new building is just part of the solution. It's also the opportunity to upgrade your equipment, your technology, and your manufacturing procedures.

We realized last year we needed greater capacity in the cabinet shop that also builds all of the interior wall modules for our motorhomes. The available floor space had us locked into building cabinets for a maximum of 12 motorhomes per day. Our craftspeople were almost touching elbows at their work tables. The finishing department needed a more efficient system to apply sealer, stains, and glazes. All of the finished parts were being

air dried which takes a lot of space. The assembly area for cabinets and modules needed better-planned work areas.

Just across the alley from our cabinet shop, our industrial engineers began to analyze the use of nearly 40,000 square feet in our existing chassis building. It, too, was operating close to capacity and dealing with several inefficiencies that a new building could correct. Plans began to take shape for solving both problems together.

It did not take long to decide that it made more sense to annex the current chassis plant to the cabinet shop and build a new chassis plant on the 13 acres we had recently acquired.

As a starting point, we combined the Breeze, Phaeton, and Allegro Bus chassis manufacturing into one production line. This allowed the cabinet shop in

the Spring of 2015 to start using half of that building for cabinet and module assembly. Combining the three brands into one line was more efficient, allowing us to reduce the workforce by three employees.

To develop the plans for the new chassis facility, our industrial engineer, Craig Davis, began meeting once or twice a week with Brad Warner, TMH chief engineer; Gary Harris, chassis production manager; Bobby Luther, purchasing manager; and Donald Crum, chassis production supervisor.

They designed the plant on a CAD-CAM with all of the equipment in place and projected it on a large screen. The plan showed where each employee would be working. Process and work flow was examined carefully, even to the places where dumpsters were located. We broke

ground in March and finished in November. The production line opened on November 2. Our building contractor was King & Associates of Florence, Alabama.

In the old chassis building, parts and main components storage was a major problem. The new PowerGlide plant includes 13 loading docks that permit the use of the delivery trailers as temporary storage until their contents are used on the production line. For engine delivery, for example, we swap out a trailer every four days. We store small items in one of our Belmont warehouses six miles away.

We saw immediate efficiencies. We can load on a conveyer at one time all of the frame rails for one day's work. That's three chassis a day now, but by summer it will be six chassis a day. We have reduced our supply trips to Belmont from five a day to three. On the production line, we now have two 10-ton overhead cranes, replacing six gantry cranes in the old plant. Today we have 30 employees in the chassis plant manufacturing three chassis a day. By summer we will be manufacturing six chassis a day by adding just 10 more employees, realizing economies of scale.

The breakdown on chassis production will be three for the Allegro Bus, two for the Phaeton, and one for the Breeze. We can go up to 10 chassis a day with just two more


work stations and a few more employees.

Our employees are really proud of the new facility. We have excellent lighting, big overhead fans to keep everyone cool in summer, and the best equipment available.

Now that the entire building of the old chassis plant is available, the cabinet shop expansion has moved into high gear. Van selected the equipment for a semi-automatic paint line that is scheduled to arrive in February. It will take about a month to assemble. The spraying and drying operation is managed by Allen Howard, a 12-year veteran at Tiffin Motorhomes.

The cabinets and parts will be attached to an overhead transport that will move them through the first enclosure for applying stain, followed by a stain flash zone.

The transport will continue moving the stain-sprayed parts through a sealer application zone followed by a baking oven. The last zone will apply a clear coat followed by a second baking oven. Components for the Allegro Bus and Zephyr receive a glaze finish that requires those items to loop through the last stage again. The enclosed environment prevents airborne particles from attaching to the items being sprayed and requires the employees to wear protective equipment and breathing systems.

Stay tuned for more details and pictures in my next column. 



The chassis storage lot has been enlarged and reorganized.



The new chassis assembly building.



Attaching the rear wheel assembly to a PowerGlide chassis.

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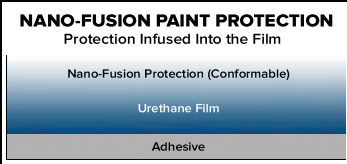
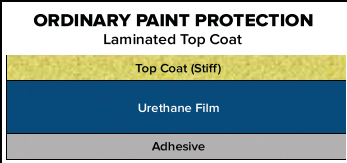
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The 2017 Allegro Breeze 32BR AN ONGOING STUDY IN UPGRADES

Text and photography by Fred Thompson

PHOTO COURTESY OF CONSTELLATION IMAGEWORKS

AT THE RVDA SHOW IN LOUISVILLE THE FIRST WEEK of December 2015, Tiffin went over the top with a new Cummins diesel power plant and a completely redesigned PowerGlide chassis for its popular Allegro Breeze 32BR. The efficient floor plan was retained but you will notice changes inside and out when you take a tour of the 2017 Breeze. You will see how Tiffin applies innovation to its downsized Class A diesel pusher that still has no competitors in the North American market. But first, let's take a sentimental journey through the Breeze's history.

Four years ago in November 2011 at the annual RVDA Show in Louisville, Tiffin Motorhomes introduced the Allegro Breeze 28BR after three years in development – a rear engine diesel, downsized Class A motorhome built on Tiffin's own specially designed PowerGlide chassis. The little diesel coach enjoyed a great reception. When it was time for the 2 p.m. unveiling of the 28BR, a large crowd had gathered to watch the massive curtain fall that had kept everyone in suspense. The well-managed suspense even brought Tiffin's competitors to the event. In its January 2012 issue, RVBusiness gave the Allegro Breeze its "Best of Show" award.

Within a few months the 28BR had a big brother – the Allegro Breeze 32BR. Its popularity was immediate and within a year orders for the "little Breeze" declined. For the 2017 model year,

TMH discontinued the 28BR. It had served its role in making "downsizing" a practical reality for those who wanted to hang on to the diesel and keep some of the amenities a Class A can offer.

Tiffin accurately gauged demand and waited for the right time in 2012 to capture the "downsized Class A diesel pusher" market with the 32BR. The market responded strongly, especially those who had been reluctant to tackle the 40- to 45-foot Phaetons and Allegro Buses. They raved about how easy the Breeze is to drive. Seeing they had a clear winner, the TMH design and marketing teams laid the plans for the long-term development of Tiffin's sixth brand. They focused on affordable luxury, practical design, flexible use, and real economy.

With its low-slung look, the Breeze became the classy sports car of the Class A motorhome industry. Its low center of gravity significantly improved handling. Then, in 2014 the Breeze set itself apart from its wannabe competitors with independent front suspension. Its reputation for smooth handling jumped two more notches.

From its beginning, TMH designers incorporated the features the Phaeton and Bus owners liked best and then used the best materials: hardwood cabinetry with raised panel doors, double-paned windows, powered solar and privacy shades for the windshield, solid surface countertops and backsplashes, a microwave-convection oven with outside venting, full body

paint, slide-out pantries, surround sound home theater systems, a skylight in the large shower, adjustable gas and brake pedals, and a paint protective shield on the front cap.

All of the seating in the Breeze is custom-designed and built by Flexsteel, the leading manufacturer of motorhome furniture. For the 2017 model year, Tiffin selected the same Ultraleather™ for the Breeze that is being used in the Allegro Bus. Both the driver and passenger chairs with Ultraleather, 8-way power adjustments, and lever-adjusted backs are standard equipment. A powered PS footrest is standard.

When Tiffin's high-tech fiberglass plant introduced the one-piece, patented, unitized slide-out box, the Allegro Breeze was the first brand to receive it. The design brought a new level of durability and waterproofing to slide-out manufacturing.

Now, let's talk about innovation. It is a rare event when a diesel engine manufacturer and a motorhome manufacturer collaborate to build a special power plant for one of its brands. That's just what happened. After a three-year collaboration between Tiffin Motorhomes and Cummins, the 2017 Allegro Breeze 32BR now enjoys a new energetic ride powered by an assertive Cummins ISV5.0 V8 engine, seen at right. Designed and developed specifically for the Breeze's new PowerGlide chassis, the new combination was tested continuously for 250,000 miles with the full planned weight of the 32BR.

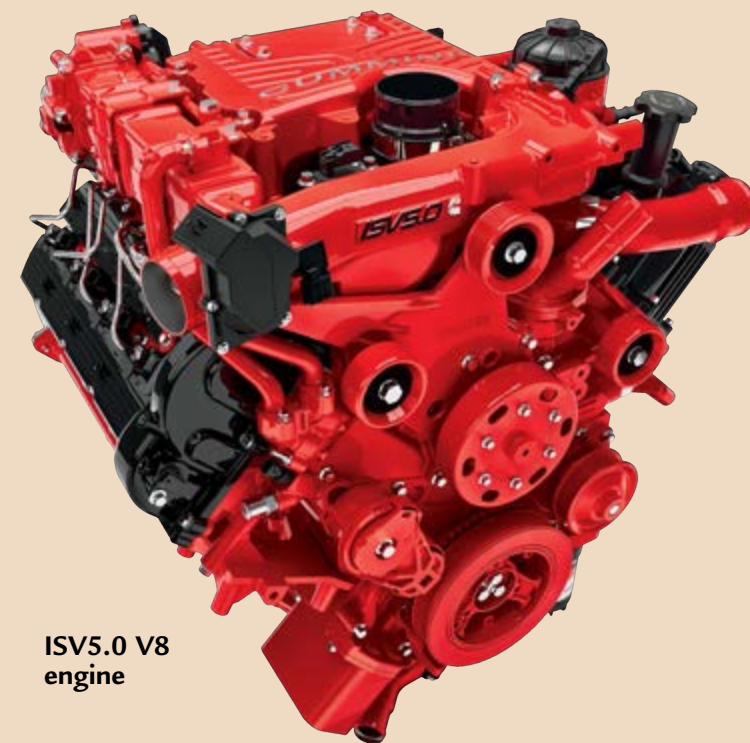
The ISV5.0 exceeds traditional diesel engines in durability, reliability, and performance. From its inception, its emissions technology was designed to meet and exceed the EPA standards. Extraordinarily clean, quiet, and fuel-efficient, this state-of-the-art Cummins V8 power plant is equipped with the latest HPCR fuel system and the VGT™ Turbocharger. It delivers 275 horsepower at 3,200 RPM and offers peak torque of 560 LB-FT at 1,600 RPM.

For the last year I have been driving the 2015 Allegro Bus 37AP and have enjoyed the takeoff, cruising, and reserve power that it delivers. With 450-hp, its GVWR (gross vehicle weight rating) is 38,600 pounds, which gives you a horsepower to weight ratio of 11.65M. Comparatively, the Breeze with 275-hp has a 23,500 GVWR, giving it a horsepower to weight ratio of 11.70M (the ratio is horsepower per thousand pounds of weight). After doing the math, it became obvious why the new Breeze delivers such a pleasing and powerful on-the-road performance.

The Cummins VGT Turbocharger's patented design is recognized in the industry for the precision boost control it provides across the speed range to elevate performance and fuel economy.

The advanced ceramic glow plugs used by Cummins reduces the cranking time in extreme cold. The plug's low current demand reduces the requirements for the vehicle charging system. The plugs are designed to last the life of the engine.

By raising the floor six inches above the PowerGlide's chassis rails, the engineers eliminated the wheel wells that were exposed in the coach's living space. The basement, of course, gained the same six inches of vertical space, increasing the storage volume from the basement's entry doors to the chassis rails. The interior height remains at 6'6" and the exterior height increased to 11'8", including the low-profile air conditioners.



ISV5.0 V8 engine

The interior of the 2017 Breeze has three notable changes.



❶ This coach's décor includes handcrafted hardwood cabinetry with a rich Cordovan stain. The deep-toned cabinets contrast beautifully with the gray fabric used in the construction of the valances. The Ultraleather cream upholstery with gray piping and the metal accents on the valances and sconces combine to create a very modern, almost Art Deco interior.

❷ With major improvements in functionality, the dash was completely redesigned for 2017 beginning with three instrument pods in a cluster, all of which are easily viewed through the top half of the steering wheel. In an efficiently designed console that begins on the left side of the steering column and curves into the wall under the side window, you will find five toggle switches for engine brake, exterior head- and parking lights, panel lamps, auxiliary start, and the pedals in-out adjustment. The windshield wiper and spray control is located just above the toggles.

On the side console that extends the length of your forearm, you will see the parking brake, the Aens shift control for the Allison transmission, the outside mirrors control with heater switch, and a large cup holder. At your elbow, Tiffin positioned the HWH computerized air leveling system. Below the instru-



ments, the designer included a large receptacle for maps and a smaller one for your cell phone, keys, and other items.

The center console has a recessed monitor angled toward the driver for the rearview and side cameras. A 12-volt outlet and two USB ports are mounted into the recessed area. Just below the monitor, a Kenwood DPX501BT programmable radio offers a CD player, Bluetooth, Pandora, iHeartRadio, connections for MP3/WMA/AAC/WAY, and SiriusXM, plus a USB port and a plug-in for a head set to enhance the use of the programs.

Toggle switches in the console take care of night and solar shades, the DS overhead fan, a map light, gen start, and the master switch for the radio. The Denso automotive heating and air conditioning system has large easy-to-use controls that eliminate fumbling for switches while you are driving. Two drawers at floor level complete the efficiently designed console.

The passenger console has toggles for the map light, the PS overhead fan, and the porch awning light, plus two USB ports. In the wall to the side of the PS chair is a 110v outlet.

❸ The previous optional residential refrigerator was upgraded to a double-door refrigerator/freezer with icemaker. The refrigerator has a large humidity-controlled drawer.

Your Daytime Living Space

After you have selected your RV site and completed the hook-up routine, you will be ready to touch a few buttons and like magic convert your "traveling Breeze" to your "living Breeze." Levers on the driver and passenger seats will allow them to do a one-eighty and become part of your living room that will comfortably seat ten: five in the Ultraleather C-shaped sofa that doubles as the dinette, three on the DS sofa, and two in the driver and passenger chairs. The passenger chair with its standard motorized foot-rest converts into a luxury recliner. Both sofas have seat belts for two.

When guests are in your coterie, you can provide overnight accommodations. The DS sofa flips quickly into a jack knife bed that measures 40 × 65 inches, perfect for two children. The C-shaped sofa has an adjustable height table that rotates 90 degrees to permit easy entry for diners. When it's bedtime, the table lowers to seat height to receive a four-inch cushion with the same shape, creating a bed that is 37 × 82 inches. When I traveled with my college roommate two summers ago, I added an 8-inch Coleman inflatable mattress to the equation which put him in la-la land in about five minutes. The storage in the cabinets above the C-shaped sofa is generous—6.5 cubic feet. Over

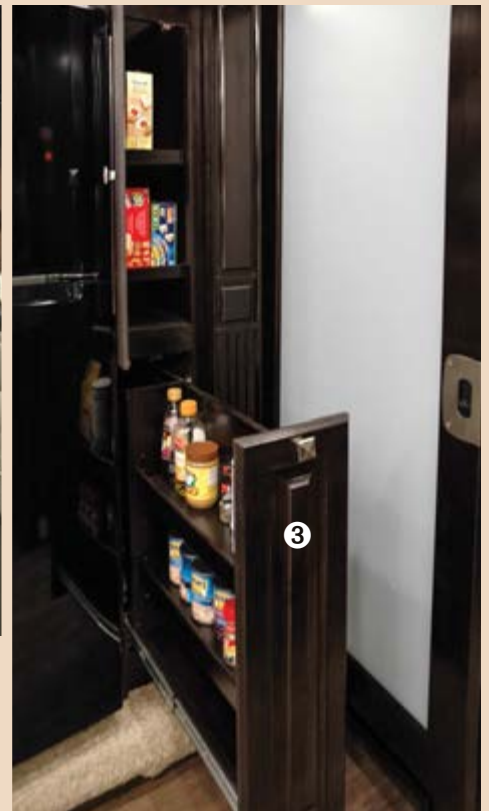
Three Views of Your Daytime Living Space.



the jack-knife sofa you've got another 5 cubic feet to stash your guest's belongings.

The Breeze's galley is very accommodating. A solid surface countertop is accented by a full-height, tiled, designer backsplash created in Tiffin's solid surface and tile department. A team of 47 craftspeople creates for 12 motorhomes every day all of the solid surface countertops and backsplashes for the dinettes, bedroom chests, shower stalls, galleys, baths, and half baths.

The galley features a double stainless steel sink with covers to match the countertop, plus a brushed nickel, gooseneck faucet with a single lever control. A double burner cooktop and a microwave-convection oven with an exterior vent provide the chef with the equipment to prepare great meals. Matching the handsome Cordovan-stained cabinets, the residential fridge



and freezer with icemaker (8 cu. ft.) complete the coach's top-quality galley equipment. A Fan-Tastic vent fan over the galley area not only removes cooking odors and heat, but also provides cooling in the evening.

As we have come to expect, Tiffin's "Store-It-All" guarantee assures plenty of storage space for the galley. The cabinet over the sink ① boasts 3.4 cubic feet of storage and the deep shelf under the mid-section television conceals 3.3 cubic of storage that we nearly overlooked.

Three large drawers ② under the cooktop will surprise you, measuring 23.5" × 18.5"—one is 3" deep and the other two are 5" deep. You will find more storage behind the double doors under the sink, plus a stack of three more drawers on the north side of the cabinet.

On the north side of the refrigerator, TMH engineered a three shelf slide-out ③ designed for items eight to 10 inches high. In a similar amount of space above the slide-out, a deep compartment is perfect for big box, bulky items.

We always have fun trying to remember what we have stored in the six small cabinets that surround the cockpit just above eye level. They are handy for maps, flashlights, record books to track service and the good mileage that you will enjoy in this Cummins-powered Breeze. A friend of ours put numbers on each cabi-

net surrounding the cockpit and then in small type from his on-board laptop and printer, created a contents list for each cabinet. After that worked so well, I was not surprised a few days later to see him sitting on a short stool alongside the two big basement storage slide-outs making a mapped inventory. No-stress RVing depends on good organization, record keeping, and maintenance. Of course, there are more items on that list, but that's another story.

Before you leave the "daytime space," you should hear the entertainment system in action. Well, we can't turn it on inside the pages of *Roughing It Smoothly*, but a thorough description is impressive.

The technology for the entertainment center is located in a louvered cabinet just above the bed. The LG Smart+ TV using the system's Launcher Bar will allow you to select programming from Today, Netflix, Hulu Plus, Amazon, Facebook, YouTube, Skype, M-Go and more. You can switch back and forth between apps, movies, and TV shows using the Launcher and its quick, nimble interface.

Input includes data discs, USB devices, MKV playback, external HDD playback, and Blu-Ray 3D discs. Stereo surround sound output in the living area emanates from four speakers in the ceiling and a sub-woofer concealed in the floor of the credenza. The LG system is certified

by the Digital Living Network Alliance. The DLNA certification makes it easy to set up your home and coach networks to share and stream photos, music, and movies. For more information, see DLNA in Wikipedia. The LG entertainment system also permits recording current programming and playing it back at your convenience.

The television ④ itself, an LG ULTRA HDTV 4K, displays 8.3 million pixels, making the resolution four times that of full HD. The television uses a revolutionary technology called OLED (organic light-emitting diodes). Unlike traditional, synthetic LEDs (light-emitting diodes), OLED uses an organic substance that glows when an electric current is introduced. This revolutionary material is part of a new design approach that drastically reduces the thickness and weight of the TV. The light passes through a combination of filters to reproduce spectacular high-definition images. LG utilizes this technology to produce big-screen sizes up to 77 inches diagonal that have the same clarity as a 42-inch unit.

The mid-section standard 42-inch TV is the primary display for the surround



Clockwise from top left: The queen bed is flanked on both sides by shirt closets, a small bedside table and three deep drawers. ♦ The drawers below the shirt closet are 23" deep. ♦ The lady's closet is 37.5" wide, 44" high, and 22" deep. Below the lady's closet are five drawers, two are shown. ♦ Four large drawers open from the end of the bed. Under the bed, you'll find another seven cubic feet of storage space. Not shown is a linen closet and three deep drawers adjacent to the shower.

sound entertainment system. It is complemented by a 32-inch over-the-dash television. In the bedroom, a 22-inch TV drops from the ceiling in a hinged encasement. If you enjoy outdoor movies (like we used to sit in our cars under the stars back in the fifties and sixties), you can still do it with the optional 32-inch TV in the sidewall under your awning. So cool!

OK, back inside. Let's skip the walk-through bath for a moment and take a look at the coziest bedroom in the business. I have already mentioned the drop down TV that allows you to catch the morning news without getting out of bed. It's also pretty neat to get your jam-

mies on and watch a good movie in bed. Amazingly, a 22-inch screen four feet away gives you the same effect and viewing pleasure as a 60-inch screen across the room in your family room at home.

First time visitors may think it is a small bedroom, but TMH makes better use of space in this bedroom than any other coach it builds. The main closet, which faces the rear wall, is 37.5" wide, 44" high, and 22" deep. I called it the "lady's closet" during the two summers we traveled in a Breeze (because it is the largest). Below the closet, Tiffin designed a chest with five drawers. Four are 14" x 17" x 3.5". The bottom drawer is 14" x 11.5" x 9". The

last digit is the depth of the drawer and the first digit is the front width.

The gentleman gets three strategically placed closets. On both sides of the bed above the end tables, each closet is 11.5" wide, 44" high, and 19" deep. Under each closet are three unusually deep drawers: 7" x 23" x 5.25". In the hall separating the toilet-lav and the shower, a third closet may be the one you'll flip a coin to see who gets it: 12" x 45" x 27". There are three deep drawers under this closet, too. All of the drawers slide easily on top quality hardware.

And that's not all. Under the bed facing the front of the coach, Tiffin designed

the space for four big drawers (22.5" × 14" × 5.5"). The bed pops up on struts to reveal a large storage area of seven cubic feet.

The pass-through bath can be conveniently closed off with two translucent sliding doors: one separating it from the living space and the other from the bedroom. The larger than usual shower (39" × 24.5") with a skylight has a height-adjustable shower head mounted on a vertical pole. Three shelves for toiletries and soap plus a built-in seat make this a most accommodating shower.

The water closet (toilet and lavatory) is well appointed with a solid surface countertop, a seamless one-piece lavatory, and a full backsplash. A corner cabinet with mirrored door offers ample storage for toiletries. A second cabinet is located on the sidewall above the backsplash. The vanity has another cubic foot of storage for cleaning products.



A Walk Around the 2017 Breeze

The front and rear caps for the 2017 model year received a complete makeover. At the plant, many of the employees began referring to the new front cap redesign as the "little Zephyr." The large front slide-out permits easy access to the 6,000KB Onan Quiet Diesel generator and other service points. If you choose the optional residential refrigerator, the two extra house batteries will be located here.

Moving down the passenger side, front-to-back, the first, second, and third basement doors access the Breeze's pass-through, lighted storage which is approximately 102 cubic feet. The fourth door conceals the air dryer, cooling fan, tank drains, and the compressed air supply. The fifth compartment houses the chassis batteries.

Moving around to the rear, the large strut-supported door swings out of the way for easy access to all of the engine check points placed at eye level.

On the driver's side from back-to-front, the first compartment houses the 50-amp service. Now located conveniently on

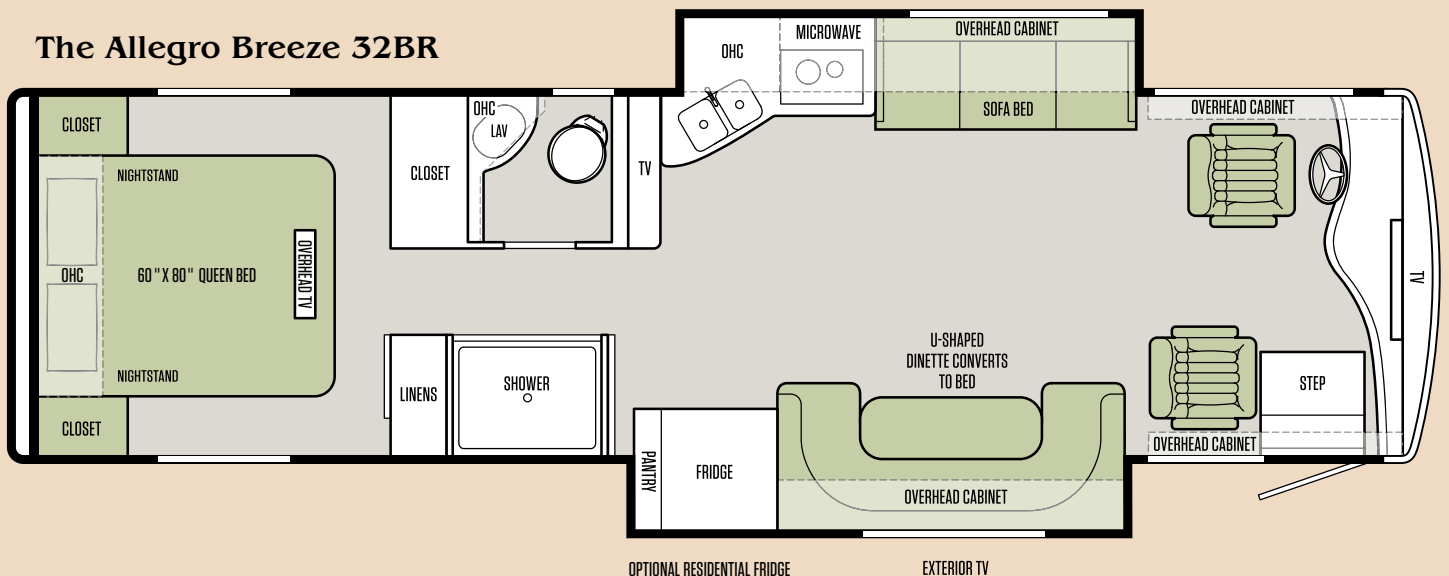
the driver's side, the second compartment holds the DEF tank. The third door conceals the lighted utility bay that is designed exactly like the larger coaches. The fourth and fifth doors open up the pass-through storage, allowing you to access your basement storage from both sides of the coach. The propane tank is in the sixth compartment. Note that all of the exterior service points are located on the driver's side. The basement compartment in the front corner (located under the driver's chair) houses the breaker panel for the 12-volt system. The release handle for the front cap is also in this compartment.

Driving the 2017 Allegro Breeze 32BR

On page 7, I mentioned the weight-to-power ratio as part of the pleasing driving performance delivered by the 2017 Breeze. The driving test we use in Northwest Alabama is Alabama Route 247 that transverses some of the state's steepest hills with long grades that exceed five percent. On the 13-mile stretch between

Continued on page 80

The Allegro Breeze 32BR



SPECIFICATIONS: Model tested 2017 Allegro Breeze 32BR, Two Slides, Base MSRP* – \$236,785 MSRP as tested with options – \$240,809

STANDARD FEATURES

Structural

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

Automotive

Allison 2100 MH 6-speed transmission
Cummins ISV5.0 V8 diesel engine
560 lb-ft torque @ 1600 rpm
275 hp @ 3,200 rpm
Four air bags
Independent front suspension
Exhaust brake
Fog lights
Daytime running lights

Exterior

Fiberglass front & rear caps
Tinted one-piece windshield
6kw Onan® Quiet Diesel generator
Two 13,500 BTU low profile roof AC (high efficiency)
Quiet AC roof-ducted system
Single electric step
¼-inch thick single pane windows
Horizontal mounted wipers
Heated power mirrors
Gel-coat fiberglass walls
Full body paint
Paint protective film
Aluminum wheels
Exterior LED patio lights
Power patio awning
Power entry door awning
Slide-out awnings
HWH automatic air leveling system
Seamless, one-piece fiberglass composite slide-out box construction
Convenient storage doors with gas shocks
Ridged long-life storage boxes
Exterior storage compartment lights
Single handle lockable storage door latches
Heated water and holding tank compartments
Two 6v auxiliary batteries
Digital / analog TV antenna
Cable ready TV
Exterior TV
50-amp service
Battery Minder Plus
Black holding tank flush system
Exterior rinse hose/shower
Back-up camera with color dash monitor
Side cameras activated by turn signals
Inverter for televisions & entertainment center only
110v exterior receptacle
110v / 12v converter
Undercoating
Roof ladder
External tripod satellite hook-up

Driver's Compartment

Ultraleather 6-way powered driver seat & passenger seat with powered foot-rest (Flexsteel®)
Lighted instrument panel

Back-up monitor
Contemporary styled dash
Single CD player & stereo AM/FM radio
XM receiver and antenna
One 12v dash receptacle
Two USB ports in dash
Dash gauges with diagnostic system
Tilt / telescope steering wheel
Adjustable gas & brake pedals
Auxiliary start
Cruise control
Dual dash fans
Power solar & privacy shades for windshield
Roll-Ease® solar & privacy shades for driver & passenger side windows
Fire extinguisher
Snack tray with two cupholders

Living Area / Dinette

Dinette sleeper lounge with UltraLeather
Home theater surround sound system with Blu-ray DVD player
66" UltraLeather jack knife sofa/sleeper-DS
Front OH TV
Mid-section HDTV

Kitchen

Single lever satin nickel sink faucet
Double bowl stainless steel sink with solid surface countertop covers
Solid surface countertops
Solid surface backsplashes and splash guard
Dual burner cooktop
Convection-microwave oven with exterior venting
Double door gas/electric refrigerator freezer
3-shelf slide-out pantry
Single door vertical pantry (2 shelves)

Bath

Medicine cabinet
Skylight in shower
LED light in shower
Satin nickel vanity faucet
Toilet compartment with lavatory
Solid surface countertop
Fiberglass shower with rainglass enclosure and door
3-speed exhaust fan
Vanity lighting
LED ceiling lights

Bedroom

37-inch wide double door wardrobe with five drawers underneath
Three 12-inch wide shirt closets (44" high)
Four large drawers in bed pedestal
Nine 23-inch drawers (7" wide x 5" deep)
Bedroom TV
Bed comforter with four matching pillows
Memory foam queen mattress
Two windows with solar / privacy shades
Carbon monoxide detector
LPG leak detector

Phone jack
110v outlets in bedside tables
Two USB ports in each bedside table

General Interior

Choose from three interior hardwood finishes
Choose from three designer fabric suites
Self-locking pocket door hardware
High gloss raised panel hardwood cabinet doors
Vinyl headliner
Solid hardwood cabinet faces & drawer fronts
Wall-to-wall vinyl tile flooring throughout coach
Ball bearing drawer slides
Scotchgard® treated carpet & fabrics
Roll-Ease® solar & privacy shades in living area windows
LED lighting throughout coach
Two power roof vents
Tank level monitor system
Smoke detector
6-gallon DSI gas / electric water heater
Two 30,000 BTU ducted furnaces

OPTIONAL FEATURES ON THIS COACH

15,000 AC with heat pump (front only)
IPO 13,500 AC
Automatic satellite
Cordovan interior hardware finish
Zest designer fabric suite
Vacuum cleaner system
Double-door residential refrigerator/freezer with icemaker

OTHER OPTIONAL FEATURES AVAILABLE

English Chestnut interior hardware finish
Mocha interior hardware finish
Raffia designer fabric suite
Toasted Almond designer fabric suite

MEASUREMENTS

Wheelbase – 202"
Overall length – 33'6"
Overall height with roof air – 11' 8"
Interior height – 78"
Overall width – 95"
Interior width – 91"

WEIGHTS & CAPACITIES

GVWR – 23,500 lbs.
Front GAWR – 8,500 lbs.
Rear GAWR – 15,000 lbs.
GCWR – 23,500 lbs.
UVW – 19,758 lbs.
CCC – 2,397 lbs.
Trailer hitch capacity – 4,500 lbs.

POWER TRAIN

Engine – Cummins ISV 5.0
Horsepower – 275 hp @ 3,200 rpm
Torque – 560 lb.ft. @ 1,600 rpm
Transmission – Allison 6-speed MH 2100

Tire size – 265/70R19.5
Alternator – 170 amps

CHASSIS

Frame – Full length ladder type design
Frame design – Low floor, one-piece construction
Anti-locking braking system – Standard 4-wheel anti-lock brakes
Suspension (front and rear) – Modified air rich
Independent front suspension
Shock absorbers – Bilstein custom tuned
Axles – Front: Reyco-Granning IFS 1000. Rear: Dana S130
Leveling – HWH Level Air system

CONSTRUCTION

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

ACCOMMODATIONS

Sleeps – Four adults, two children
Fuel tank – 70 gallons
Fresh water – 70 gallons
Black water – 30 gallons
Grey water – 50 gallons
LPG tank – 20 gallons (can be filled to 80% capacity)

MSRP*

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

UVW

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

DEALERS

To locate the Tiffin dealer nearest you, go to www.tiffinmotorhomes.com 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.

Tiffin Allegro Club Rally THE GREAT SMOKY MOUNTAINS RALLY SEVIERVILLE, TENNESSEE

by Sally Moore

Late September 2015 saw a steady stream of beautiful Tiffin coaches making their way to the River Plantation RV Resort in Sevierville, Tennessee for our final 2015 rally. We hosted 250 coaches from across the USA and Canada for a week of fun, fellowship and comradery. The weather was as close to perfect as one could expect! Cool mornings and sunny afternoons were delightful. Tennessee RV Sales from Knoxville brought several Tiffin coaches to show our owners and made several folks very happy by helping them move into the coach of their dreams. Thank you, Roger Sellers and all of your great staff for being a part of our rally.

Our volunteers came early to help the Tiffin staff get everything ready for the rally. WE LOVE OUR VOLUNTEERS! They pay to come to the rally and then work hard all week to be sure everyone

has a good time just as they do! Our volunteers are fantastic!

As soon as coaches arrived, guests made their way to the Tiffin Store to stock up on the newest Tiffin swag and receive their agendas and welcome bag of gifts. Everyone gathered in the conference center located at the RV Resort on Monday evening for a delicious meal followed by welcoming remarks by Bob Tiffin, Andy Baer, and Kelly Moore. Door prizes were awarded and everyone enjoyed a few games of Tiffin Allegro Bingo. We couldn't have bingo night without our official "Bingo Experts," Tom and Pat Webber! Prizes were awarded with much fun and laughter.

Tuesday morning saw several energetic souls out for an early morning power walk or stroll about the campground to get the blood flowing before our big Tennessee mountain country breakfast. Immediately after breakfast, seminars on RV-related topics were held. Great topics that interested all RV owners were covered, such as convection microwave cooking, updating and understanding your navigation system, and caring for the exterior of your Tiffin. Onan generators, Powerglide chassis, and Freightliner chassis always have great participation at their seminars.

Our professional line dance instructor, Tammy Wyatt, and her students had a great time every afternoon learning the steps and moves. Wonderful exercise while having a lot of fun at the same time!

Ice cream was enjoyed by everyone in the new coach display. Yummy treats on a warm, sunny afternoon! This was a great opportunity to visit with one another and share travel experiences. Tuesday night we welcomed our Franklin County country and western superstar, Joseph Baldwin, to the stage after a delicious meal of BBQ and fried chicken. Joseph entertained the group with his renditions of many Country and Western hit songs as well as several songs that he has written personally. All veterans were recognized and celebrated during the evening. We salute



Sunset at the GSM rally.



Many owners decorated with the country and western theme.



Country and Western singer Joseph Baldwin with his wife Misty visit with Judy and Bob Tiffin.

our veterans and thank you for your service to our nation!

Wednesday morning saw our dedicated walkers out and about very early enjoying the beautiful Smoky Mountain scenery again and then Tennessee RV brought a truck load of Krispy Kreme doughnuts to everyone's delight! Interesting seminars were held again in the Conference Center. Everyone gathered at noon for a tailgate buffet of delicious grilled burgers and hot dogs with all the trimmings. Folks gathered around the new coaches after lunch for a "Swap Meet." Owners were invited to bring any of their unwanted junk--I mean treasures! Others made their best deal to take the junk/treasures home with them!!

Owners were invited to participate in our Country & Western site decoration contest. Lots of originality and thought went into this. Tiffin Allegro gift certificates were awarded to winners Mr. & Mrs. Jim Arnold, York Pennsylvania; and runners-up Mr. & Mrs. Peter Nudi, Pittsburg, Pennsylvania, and Mr. & Mrs. Billy Amos, Vinton, Virginia. Thanks to everyone who participated!


We were treated to a wonderful concert after dinner on Wednesday evening by east Tennessee's own Kenny Evans. Kenny performs weekly at Pigeon Forge's popular Country Tonight Theater and he gave our Tiffin family a fabulous show of the golden oldies from the 50's and 60's!

Thursday morning saw everyone gathered in the Conference Center for another bountiful breakfast followed by a morning of educational seminars. After lunch Cynthia Skinner hosted a craft and hobby tea with a special presentation by the Cherry Pit Quilt Shop from nearby Pigeon Forge. Everyone enjoyed sharing their favorite craft item and seeing all the wonderful items others had on hand.

Ice cream was enjoyed again Thursday afternoon while touring the beautiful Tiffin coaches one last time. Tennessee RV was able to make several people's dream come true!

Thursday evening brought an end to our festivities. After another delicious meal, more fantastic Tiffin door prizes and Red Bay stories by Kelly Moore, the Redhead Express took the stage for a wonderful show of exquisite harmonies and melodies. This family of seven children, mom and dad, two grandkids and two sons-in-law take RVing to a whole new level! Wonderful family entertainment!


Friday morning was cool and misty but many Tiffin friends hooked up their tow and headed on to their next destination while several extended their stay at River Plantation for a few more days. Whatever your plans, travel safely and we hope to see you at a Tiffin rally somewhere in the near future!



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2016 Allegro Club Rallies

Mark your calendars now and make plans to join us at one or more of the following 2016 Tiffin Allegro Club rallies!

Sarasota County Agricultural Fairgrounds, Sarasota, Florida

Arrive March 2 & Depart March 6, 2016

Registration Opened at 10:00 a.m. CDT, Sept. 15, 2015. We are currently accepting registrations for our wait list.

Palm Creek RV Resort, Casa Grande, Arizona

Arrive April 11 & Depart April 15, 2016

Registration Opened at 10:00 a.m. CDT, Oct. 13, 2015. We are currently accepting registrations for our wait list.

Cam-Plex, Gillette, Wyoming

Arrive June 20 & Depart June 24, 2016

Registration Opened at 10:00 a.m. CST, January 20, 2016.

Rally Schedule is Subject to Change

For latest updates on rally and other Tiffin Allegro Club information, visit www.TiffinSideroads.com and enter your email address in the SUBSCRIBE box. You will promptly receive an email asking that you confirm your subscription. After you click FOLLOW, you will begin hearing from us once or twice per month.

Sarasota, Florida

Join us in sunny Florida for our first Tiffin Allegro Club rally in 2016! We will gather at the Sarasota County Fairgrounds/Robarts Arena. Lazy Days Supercenter will be on hand with a display of beautiful new Tiffin Motorhomes!

We expect to host approximately 300-350 coaches at the fairgrounds. This will be Tiffin's only "BUDDY" rally in 2016 which means you can bring your friends with you that may drive Some Other Brand! We would like to show them how to become a member of the Tiffin family of coach owners.

The fairgrounds will have 30-amp electrical service, but no water or sewer hookups. Bring an extension cord with you just in case it's needed. There are dump stations at the grounds. Arrive with a full tank of water and empty holding tanks and you should be fine. Clean shower facilities are available at the fairgrounds.

Your rally fee will include multiple meals, ice cream social, live entertainment, four nights' camping, seminars, shopping with RV suppliers and local vendors, and other fun activities. Your rally fee also includes our terrific Tiffin and Lazy Days service technicians performing three minor repairs on all coaches. These trained technicians offer a wealth of information for you to tap into! You have made a sizeable investment in purchasing a beautiful motorcoach. Take this valuable opportunity to learn all you can about it.

The cost for one coach and two adults is only \$429. A registration form can be found at TiffinMotorhomes.com and also at TiffinSideroads.com. Complete this form and return it to the Tiffin Allegro Club by fax or scanned email.

Gillette, Wyoming

Westward ho! The Tiffin Allegro Club is saddling up and rolling

out for our final rally of 2016. The Cam-Plex Multi-Events Facility will be the location of this June rally. Gillette is a small city, but it is located directly between Yellowstone National Park to the west and Mt. Rushmore and the Badlands to the east. We are prepared to host up to 325 coaches at this beautiful facility. All sites will have water, electricity, and sewer. Wi-Fi is available in some areas of the facility. Meals, seminars, and entertainment will be located in a modern, climate-controlled building. This is a beautiful section of the USA - come prepared to enjoy sightseeing in the area.

As usual, Tiffin Motorhomes will have some of their finest service technicians on hand for minor service repairs. We will have several catered meals and outstanding entertainment each night. Seminars, classes, ice cream socials, and other fun activities are planned. Come prepared to learn more about your beautiful Tiffin coach and meet other friendly Tiffin owners! Several representatives from Tiffin Motorhomes will be on hand. Bretz RV will be present with several new coaches for our rally attendees to see. Be prepared to be tempted! The cost of this rally including four nights camping, several catered meals, seminars, entertainment and more is \$459 per coach with two adults.

New Tiffin Rally Registration Process for 2016

The Tiffin Allegro Club is blessed to have a difficult problem! Tiffin rallies have become so popular, we can't accommodate everyone who wants to attend! Almost all of our rallies are a sellout - many on opening day. We are constantly looking for facilities that will accommodate a larger number of coaches with dining/meeting facilities to comfortably house everyone. Other factors also play a part in the rally selection area, but be assured we are constantly scouting for good locations. In order to better serve Tiffin owners with our wonderful Tiffin service techs and personal attention at seminars and functions, at this time we have no plans to expand our rally size beyond 325 coaches.

To make rally registrations fair and available to everyone, we will be using an outside registration processor for registrations during 2016. This outside vendor will accumulate all registrations and provide us information in the order that registrations are received. This should eliminate problems with overloading our email server, jamming the fax machine, etc. No rally registrations will be accepted by mail, in person or by telephone.

The only way to register for a rally will be online at Tiffinmotorhomes.com. Click on the Owner's Club tab, then click Tiffin Allegro Club, finally click on Rallies and go to the specific rally you wish to attend. Complete the required information and pay for the rally online. Links to this website will be available at Tiffinsideroads.com also. Early registrations will not be accepted and you must have a current membership in the Tiffin Allegro Club to participate. Anyone not having access to the internet should ask a friend or family member to register for them as we will not be able to register anyone by telephone.

As always, we are here to answer any questions you have concerning upcoming rallies. Give us a call at 256-356-8522, Monday through Friday, 8:00 am - 4:30 pm Central Time. Travel safe and enjoy your beautiful Tiffin coach!

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* Estimated APR (Annual Percentage Rate). Subject to consumer loan program requirements and credit approval. Certain fees, closing costs, and restrictions may apply. APR applied to the loan is the APR in effect on the date the application is received and is valid until 30 days after the loan is approved. APRs may vary with loan term. For a purchase, RV must be 2008 model year or newer. For a refinance, RV must be 2006 model year or newer. Maximum loan-to-value is determined by the following: credit score and model year, with collateral value being established per NADA Used Wholesale Base Trade-In Value. Maximum loan term based on model year, loan amount, loan type, and lender guidelines. Example of a recreational use RV loan: A 10 year fixed-rate \$85,000 loan. Based on an APR of 4.29%, this loan has 120 monthly payments of \$872.35 each.

The National Park Service

A CENTENNIAL ANNIVERSARY

by Fred Thompson

EDWARD AND MARGARET GEHRKE spent most of their lives in Lincoln, Nebraska. He was born in 1880 and she in 1883. Margaret was a school teacher, Edward a successful contractor who built 300 Craftsman-style bungalows. They had no children.

Financially, they were able to travel months at a time to satisfy their insatiable desire to see and learn more about the U.S. and Canada. Beginning in 1909 with a trip by train to “California and the West,” Margaret kept a daily journal and

The couple’s six tours by train between 1909 and 1915 included four in the U.S. and two in Canada. Their last train tour in November and December 1915 focused on seeing the Panama Pacific International Exposition held in San Francisco. However, they spent most of their time in California visiting the parks from Sacramento to San Diego.

They departed on Monday, December 27, for a one-day side trip across the desert to the Grand Canyon, a visit they decided they should not miss. Margaret devoted a full page in her diary to their short visit on Dec. 28. The underlines are Margaret’s.

Grand Canyon, Arizona. A few things in this beautiful old world are too big to talk about. We can only weep before so supreme a spectacle of glory and of majesty! This morning we took a fifteen mile ride along the rim of the canyon. A light snow lay on the ground and on the dwarfed desert trees. The air was cold and bracing. We had a fine drive.

All day the canyon grew on us. This afternoon we did some climbing down and regretted that we had not made the trail trip. Sunset came—a gorgeous Arizona sunset and lit the canyon with a riot of a million colors. It was wonderful! Night came. We left the Grand Canyon in a flurrying snow storm. We have had another wonderful day together. Let those who will, buy lands and horde

money; we will have our memories, glad memories of golden experiences together.

The excursion train took them back to Las Vegas that evening where they departed the next day for Denver, and then on to Lincoln, Nebraska, their hometown. As we go to press with our first national park story for 2016, this quick glimpse of a brief visit to the Grand Canyon 100 years ago appropriately describes the beginning of our affair with our national parks — America’s best idea.



Edward and Margaret Gehrke at Glacier National Park

Edward used his Kodak to make a visual record of every place they visited. Her love and admiration of the majestic beauty of the western national parks were thoughtfully recorded in prose that reflected her college degree in the classics.

Their fascination with the west may have been spurred by the flamboyant style of President Theodore Roosevelt, who oversaw the establishment of five national parks and traveled to most of them during his two terms in office, which had just ended prior to the Gehrkes’ first trip to California in 1909.

EIGHT MONTHS AFTER the Gehrkes' brief visit to the Grand Canyon, President Woodrow Wilson signed legislation on August 25, 1916 to create the National Park Service as a separate bureau of the U. S. Department of the Interior. The story leading to President Wilson's signature began 46 years earlier in August 1870 when the Washburn-Langford-Doane Expedition set out to explore the Yellowstone region at their own expense to investigate the stories told by scouts and trappers about amazing natural wonders—hot geysers shooting water and steam into the sky, hot mud pools burping air, gigantic falls diving a thousand feet into a tinted canyon.

The expedition departed from Fort Ellis led by Surveyor-General Henry D. Washburn, businessman Nathaniel P. Langford, and attorney Cornelius Hedges. Lt. G. C. Doane was in charge of the military escort. They first traveled to Yellowstone Lake, following the lake's eastern and southern shores, and then proceeded to explore the Lower, Middle, and Upper Geyser basins, where they observed the regularity of one geyser that erupted every 74 minutes. Of course, they named it Old Faithful. Washburn, Langford, and Doane each assured his place in histo-

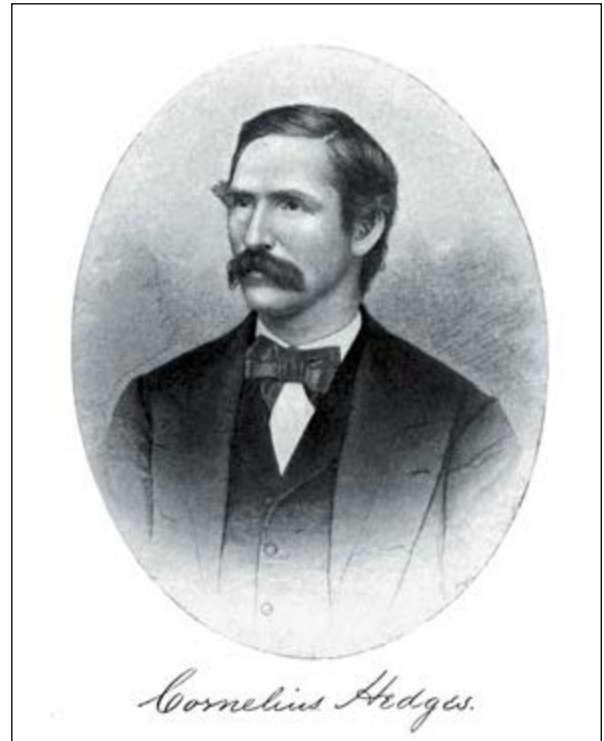
ry by assigning his name to a mountain over ten thousand feet.

As the story goes, while the 18-member party was camped in mid-September at the confluence of the Firehole and Gibbon rivers, the men began evaluating the commercial value of the natural wonders they had observed and made plans for asserting personal claims. Cornelius Hedges was thinking at the opposite end of the spectrum, and with pure altruism introduced a revolutionary idea. He urged the men to waive their plans for making personal claims, as gold miners might do, and instead work on an arrangement to set aside these amazing geophysical treasures in a reserve for the enjoyment of the entire U.S. population. To Hedges' surprise, his magnanimous idea was instantly approved.

The newly formed advocacy of the national park idea returned home to Montana and formed a team led by Cornelius Hedges, Nathaniel P. Langford, and William H. Clagett to project the concept for Yellowstone National Park into the consciousness of legislators. Clagett had just been elected to the U.S. House of Representatives from Montana. Langford and Clagett authored the national park bill which was introduced to the House of Representatives on December 18, 1871.



Old Faithful



The preceding summer Dr. Ferdinand V. Hayden, a former Union Army medical doctor who had refocused his career to exploration and geological surveying, led a group of 50 men to the Yellowstone region. His team included famed Civil War photographer William Henry Jackson and Thomas Moran, the renowned painter from the Hudson River School. Jackson produced a series of large-format photographs of the incredible Yellowstone phenomena which Dr. Hayden placed on the desks of every member of Congress. The national park bill was strongly supported by Secretary of the Interior Columbus Delano.

The bill was adopted by the House on January 30, 1872 and passed by the Senate on February 17. President U.S. Grant signed H.R. Bill 16, An Act to Create Yellowstone National Park, on March 1, 1872.

Nathaniel P. Langford was appointed superintendent of Yellowstone in May 1872 without a salary or a budget. The park was patrolled by soldiers detailed by the Secretary of War, similar to forts and garrisons that protected citizens during the settlement of the west.

Langford actually visited the park three times in the next five years and was removed from the office of superintendent in April 1877. The U.S. government was just getting its feet wet in learning how to manage a national park, especially one that was nearly 2,000 miles from Washington. Even though Congress began paying a small stipend to the superintendents, the next three each lasted less than two years.

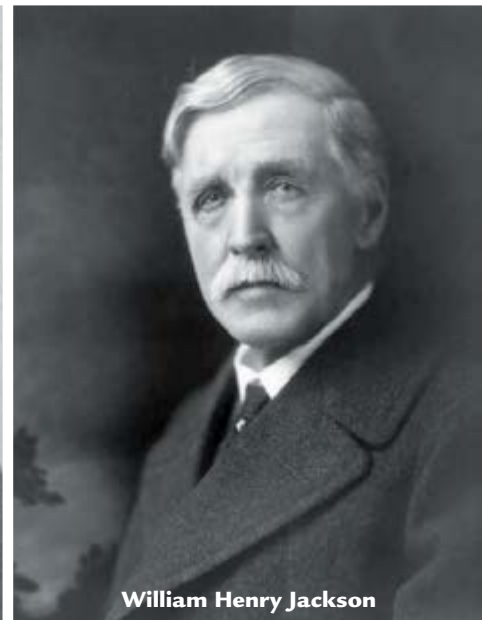
In 1886 Secretary of the Interior Lucius Q. C. Lamar saw the futility of preventing opportunists from ruining the park with vandalism, robberies, and poaching in the face of three superintendents who appeared unconcerned. Lamar asked the U.S. Army to intervene, bringing Yellowstone under military jurisdiction. In 1890 three more national parks were established: Yosemite, General Grant Grove (a part of Kings Canyon National Park), and Se-



quoia National Park. Mount Rainier National Park was set aside in 1899 in Washington. After the turn of the century, the chain of national parks and other special areas grew larger under the enthusiastic leadership of President Theodore Roosevelt. An act of Congress approved in June 1906, known as the Antiquities Act, gave the President the authority “to declare by public proclamation historic landmarks, historic and prehistoric structures, and other objects of scientific interest that are situated upon the lands owned or controlled by the Government of the United States to be national monuments.”

During his administration (1901–09), Roosevelt created five new national parks, 18 national monuments, four national game refuges, 51 bird sanctuaries, and over 100 million acres of national forests. As the number of national parks and special treasured resources swelled, no central organization existed to manage them. Under a 1906 Act, monuments of military significance were turned over to the Secretary of War, those within or adjacent to national forests were placed under the Department of Agriculture, and the rest were under the jurisdiction of the Department of the Interior. The Chickamauga–Chattanooga National Military Park established in 1890 was administered by the War Department.

Private interests including hotels, rail-



roads, ranches, and sawmills had begun to realize significant profits in the parks and were exploiting their resources, often relatively unchecked. Park management by the military focused on preventing crime and wanton misuse or destruction. As parks and historical assets continued to be added, the complete lack of systematic management made its very deficiencies blatantly obvious. Outspoken observers made the several authorities in charge of the various parks, monuments, and historic areas aware of the critical need to create a single administrative agency to adopt definitive policies to provide long-range planning for operations and management of existing assets and systematic procedures for the development of new ones. Other major issues included the protection and conservation of what was fast becoming our national heritage. Prominent conservationists during the waning years of Roosevelt's administration began efforts to obtain the necessary legislation to establish a single agency to oversee the national parks.

Dr. J. Horace McFarland, a Pennsylvanian and a member of the board of directors of the American Planning and Civic Association, realized the need in 1908 for a government bureau to take charge of the national parks. He addressed a conference of governors called by President Roosevelt to consider measures for the conservation of



Travertine Terrace, Mammoth Hot Springs, Yellowstone



President Ulysses S. Grant



President Theodore Roosevelt



Dr. J. Horace McFarland

the country's natural resources, urging that "the scenic value of all the national domain yet remaining should be jealously guarded as a distinctly important natural resource."

President Taft in a special message to Congress on February 2, 1912, said, "I earnestly recommend the establishment of a Bureau of National Parks. Such legislation is essential to the proper management of those wondrous manifestations of nature, so startling and so beautiful that everyone recognizes the obligations of the Government to preserve them for the edification and recreation of the people."

Soon after Franklin K. Lane left the Interstate Commerce Commission in March 1913 to become President Woodrow Wilson's Secretary of the Interior, McFarland urged him to establish a bureau to administer the national parks. Over the next three years McFarland worked tirelessly with Secretary Lane and other officials at the Department of the Interior, along with Frederick Law Olmsted, the designer of New York's Central Park, and Henry A. Barker, who represented the American Civic Association, to develop the concepts, responsibilities, and organizational structure of a National Park Service to oversee and govern the country's growing number of national parks, monuments, and treasured historical assets.

Senator Reed Smoot of Utah and

Representative William Kent of California sponsored the bills in Congress that resulted in the establishment of the National Park Service. The Kent bill was passed by the House of Representatives on July 1, 1916 and the amended Smoot bill was passed by the Senate on August 5, 1916. The House disagreed to the Senate's amendments. Conferees were appointed to consider the differences. The committee resolved the differences and the bill was passed by the Senate on August 15 and by the House on August 22. President Wilson signed the legislation on August 25, 1916 that authorized the establishment of the National Park Service.

A year earlier Secretary Lane recruited Stephen T. Mather to accept an appointment as his assistant to take charge of national park issues. A graduate of the University of California-Berkeley, Mather was born into a family whose wealth was based on borax, a component mined almost exclusively in California which is the basic ingredient in many detergents and cleaning products.

Although the company's headquarters was in New York, Mather and his wife moved to Chicago in 1894 where he established a distribution center. His work in advertising proved vital to the company's image when he developed the picture and label for "20 Mule Team Borax" which became a household name throughout the

country. A dispute over a family benefit issue caused Mather to leave and form a new borax company with long-time friend Thomas Thorkildsen in 1904. The company was extremely prosperous and both men became millionaires in less than 10 years. In his mid-forties, Mather retired to pursue personal projects.

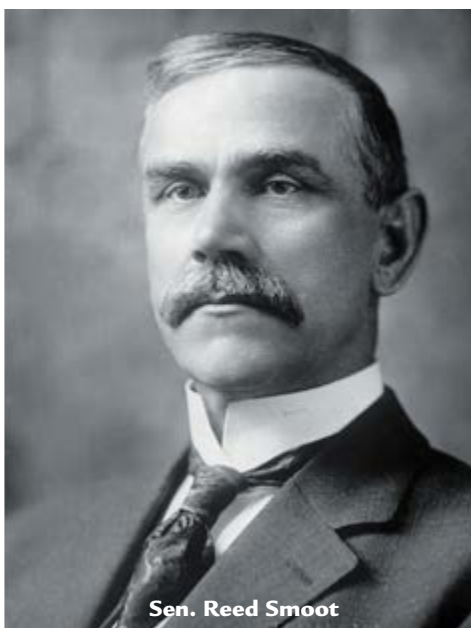
Steve and Jane Mather toured Europe, renewing his interest in nature. They admired the beautiful parks throughout Europe and their accessibility to the public. He was inspired to return home and engage in the preservation of more parklands in the U.S., protect scenic resources, and make parks more accessible to the public. Mather became a dedicated conservationist, influenced by a strong friendship with John Muir.

In the decade prior to President Wilson signing the bill to create the National Park Service, Mather had worked tirelessly to build support for the existing national parks. He used his personal funds to employ Robert Sterling Yard to work with him on publicizing the great resources of the parks. He solicited the influence and support of politicians and wealthy corporate leaders.

When the National Park Service was authorized by Congress in 1916, Secretary Lane asked Mather to stay on. With the assistance of Horace M. Albright, a fellow alum who graduated from the Uni-



President William H. Taft



Sen. Reed Smoot



Rep. William Kent

versity of California–Berkeley in 1912, Mather began to build the organizational structure of the new federal agency to protect and manage the national parks. He and Albright created a team of career civil service people who were specialists in a variety of disciplines to operate and manage the parks.

In 1917 Mather was appointed Assistant Secretary of the Interior and Director of the National Park Service. When he began, the government owned 14 parks and 18 national monuments. Although the national parks flourished first in the western states, Mather and Albright over time persuaded Congress to extend the concept into the Eastern United States. Having earned a law degree from Georgetown University, Albright was instrumental in acquiring land for several new national parks in the east. In 1926 the Shenandoah and Great Smoky Mountains national parks were authorized. Mather believed magnificent scenery should be the first criterion in establishing a national park.

Mather introduced concessioners to operate hotels, restaurants, and other facilities within the parks. He designated and developed travel routes to be used as “National Park-to-Park Highways” and encouraged cooperation with the railroads to increase visitation to more remote units in the park system. “See America First” was the slogan adopted



by the NPS to encourage citizens to visit their national parks.

In 1919 Albright began a 10-year stint as the superintendent of Yellowstone National Park while continuing to serve as an advisor and consultant to Mather. During Mather’s several illnesses during his 13 years as director, Albright stepped

in as acting director to keep the NPS running smoothly. Working closely with his boss and mentor, Albright was responsible for molding the national parks into a unified system. Many policies initiated by Albright, such as historic preservation, are still being practiced in the parks today. He was personally involved in the creation of Zion National Park and even more responsible for the establishment and later expansion of Grand Teton National Park.

By the time Stephen Mather retired in 1929 due to ill health, the park system included 20 national parks and 32 national monuments. The increase was governed by the criteria he created for identifying and adopting the new parks and monuments. He died in 1930. Three years later Mather’s park-to-park highway concept validated FDR’s plan to use the Civilian Conservation Corps to help build the Blue Ridge Parkway, connecting the Shenandoah and the Great Smoky Mountains national parks.

Horace Albright succeeded Mather on January 12, 1929 as the second director of the National Park Service. Under his leadership the NPS established the Branch of Research and Education and made significant strides to improve landscape architecture in the parks. Three national parks were added to the system and ten national cemeteries came under the NPS’s jurisdiction.



President Woodrow Wilson



Stephen T. Mather



Horace M. Albright

Before his resignation in 1933, Albright recommended to President Roosevelt that the historic sites from the Civil War should be managed by the National Park Service. Roosevelt issued two executive orders: one to transfer to the NPS all of the historic sites managed by the War Department and another to place under the NPS all of the national monuments managed by the Department of Agriculture. Additionally, all parks and monuments in the District of Columbia were also turned over to the NPS.

After serving four years and eight months, Albright resigned to become vice president and general manager of United States Potash Company. On the 64th anniversary of the National Park Service in August 1980, President Jimmy Carter awarded Albright the Presidential Medal of Freedom. Albright had retired to live in his beloved Van Nuys, California. He passed away in 1987 at the age of 97.

In the 76 years from August 9, 1933 to September 25, 2009, fifteen directors served the National Park Service. It is well beyond the scope of this brief history of the National Park Service to discuss the accomplishments of each director's administration. However, a list of the total number of park units broken down into the system's park designations clearly shows the growth of the NPS and its success over the last three-quarters of a century.



Jonathan B. Jarvis

National Park Service units in Dec. 2015

National Battlefields	11
National Battlefield Parks	4
National Battlefield Site	1
National Military Parks	9
National Historical Parks	50
National Historical Sites	78
International Historic Site	1
National Lakeshores	4
National Memorials	30
National Monuments	80
National Parks	59
National Parkways	4
National Preserves	19
National Reserves	2
National Recreation Areas	18
National Rivers	5
National Wild and Scenic Rivers and Riverways	10
National Scenic Trails	3
National Seashores	10
Other Designations	<u>11</u>
Total Units	409

In addition, there are 146 Related Areas under the administration of the National Park Service.

When Albright resigned in 1933, there were 23 national parks, 32 monuments, and 10 national cemeteries. While Mather and Albright established the modus operandi for the first quarter century of the NPS, it is obvious the next 15 directors made huge contributions to the operations and expansion of the park systems' ability to serve the growing U.S. population with outstanding recreational opportunities.

Other impressive statistics applied to the combined national park units include:

- 84 million acres of land
- 4.5 million acres of oceans, lakes, and reservoirs
- 85,049 miles of perennial rivers and streams
- 68,561 archeological sites
- 43,162 miles of shoreline
- 27,000 historic structures
- 121.6 million objects in museum collections
- 21,000 buildings
- 12,250 miles of trails
- 8,500 miles of roads

The top 10 most visited places in the National Park System in 2014:

Golden Gate National Recreation Area	15,004,420
Blue Ridge Parkway	13,941,749
Great Smoky Mountains National Park	10,099,276
George Washington Memorial Parkway	7,472,150
Lincoln Memorial	7,139,072
Lake Mead National Recreation Area	6,942,873
Gateway National Recreation Area	6,021,713
Natchez Trace Parkway	5,846,474
Chesapeake & Ohio Canal National Historical Park	5,066,219
Grand Canyon National Park	4,756,771

The top 10 most visited sites with the "National Park" designation in 2014:

Great Smoky Mountains National Park	10,099,276
Grand Canyon National Park	4,756,771
Yosemite National Park	3,882,642
Yellowstone National Park	3,513,484
Rocky Mountain National Park	3,434,751
Olympic National Park	3,243,872
Zion National Park	3,189,696
Grand Teton National Park	2,791,392
Acadia National Park	2,563,129
Glacier National Park	2,338,528

Jonathan B. Jarvis, the 18th director of the National Park Service, will soon complete the 40th year of his career with the service, having begun in 1976 as a seasonal interpreter in Washington, D.C. Appointed by President Obama, he was confirmed as the director by the United States Senate on September 25, 2009. At the time of his confirmation, he was regional director of the NPS's Pacific West Region.

In 2016 with a \$3.05 billion budget to operate the NPS and direct its Centennial Celebration, Jarvis oversees an agency with more than 22,000 employees and over 400 park units which may set a record of 300 million visitors this year. The administration of the NPS's \$3 billion budget and the dollars spent by 300 million visitors is expected to generate \$30 billion in

economic benefit throughout the country.

The National Park Service brings the park idea and its concepts to nearly every county in the United States. Grants from the Land and Water Conservation and Historic Preservation funds help communities preserve local history and create close-to-home recreational opportunities, Jarvis has noted. The NPS's tax credit program has leveraged more than \$60 billion in private investment in historic preservation.

As he manages the National Park Service on the eve of its centennial, Jarvis indicates that he is focusing on several key areas critical to its future: enhancing stewardship of the hundreds of places entrusted to the NPS's care; maximizing the educational potential of our parks and its programs; engaging new generations and audiences, national and international; and ensuring the welfare and career fulfill-

ment of National Park Service employees.

When asked to speak to civic, professional, and environmental groups, the director has favorite topics that include climate change, the sustainability of our environment, the outdoors as a source of public health, and the parks as a unifying, inspirational force for our nation. His blueprint for the agency's second century calls for innovative, ambitious, yet practical ways to fulfill the National Park Service's promise to America in the 21st century.

"America's National Park System is a gift from past generations to this and succeeding generations," Jarvis said in a recent interview posted on the internet. "While the challenges we face today—like climate change, shrinking open space, habitat destruction, non-native species, and air and water pollution—could not have been imagined when this agency was

established in 1916, our mission remains the same: to preserve this nation's natural and cultural heritage unimpaired for the enjoyment of this and future generations."

While Jarvis has built an organizational structure into which he has placed talented people to assure a smoothly operating National Park Service/System, he is primarily an excellent communicator who wants to teach others—from the top to the bottom of the NPS—how to best communicate their knowledge to their peers and those who benefit immeasurably when they use their national parks. His skill and desire to teach is demonstrated by his personal website (jonathanjarvis.com).

An author, historian, Pulitzer Prize winner, and one who is often called the "Dean of Western Writers," Wallace Stegner called our national parks "the best idea we ever had. Absolutely American, absolutely democratic, they reflect us at our best. . . ."

SO WHAT HAPPENED TO Edward and Margaret Gehrke after we left them at the Grand Canyon on December 28, 1915? Edward decided to switch their mode of travel from trains to Buicks. Over the next 20 years he owned 17 of them, trading for a new one almost every year. Margaret's journal continued to chronicle tours of up to 7,000 miles each summer to the national parks: Yellowstone, Rocky Mountains, Glacier, Crater Lake, Mt. Rainier, the Black Hills, Mesa Verde, Yosemite, Sequoia, Kings Canyon, Death Valley, Zion, Bryce, and Arches. A trip east took them all the way to Lafayette National Park (renamed Acadia NP in 1929). Margaret often described their camp locations: grassy sites by streams where they pitched their tent and often met friendly neighbors who stopped by to visit.

In 1928 Edward decided their mode of travel should be more accommodating. Having spent most of his career as a building contractor, he designed a "house car" which Margaret named the Bungie-Weck. Their shakedown trip took them through their home state in October 1931. Three days out they camped at Marsh Lake. The

trip was going well. *"Enjoyed getting our first real dinner. Now this afternoon I am writing here at our little desk, while Edward works at the car. Our little house is going to be pleasant to live in. Perfect."*

In 1936 they traveled in Bungie-Weck to Minnesota, pulling Edward's boat behind as he looked for the ideal fishing spot. It never became clear in Margaret's diary if fishing or photography was his

favorite hobby. They made the same trip the following year and went all the way to the Canadian border. There is no diary for 1938 and the story of the delightfully nomadic couple ends in 1939 when Edward died at 59. Margaret had no desire to travel alone, but she made one final trip by train in 1948 to their favorite destination: Rocky Mountain National Park. Margaret lived to be 96, passing away in 1979. ➔



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Other Information About Our National Parks

Fees. Most of the sites in the national park system charge an entrance fee ranging from \$3 to \$25 per week. Visitors can purchase an \$80 annual pass that covers entrance fees at national parks, national wildlife refuges, national forests, and lands managed by the Bureau of Land Management, Bureau of Reclamation, and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. The pass covers entrance, standard amenity fees, and day use fees for a driver and all passengers in a personal vehicle.


Annual Pass for U.S. Military. Current U.S. military members and dependents, including Reserve and National Guard members, can obtain a free annual pass by presenting a Common Access Card (CAC) or a Military ID (Form 1173) at a federal recreation site.

Annual 4th Grade Pass. Fourth graders and their parents should visit everykidinapark.gov and print a valid Every-Kid-in-a-Park paper pass. Exchange the paper pass at a federal recreation site for a validated annual pass.

Senior Pass. U.S. citizens or permanent residents age 62 or older may obtain a lifetime pass at a federal recreation site with any state or federal document (e.g. driver's license) with picture ID that shows age and residency. The Senior Pass may provide a 50 percent discount on some amenity fees charged for services

such as camping, swimming, boat launch, and specialized interpretive services. Google "senior pass for national parks" if you wish to obtain the Senior Pass through the mail.

Books & Films. A google search for literature will produce an almost endless list of material to help you plan your visits to our national parks, seashores, parkways, lakeshores, trails, battlefields, monuments and related sites. My major resource book in our visits to more than 20 of our national parks is *National Geographic's Complete National Parks of the United States* by Mel White (2009, \$40). Our second resource is Ken Burns' PBS film *The National Parks: America's Best Idea*. (6 DVDs, \$58.97). The companion book to Burns' film is *The National Parks: America's Best Idea* by Dayton Duncan and Ken Burns (2011, \$25.11 pb). Our best guide to the activities offered in the national parks is *Your Guide to the National Parks* by Michael J. Oswald (2012, \$25 pb).

Campgrounds. While most national parks have campgrounds, sites with full hookups are rare (although Yellowstone and Grand Canyon are exceptions). If you want to camp in the national parks, the shorter your motorhome the more likely you are to find a site. We usually found nice campgrounds just outside the parks and used the internet to locate them, guided by rvparkreviews.com 



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EXPLORATION • THE RIVER • THE LAST 150 YEARS: THERE ARE
SO MANY WAYS TO STUDY, ENJOY, AND APPRECIATE THE
PHENOMENON THAT WE CALL . . .

The Grand Canyon



THE ROCK LAYER AT THE BOTTOM OF THE CANYON, called the Vishnu Schist, a mile below the surrounding plateau, is nearly two billion years old, according to current thought and research in earth science and geology.

Try to wrap your mind around that number to latch on to the concept: A millennium is 1,000 years. Recorded history began with accounts of the ancient world in approximately 4,000 B.C. Human-produced symbolic communication may go back 10,000 years. That's only ten millennia!

It takes one thousand millenniums to equal one million years. We are not there yet. It takes one million millenniums to make one billion years. And it takes two million millenniums to make two billion years. Think of it another way. Christ lived 2,000 years ago. Multiply that 2,000-year span one million times and you will have two billion years.

That does not mean the Grand Canyon itself is nearly two billion years old. Only the rock in the Vishnu Schist at the bottom of the Canyon is that old. But what is so fascinating is the geologic timeline provided by the walls of the Canyon from the plateau at the top to the Colorado River at the bottom.

Dr. Michael Wyssession in his book and six DVDs, *The World's Greatest Geological Wonders: 36 Spectacular Sites*, describes the progressive age from the top to the bottom as if it were a layer cake. The rocks at the top are the youngest: 240 million years old. The layer near the bottom is over 500 million years old. At the very bottom by the river, we find an unconformity, defined by the author as "a gap in time." An unconformity occurs when

Text by Fred Thompson
Photography by Claudia Abbott

many layers of rock are deposited on top of one another, but the deposits are interrupted by a period when the younger layer is eroded away and the new deposits are added later. The unconformity gap begins with a layer 540 million years old and then skips to a layer that is 825 million years old. The next layer is a billion years old, then one at 1.25 billion years, and finally the Vishnu Schist at 1.8 billion years.

The layers are different kinds of sedimentary rock, principally limestone, sandstone, shale, most of them created in marine environments. The more vertical sides of the Canyon are the limestones and sandstones, while the slopes are usually the shales.

Most deep canyons in the earth are formed when mountains are pushed up by various forces within the earth: tectonic plates colliding, volcanic activity, glacial flows. But there are no mountains surrounding the Grand Canyon. It is located in the Colorado Plateau. To reach the Grand Canyon, we drive across essentially flat terrain.

We noted that the layers were formed in marine environments, yet the plateau is seven to eight thousand feet above sea level. The Colorado Plateau is connected to the tectonic plate history of California. There was no San Andreas Fault 50 million years ago. A large part of the Pacific Ocean seafloor that became known as the Farallon Slab was in the process of separating from the Pacific Plate, creating a mid-ocean ridge. As the North American Plate continuously moved west over a period of 200 million years, it approached the mid-ocean ridge and began to move over it. About 30 million years ago, the North American and Pacific plates collided and the San Andreas fault was born.

The North American plate subducted the Pacific plate, a hot, buoyant, young ocean seafloor, pushing up the Rocky Mountains. It was preceded by the Farallon Slab which lifted up the Colorado Plateau, a tectonic process that took 70 million years.

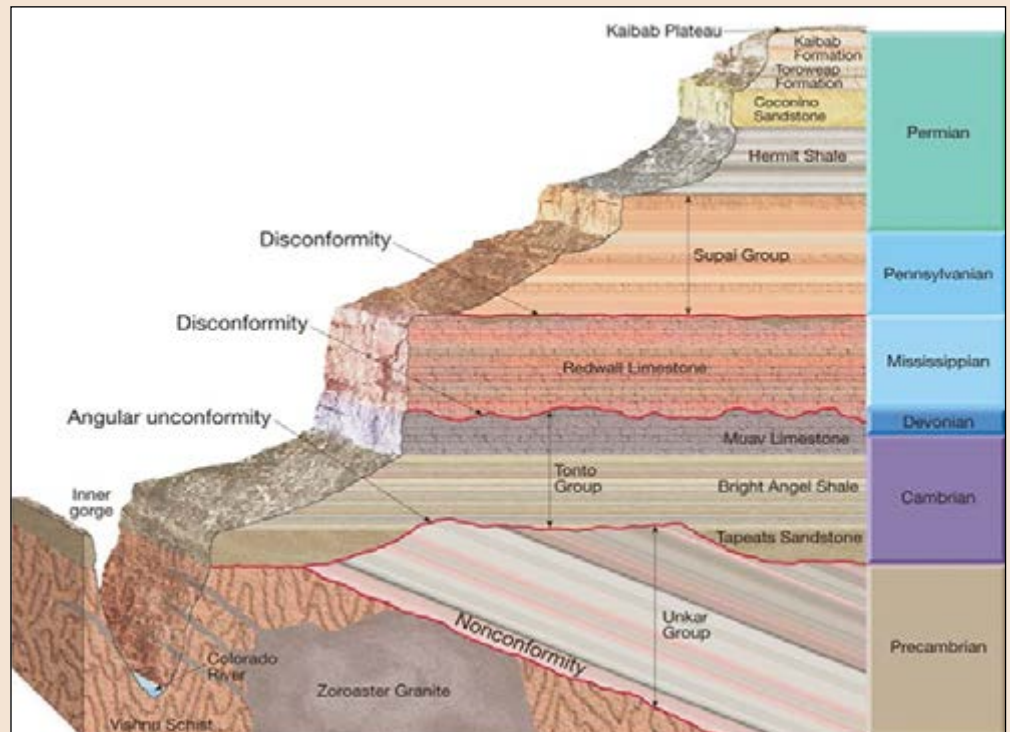
Before all of this occurred, the Colorado River began in the mountains of what is now the state of Colorado and flowed to the Pacific Ocean. Streams generally have hyperbolic profiles shaped by their originating elevations and their flow on a downward slope that gradually flattens out to finish in a delta, usually the ocean or a large lake.

The formation of the San Andreas fault and the mountains of southern California blocked the Colorado River's path to the Pacific, turning it south toward Mexico. The Baja was formerly Mexico's Pacific shoreline, but tectonic activity separated it from Mexico when it became part of the mid-ocean ridge sys-

tem. This opened up the Gulf of California and a shorter path to the sea for the Colorado River.

The river begins in northern Colorado at La Poudre Pass. At the pass, the Continental Divide forms the northern boundary of the Rocky Mountain National Park. To the east, La Poudre Creek drains into the Mississippi River and eventually the Gulf of Mexico. To the west, the Colorado begins as a tiny stream flowing from a wet meadow with an elevation just over 10,000 feet. By the time it flows several hundred miles to Moab, Utah, at 4,000 feet, its flow has been increased by the Gunnison and the Green rivers.

After the western end of the river's hyperbolic curve was raised by the subducted Farallon Slab, the length of its path across the Colorado Plateau was abbreviated, causing the river



Generalized stratigraphic column for the Grand Canyon showing major rock units and unconformities. Copyright © 2005 Pearson Prentice Hall. Used by permission.

to have more downward force to artistically carve a majestic canyon in only five million years. The Canyon is 18 miles across at its widest point. The Colorado River flows 277 miles along the Canyon floor within the park's boundaries, beginning at an elevation of approximately 3,150 feet at Lake Powell and leaving the park at approximately 1,150 feet before it flows into Lake Mead. If you are on the north rim, you are standing approximately 6,000 feet above the river; on the south rim that factor changes to 4,800 feet.

Human History in the Canyon

Nomadic hunter-gatherers may have passed through the Canyon as far back as 12,000 years ago. Archaeologists are confident the evidence points to human habitation in the Canyon at least 4,000 years ago, or 2,000 B.C. Split-twig animal figurines dated



Archaeological excavation of a kiva (ca. 1185 A.D.), an ancestral Puebloan ceremonial chamber, at the Tusayan Ruin.



These pots (ca. 1100 A.D.) were found in a cave in the Grand Canyon National Park. The NPS protects for future generations these irreplaceable treasures and villages such as the Tusayan Ruin site.

in this range were found in the Redwall Limestone cliffs of the inner gorge. A split-twig figurine is on display in the Tusayan Museum. These canyon dwellers were part of the Desert Culture.

The ancestral Pueblo evolved from the Desert Culture around 500 B.C. As their agricultural and technical skills evolved, they developed a more stable lifestyle around 500 A.D. Three hundred years later they began to use stone in addition to mud and poles to construct above-ground dwellings, initiating the Pueblo period. In the winter months, they moved to the caves in the inner gorge and returned to the plateau in the summer months. Large granaries and multi-room pueblos survive from this era. The most accessible site today is the Tusayan Ruin on the south side of Route 64 as you travel east to the Desert View Watchtower. Constructed around 1185, it probably housed 30 people. There are approximately 2,000 ancestral Pueblo sites within the park's boundaries.

Between 1200 and 1300 A.D. these cultures disappeared without explanation. For about a hundred years the Canyon area was uninhabited. Then Paiute from the east and Cerbat from the west found the region habitable and established settlements. A little later the Navajo arrived. These cultures were stable until the U.S. Army forced them to move to reservations in 1882, unfortunately pulling them into the general removal

of Indians that happened at the conclusion of the Indian Wars.

The Havasupai and Hualapai are descended from the Cerbat and continue to live in the immediate areas to the south and southwest of the park boundaries. The village of Supai in the western section of the park has been occupied for several hundred years. Adjacent to the eastern section, the Navajo Nation is the largest reservation in the U.S.

Exploration

During Spanish explorer Francisco Vázquez de Coronado's expedition from Mexico through parts of the southwestern United



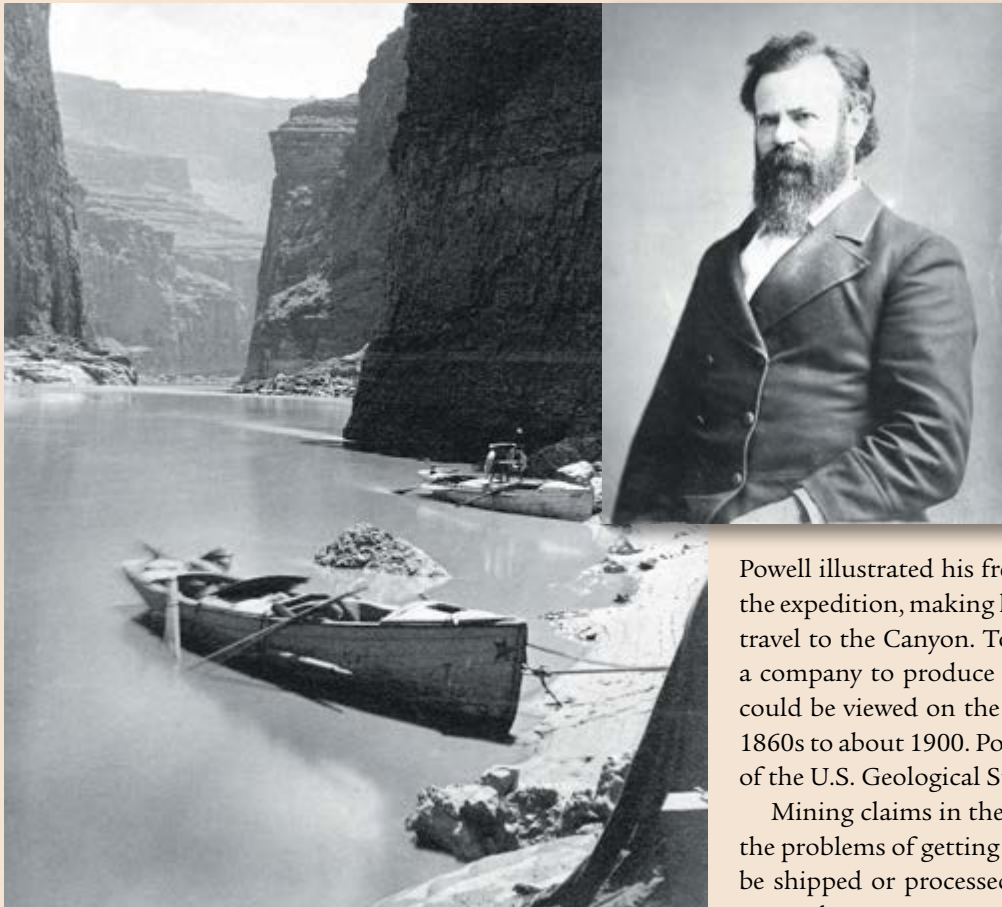
Francisco Vazquez de Coronado explored Mexico and the region that would become the southwestern United States between 1540 and 1542. He sent a contingent led by Garcia Lopez de Cardenas to the Canyon area. Cardenas declared the gorge an "impassable barrier."

ed States between 1540 and 1542, he sent a contingent of 13 soldiers led by Garcia Lopez de Cardenas to the Canyon area. In desperate need of water and unable to find a safe passage to the river on horseback or on foot, Cardenas declared the gorge to be an "impassable barrier," a report that ended exploration in the area for over 200 years.

In 1776 two Spanish priests traveled along the northern rim searching for a route between missions at Santa Fe, New Mexico and Monterey, California. Later that year a Franciscan missionary found the region impassable after spending a week there.

The Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo in 1848 ceded the Grand Canyon region to the United States. The Pacific Railroad made geologic surveys and observations in 1856. Jacob Hamblin, a Mormon missionary, was sent by Brigham Young to establish safe locations to cross the Colorado River. In 1858 he identified two sites, Lee's Ferry and Pierce Ferry.

The U.S. War Department sent an expedition led by Lt. Joseph Ives in 1857 to assess the region's potential natural resources and determine the feasibility of a commercial navigation route from the Gulf of California into southern Utah and Colorado. After two months and 350 miles of difficult navigation, their steamboat reached Black Canyon where it struck a rock and had



John Wesley Powell's second expedition on the Colorado River through the Grand Canyon in 1872–73 with boats especially designed to traverse the rapids was a great success. The image at left was taken during a break on a calm stretch of the river in Marble Canyon.

to be abandoned. They continued their exploration along the south rim of the Canyon and eventually reached Fort Defiance. In his report to the War Department in 1861, Ives declared the Canyon and its surrounding area to be "altogether valueless," and predicted his expedition would be "the last party of whites to visit this profitless locality."

The expedition's topographer produced one of the first maps of the Canyon. Another member of the expedition, geologist John Strong Newberry, came back with a completely different opinion. He convinced fellow geologist John Wesley Powell that a boat run through the Canyon to complete the mapping survey would be worth the risk. Major Powell was a Civil War veteran who fought in the Battle of Shiloh where he lost his right forearm. In May 1869 with nine men, Powell launched from Green River Station in Wyoming. While traversing a rapid, one of the boats capsized with a loss of most of their food and scientific equipment, shortening the expedition to 100 days. Severely discouraged, three men left the expedition to climb out of the Canyon and were never heard from again. The other six survived and successfully ran most of the Canyon.

In 1871 with boats designed for the rough river passage, a much better-funded expedition set up a chain of supply sta-

tions along the river, and the party this time included a photographer. Thomas Moran, an artist from the famous Hudson River School, joined the group in the summer of 1873 after they had completed running the river. Powell and his team catalogued geologic features, flora and fauna, and archaeological sites.

Powell illustrated his frequent lectures with photographs from the expedition, making him a national celebrity and stimulating travel to the Canyon. To help fund future projects, he licensed a company to produce and sell 650 stereographic images that could be viewed on the popular device marketed from the late 1860s to about 1900. Powell became the second director in 1881 of the U.S. Geological Survey.

Mining claims in the Canyon never proved profitable due to the problems of getting the ore up to the plateau where it could be shipped or processed. However, the miners' efforts did improve the narrow, treacherous Indian trails, the most popular being the Bright Angel Trail.

Getting to the Grand Canyon

After Powell's lectures and the subsequent newspaper stories, only the most determined came to visit at first because of the arduous journey required to reach the Canyon. The Santa Fe Railroad completed a line in 1882 to Flagstaff, but it was still an eight hour stagecoach ride to the South Rim. Nineteen years later a spur was built to transport visitors all the way to Grand Canyon Village. Tourism increased dramatically. The first automobile arrived in January 1902, but the train continued to be the most popular way to reach the Canyon until the 1930s.

In 1901, a spur line was built from Flagstaff to Grand Canyon Village, eliminating the eight-hour stagecoach ride that visitors to the Grand Canyon had previously endured.



For lack of passengers, the Grand Canyon Railway (GCR) ceased to operate in 1968, which was an indicator that the number of cars traveling into Grand Canyon Village might soon exceed the capacity of the limited amount of parking available. The GCR was reintroduced in 1989 as a better alternative to transport visitors into the park. Regularly scheduled buses were provided on the routes servicing the overlooks from Yaki Point to Hermits Rest.* Visitors were offered better hiking trails connecting the overlooks and bicycle rentals jumped in popularity. Today bicycle racks adorn a significant number of the arriving automobiles.

Accommodations

In the early days, American entrepreneurship flourished: a two-room hotel sprouted in 1884; a rancher opened his home in 1886 to paying guests; another hotel opened at Dripping Spring; a tent house (army tents on platforms) opened in 1890 with common areas. Then, as usual, big business saw the opportunity and the Grand Canyon Hotel Company constructed the first real hotel in 1892. Four years later the Bright Angel Hotel was built in Grand Canyon Village followed by the Cameron Hotel in 1903.

Luxury trains with sleeping cars were bringing upscale, well-healed visitors to the Grand Canyon. As in other U.S. and Canadian national parks, railroad company management quickly evaluated demand and disposable income and built the El Tovar Hotel in 1905. Built in the popular arts-and-crafts rustic style,



the El Tovar was constructed with darkly stained, massive logs transported from Oregon on Santa Fe Railroad flatcars. Scheduled for the hotel guests, carriage rides along the South Rim were very popular.

Advocated by the NPS's first director, Stephen T. Mather, concessioners were introduced at the Grand Canyon to efficiently provide amenities to the growing number of annual visitors. Fred Harvey, an Englishman credited with developing America's first restaurant chain, won the contract. He boosted

*Today, the Hermits Rest Route is closed to private vehicles March 1 to November 30 when the free Hermits Rest Route shuttle bus is operating. All roads east of the Village Route Transfer Station, including Grand Canyon Village, are open to private vehicles (parking in the village is extremely limited).

business with the incorporation of the "Harvey Girl," a group of well-trained young women between the ages of 18 and 30 neatly attired in starched dresses. Supervised by a Senior Girl, they lived in dormitories with enforced curfews and supervised male visits. Parents had no apprehensions when they allowed their daughters to go work for the summer as a Harvey Girl in a national park. At the company's peak, Fred Harvey employed 5,000 Harvey Girls working in 85 restaurants, 15 hotels, and 30 dining cars on the Santa Fe Railway. It was a recipe for success. After Harvey died at 65 in 1901, his sons Ford and Byron continued to operate the company with their father's business philosophy.

Fred Harvey's success quickly became a legend in the national parks. In 1902 Ford and Byron employed Mary Elizabeth Jane Colter as their company's architect. She designed and supervised the construction of five buildings at the Grand Canyon: Hopi House, Lookout Studio, Hermit's Rest, Desert View Watchtower, and renovations to the Bright Angel Hotel, later known as Bright Angel Lodge.

After Fred Harvey's sons and grandsons managed the company for over 60 years, Xanterra acquired The Harvey Company in 1968 and began to apply the Harvey expertise in the hospitality industry to its own chain of hotels and restaurants. Additional restaurants, hotels, and retail shops were built or acquired. With the acquisition of TW Recreational Services in 1995, Xanterra became the largest national and state park concessionaire in the United States.



The El Tovar Hotel, completed in 1905, was an immediate success and has operated continuously for 110 years. ♦ In the 1880s Fred Harvey created the "Harvey Girls," hiring young women between the ages of 18 and 30. Through use of the dorm mother concept of supervision, parents were assured their daughters could leave home and safely work in Harvey's restaurants, hotels, and dining cars on the Santa Fe Railway. At one time, there were more than 5,000 Harvey Girls who served patrons in the hospitality industry.



So There's the History in a Small Package. Now, How Does One Go About Seeing the Grand Canyon Today?

If you are a pre-trip planner, go to nps.gov/grandcanyon/plan-your-visit. Your best source of information once you have arrived is an 8-page tabloid newspaper called "The Guide: Summer/South Rim Information and Maps" available at the Grand Canyon Visitor Center and other locations in the village.

But first, where will you park your motorhome? For 95 percent of the Tiffin owners who may visit the South Rim this year, I am guessing your coach will be over 30 feet in length. That leaves you with one choice *inside the park*:

Trailer Village RV Park has 84 paved sites with full hookups at \$36/night for two. \$3.50 for each additional passenger. Taxes not included. 877-404-4611 or visitgrandcanyon.com/trailer-village-rv-park. Golden Age & Senior Pass not accepted since the park is operated by concessioners.

If your coach is 30-ft. or less in length, you may want to stay at Mather or Desert View.

Mather Campground has over 300 sites. No hookups. Dump station and water available. Restrooms have flush toilets and showers. \$18/night.

Desert View Campground has 50 sites. No hookups. Dump station and water available. Restrooms have flush toilets, no showers. \$12/night.

Campground reservations are strongly recommended (recreation.gov). Golden Age and Senior Pass are accepted. 877-444-6777. The Desert View campground operates on a first come, first served basis. Make your campground reservations as far in advance as possible.

Park Ranger Programs. If you really want to learn about this magnificent park, there are at least a dozen ranger programs. Stay at least a week and take advantage of one ranger program a day. See the "The Guide" for the schedule.

Day Hikes Below the Rim. Read "The Guide" carefully after you have selected one of the three trails: (1) Bright Angel Trail, (2) South Kaibab Trail, and (3) Hermit Trail and Dripping Spring Trail. The trails range in difficulty from "easy" to "very difficult." Don't overestimate your ability, stamina, and strength. "The Guide" lists nine essentials for your day pack when hiking below the rim.

Walk the Rim Trail. A small postcard-size chart in "The Guide" outlines the trails on the rim. By using the four bus routes, you can pick a trail segment each day and walk to the overlook points at different times to find the best lighting for your camera shots. Four bus routes will get you anywhere you want to go except the eastern end of the Desert View Drive which is accessible by car.

Xanterra Mule Trips.

CANYON VISTAS MULE RIDE. A four-mile ride along the rim trail takes three hours. \$128.67 + taxes per rider. 888-297-2757.

OVERNIGHT RIDES TO PHANTOM RANCH. A full day's trip



into the Canyon with full accommodations and meals plus overnight stay at Phantom Ranch. Descend on Bright Angel Trail and return on South Kaibab Trail. \$539.37 for first person, \$936.74 for two. \$406.37 for each additional person in a family.

Visitor Centers and Museums. Your first stop should be the Grand Canyon Visitor Center near Mather Point. Rangers will help you plan your visit based on the amount of time you want to spend at the Canyon.



Grand Canyon
Visitor Center

I also recommend a preliminary visit to Verkamp's Visitor Center in the village, a key piece of Grand Canyon history. John Verkamp came to the Canyon in 1898 and set up a souvenir shop in a tent. It was not a profitable venture initially, but he returned in 1905 after the railroad spur was built offering a pleasant train ride to the Canyon, a huge improvement over the eight-hour stagecoach trip from Flagstaff. He constructed the current building and opened for business on January 31, 1906. The Verkamp family continued to operate the store until 2008 when it was purchased by the National Park Service and reopened as a visitor center. The Grand Canyon Association bookstore is also located here.

While you are in the village, be sure to visit the Kolb Studio

near the entrance to the Bright Angel Trail. The Kolb brothers were not only good photographers, they were good at marketing their skills. The exhibits in their studio-home are not to be missed. Risking life and limb, they took impossible pictures.

Be sure to visit Yavapai Point and the Yavapai Geology Museum to learn more about the age and formation of the Canyon. The views from the Point are great. The nearby Shrine of the Ages will be the location of ranger talks and other activities.

In addition to several overlooks on Route 64 to Desert View,

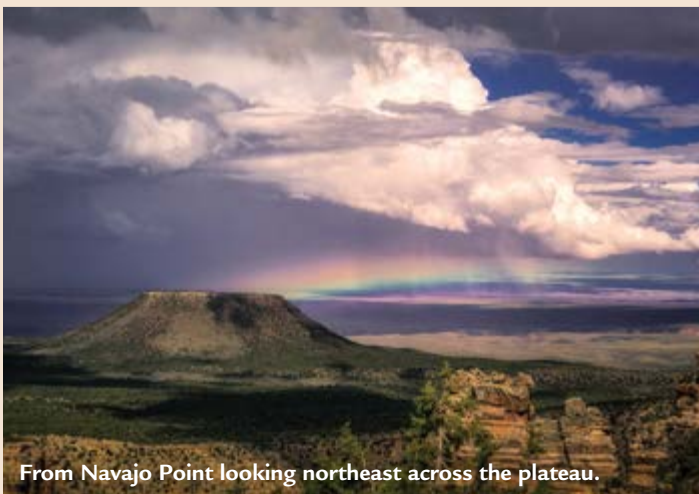
the Tusayan Ruin and Museum is a “must see” opportunity to learn about the archaeological history of Native Americans in the preceding millennium. Your next stop will be the Desert View Watchtower. In addition to great Canyon views to the west, I was fascinated by the flat plateau views to the east which dramatically illustrate how the Colorado River and its tributaries created the Canyon’s one-mile depths with grinding erosion over five million years. We will begin our photographic tour of the South Rim from the Desert View Watchtower.

Views of Grand Canyon from Desert View to Hermit’s Rest

AN EAST TO WEST TOUR OF THE OVERLOOKS



Desert View Watchtower



From Navajo Point looking northeast across the plateau.



From Navajo Point looking west.

Desert View Watchtower. Architect Mary Elizabeth Jane Colter designed the Desert View Watchtower to serve as a rest stop and observation tower for the guests who toured the South Rim. The ground floor is a replica of a kiva. You can see the archaeological remains of a kiva (a sacred ceremonial chamber) at the Tusayan Ruin. As you ascend to the second and third floors, the walls of the circular structure contain Hopi art, pictographs, and traditional images. At 7,522 above sea level, the roof top of the tower on a clear day provides views of the Colorado River to the west, the Painted Desert to the northeast, the Marble Canyon to the north, and the San Francisco peaks to the south.

Navajo Point. At an elevation of about 7,500 feet, Navajo Point is the highest of the overlook points on the south rim of the Canyon. Only a half mile west of Desert View, you can look back and get a great view of the Watchtower. There are panoramic views to the west. An east-northeast view of the plateau across the Colorado River shows how the plateau runs right up to the edge of the Canyon.

Lipan Point. This location offers the South Rim’s best views of the Colorado River: several stretches of the river and two of the major rapids. Be sure to bring your field glasses. In the summer months you might get a glimpse of pontoon boats running the rapids. With magnification you can identify the Canyon’s “supergroup,” several strata of rock tilted at an angle when compared to other layers of rock at other locations in the Canyon. The angle suggests there was an era of uplift or mountain building before the layers of sandstone, limestone, and shale were deposited. The supergroup’s red, white, and black rocks are composed of sedimentary rock and layers of lava. Sunsets at Lipan Point can be spectacular, but it may take more than one visit to get the picture you will want to frame.

Tusayan Museum. The museum is dedicated to the ancestral Puebloan people who inhabited the area 800 to a thousand years ago. Their mysterious disappearance between 1200 and 1300 A.D. has not been solved. The ruins of a kiva and other structures are under continuing archaeological investigation.

Moran Point is one of the most visited vantage points on the drive between Desert View and the village. The location is



A view of the Colorado River from Lipan Point.



A view to the northwest from Moran Point.



A view to the northwest from Yaki Point.



Looking to the north in a U-shaped part of the rim, Pipe Creek Vista opens to a major canyon.

named for Thomas Moran who came here at the invitation of John Wesley Powell to document Powell's exploration of the Canyon. He missed running the river with Powell, but his 1873 7 × 12-foot painting, *Chasm of the Colorado*, was acquired by Congress to hang in the Senate lobby.

Yaki Point. A 2-mile sideroad takes you to Yaki Point where a northern view gives you a great perspective to the north that includes a promontory and an arch (note the sunlight in the wall). A southern view reveals the switchbacks on the South Kaibab Trail descending into the Canyon.

South Kaibab Trail. A day before our arrival, photographer Claudia Abbot and her husband Charlie took a long hike down the South Kaibab Trail and got some great images. The first stop on the trail was Ooh-Aah Point (that's right, the "oohs" and "aahs" that first-timers express when seeing the Canyon from here gave the place its name). A little farther down the trail they had to stand aside (park rules) to allow the mule train to pass that was coming from Phantom Ranch. Claudia also found a place to combine a view of switchbacks with a great view of the Canyon.

Pipe Creek Vista. This viewpoint opens to the major canyon between the Kaibab Trail and the Bright Angel Trail. The top of the image just above the clouds reveals the upper layers of the cake-like limestone and sandstone strata. Below you see the shale slopes that form so much of the lower strata.



The South Kaibab Trail is used by the mule trains to exit the Canyon.

Parking and Walking. After completing the driving tour from Desert View to Pipe Creek Vista, find a parking place in the Grand Canyon Visitor Center which is directly across from Mather Point. **Mather Point** (overleaf). Looking back at Mather Point from a nearby vantage point on the trail, you can see why visitors linger here to ponder the magnitude and beauty of the Canyon. Stephen T. Mather was the first director of the National Park Service and would be pleased to witness the NPS's progress since he retired 87 years ago. He established many of the park's operational policies that are still in use today. The rim trail to Yavapai Point is 0.7 mile. There is parking at the Geology Museum if you need to drive.

Yavapai Point and the Geology Museum (overleaf). Park rangers and those who know the Canyon best will tell you Yavapai Point has the best view of the Canyon from any point near the hotels or the center of the South Rim Trail between Desert View and Hermit's Rest. You can see the Bright Angel Trail, Indian Gardens, Phantom Ranch (with field glasses), the Colorado River, and the suspension bridge that hikers use to cross the river to the Ranch. The nearby Geology Museum offers limited but interesting displays that explain the forces that created the uplift of the Colorado Plateau (70 million years) and the timeline of the river's erosional forces that created the Canyon in 5 million years.



Mather Point from a vantage looking to the northeast following an afternoon shower.



Yavapai Point offers one of the best views of the Canyon from any site near the hotels.



Take a Break from the Canyon and Visit Kolb Studio.

This building literally on the edge of the Canyon was the home and studio of photographic pioneers Emery and Ellsworth Kolb. They stood ready to test any product that George Eastman could make.

They located their studio adjacent to the entrance to the Bright Angel Trail in order to take pictures of the mule riders as they began their descent into the Canyon. When they returned late in the day or the following day, the Kolbs had the riders' pictures ready to purchase. The original building is now 112 years old. Special exhibits of the brothers' work, their photographic equipment, and their daring exploits to take pictures in the most

The Bright Angel Trail begins with a dramatic cut through a tunnel (below) and then follows a series of long switchbacks as it descends into the Canyon to Phantom Ranch.



inaccessible places will amaze you. If you've ever taken a picture, you will want to spend at least an hour in the Kolb Studio.

Now that you are in the village, you may want to visit the Verkamp's Visitor Center and the Hopi House. If you are following the overlooks tour, you may find yourself around noon near several restaurants in the village.

Restaurants in the Village. In our five-day visit, we dined at Bright Angel Restaurant, the Arizona Room, and the El Tovar Dining Room. All three had very appealing menus (which can be viewed online). The El Tovar is elegant; the dining experience and excellent cuisine is worth the price.

The Bright Angel Trail. The trail begins immediately behind the Kolb Studio and descends through several easy switchbacks. It's a good place to sample a trail into the Canyon for 15 or 20 minutes without wearing yourself out. In the morning, the mule train originates at the Bright Angel Trailhead.

Trailview Overlook (overleaf). A late afternoon walk from the Bright Angel Lodge to the Trailview Overlook rewarded the photographer with unusual lighting.

Maricopa Point. The edge of the Canyon here has a narrow promontory extending about 100 feet before it drops off vertically. Photographers can revel in a full 180-degree view to challenge their skills.

Powell Point. John Wesley Powell's two exploratory trips through the Canyon contributed an enormous amount of geological information to the existing knowledge of the Canyon. The photography from his second exploration enhanced his lectures, popularizing the Grand Canyon as a tourist destination in the early 1900s. In 1920 Powell Point was selected as the



A late afternoon shot near Trailview Overlook.



Photographers come to Hopi Point for both sunrise and sunset pictures.



Mohave Point offers a wide contrast in colors, making it one of the best views on Hermit Road.



Louis Boucher is said to have inspired Mary Jane Colter's design of Hermits Rest.



Native materials were used exclusively to construct the Hermits Rest interior.



Colter is said to have rubbed the stones with soot to get the aged appearance of the fireplace and the concave walls above it.

site for the dedication of Grand Canyon National Park.

Hopi Point. Because this point juts into the Canyon, it is one of the best places to take both sunrise and sunset pictures. The long section of the Colorado that you see from Hopi Point is so far away that it looks like a small stream, but the river is actually over 100 yards wide at that location. The rock layers in the Canyon wall are easily visible from Hopi Point.

Mohave Point. From this location, you can see the Colorado to the northwest before it is eclipsed by the buttes. It reappears to the southeast. We picked Mohave Point as the best view on Hermit Road.

Pima Point is the final overlook on Hermit Road, the western end of the drive along the South Rim. The vista extends over 40 miles into the Canyon. You will see the Ninety-Four Mile Creek tributary on the right, flowing into the Colorado.

Hermits Rest. At the western end of Hermit Road along the Canyon's south rim, buses discharge passengers to view a structure named for Canadian-born prospector and recluse Louis Boucher. He was called a hermit by locals who saw him infrequently. In 1891 he staked a claim near the present-day Hermits Rest. For years he lived alone at the end of a trail in a cabin at Dripping Spring. No one seems to know if he ever found any ore of value in his claim.

In 1914 the Fred Harvey Company commissioned Mary Jane Colter to design a building of natural stone that fit into the landscape. Upon entering the structure, the visitor sees a large stone wall housing a semi-circular alcove with a fireplace and a raised floor. A snack bar opens on the west side of the large room, plus a bookstore and a room where native crafts are sold. Visitors can hike on the trails around Hermits Rest or just relax on the

shaded front porch until they are ready to take the next bus back to the village.

A day or two spent on the Grand Canyon's South Rim and the hundreds of digital pictures you snapped will provide material for a huge scrapbook and several years of reflection about the beauty, mys-

tery, and immensity of a place you cannot imagine or fully appreciate by just viewing our best attempts to capture it in pictures. You must see it. And after you have seen it, you probably will return to see it again. It is too vast to absorb in only one visit. **RIS**

Arches National Park



The Delicate Arch

The 18-mile drive through Arches National Park just outside of Moab, Utah could be done in an hour each way. But it is not unusual for this jaw-dropping experience to take a half day in each direction. If you are overwhelmed, even awestruck, you could be there for days.

Interestingly, geologists round off the number of years that it takes to create the formations found at Arches National Park into “hundreds of millions of years.” In this case, it took about 300 million years. An ancient sea bed covering this area of the continent repeatedly receded, evaporated, and refilled, leaving beds of salt thousands of feet thick. Another era followed during which sand was deposited, forming layers of sandstone several thousand feet in depth.

As the underlying salt layers became heated under the weight of the sandstone, the salt layers began to flow and shift causing the sandstone to collapse into the salt cavities, vertically crack, and uplift into domes. As natural forces eroded the deformed sandstone, freestanding walls were created that geologists call fins. Most of the fins eventually collapsed. But depending on the density of the sandstone and the eroding forces, the centers of the fins sometimes eroded first, leaving arches. Today, there are more than 2,000 arches in Arches National Park. The formations are in a layer of salmon-colored rock called Entrada sandstone. The sandstone layer is not stable and changes continue to happen.

If you are a hiker and the weather isn't too hot, you may want to hike the 7.2-mile round trip trail that begins at the Devils

Garden area where the main park road ends. A mile down the trail you will come to the Landscape Arch that boasts a 306-foot span. Another mile on the trail will bring you to the Double O Arch. Other features along the trail will keep your camera clicking.

The most famous arch in the park—it appears on Utah's auto license plates—is probably Delicate Arch. Take the side road to Wolfe Ranch and park at the trailhead. The 3-mile round trip to Delicate Arch is rated as moderately strenuous.

From your car, just over a mile after you leave the Visitor Center, you will be able to enjoy Park Avenue,

The Three Gossips, The Organ, Courthouse Towers, and Sheep Rock. In less than 10 miles you will come to Balanced Rock.

The campground at Devils Garden has 50 sites and is open year-round. Reservations (recreation.gov) are recommended March through October, otherwise first come, first served. There are no hookups or dump stations. Potable water, picnic tables, grills, and flush toilets are available. Some sites will accommodate RVs up to 30-feet in length. Bring your own wood for campfires or charcoal for the grills. For a list of campgrounds outside the park, visit discovermoab.com

While there are many attractions to enjoy in Moab, we found a DON'T MISS that we thoroughly enjoyed. Between Moab and the entrance to the park, you will see **Canyonlands by Night and Day**. The company offers a variety of trips in jetboats on the Colorado River with several departure times and trip durations. We chose the 6 p.m. three-hour trip (\$89) that took us all the way down the Colorado to Canyonlands National Park. The boat captain proved to be an excellent guide, taking time to point out every interesting point along the river, including petroglyphs, birding sites, old mining operations, and more. The company also offers backcountry trips by ATVs, Hummers, helicopters, and horseback.

Claudia Abbott's photography of the western national parks can be viewed and is available for purchase at her website: cabbottphotography.com

Canyonlands National Park



Grand View Point

If you came to Moab primarily to visit the amazing sandstone formations at Arches National Park, you are like most visitors to the national parks in southern Utah. Arches NP is heavily promoted; Canyonlands NP is not. But you owe it to yourself to give it one day at least and drive 32 miles from Moab to the Island in the Sky Visitor Center. Rangers at the center will help you plan your visit into Canyonlands National Park.

Canyonlands is essentially three distinct parks defined by the Green River and the Colorado River. If you positioned a big Y on top of the park, the Island in the Sky district is in the top of the vee, flanked by the Green River on the left and the Colorado on the right. Their confluence is approximately in the center of the park.

The Island in the Sky is so named because of its position on the high plateau overlooking the deep cuts made by the two rivers. Driving south from the visitor center, you will come to the trailhead for the Mesa Arch, one of the most photographed formations in Utah. Serious photographers arrive here before dawn to capture the sunrise beaming through the arch.

Near the Mesa Arch parking area, a side road to the west will take you past the Willow Flat Campground to the Green River Overlook (6,000') that provides some of the best sunsets in the west. There are 12 campsites at Willow Flat. The campground has pit toilets, but there are no hookups and no potable water source. Each site has a fire ring and a picnic table. Some of the sites are long enough for a 45-foot coach. First come, first served. I suggest a visit in your tow car to claim a site, and then go back

for your coach. There's no better place in Utah to capture sunrises and sunsets from the same location.

Driving five miles farther south will take you past the overlooks at Candlestick Tower, Buck Canyon, Orange Cliffs, and finally Grand View Point (6,080') where you will enjoy the most impressive views in Canyonlands, and one of the best in the whole state of Utah.

If you are towing an off-road vehicle, you are in one of the best parks in the country for off-roading. Ask a ranger in the visitor center for detailed maps of White Rim Road, Shafer Trail Road, and the Mineral Road.

We did not have time to visit the Needles and the Maze districts of the park. You can enter the Needles district on UT-211 and stop for a planning session at the Needles Visitor Center. Our maps show many miles of unpaved roads deep into the wilderness. There are two campgrounds: one at Needles Outpost near the entrance and another at Squaw Flat. Because the parking space for the RV is not well-defined, you should usually find a space that will handle a 40-foot coach.

The Maze district has no paved roads and is designed for off-road vehicles. There are seven primitive campsites in the district if you want to have a different experience tent camping and cooking over a campfire. Our oldest son, Patrick, would jump at the chance to camp and hike in the Maze and might talk his dad into another shot at some of the camping experiences we enjoyed 30 years ago.

Zion National Park



Court of the Patriarchs

Located in southwestern Utah near I-15, Zion National Park is 45 miles northeast of St. George, Utah. Of the five national parks in southern Utah, Zion is the closest to the Grand Canyon National Park if you decide to expand your national park touring to the north.

The park has three entrances: the northwest entrance at exit 40 from I-15 takes you to the Kolob Canyons Visitor Center. After a stop at the visitor center, you can take a scenic drive through the canyon leading to several trailheads, including one to the Kolob Arch. This drive is not recommended for motorhomes. You should visit these locations in your tow car.

To reach the south entrance to Zion National Park, take exit 27 on I-15 and go south to La Verkin on UT-17. Turn east on UT-9 to Springdale. You will be following the scenic Virgin River most of the way. The first commercial campsite with full hook-ups will be the Zion River Resort on your right, adjacent to the river. The park is serviced by the free Springdale-Zion Canyon Shuttle. The Zion River Campground and RV Resort is located in the village of Springdale. It also has full hook-ups and services. If you prefer a national park camp site, make a reservation

at Watchman Campground near the south entrance. It has electric service on Loops A & B. Fresh water and a dump station are available at a central location in the campground. The rate is \$30/night (\$15 for Senior Pass and Golden Age passports). Reservations required.

The east entrance to the park is the most scenic, featuring a 5,613-foot tunnel that was constructed between 1927 and 1929 to shorten to 70 miles the distance from Zion to Bryce Canyon National Park. The tunnel's restricted size requires that drivers of vehicles or RVs over 11.33 feet in height or 7.83 feet in width give advance notice to the gate keeper so that two-way traffic can be shut down, allowing an oversized vehicle to drive down the center of

the tunnel. The maximum center height is 13.08 feet.

At the east end of the tunnel, the Canyon Overlook Trail is a one-mile hike of moderate difficulty. We found our hiking poles very useful. The trail leads to the edge of a cliff that provides a magnificent view into the lower Zion Canyon. Parking for 10 cars is available right at the east end of the tunnel.

Zion National Park is noted for its spectacular cliffs. The clearly visible layers of rock tell a geologic story spanning 240 million years. After a visit to the Zion Canyon Visitor Center to plan your day in the park, board the shuttle bus for the scenic 6.5-mile trip into the canyon, and get a spectacular overview. You can retrace your shuttle bus trip to trailheads for the Emerald Pools trails, Observation Point, and Angel's Landing.

Located at the Emerald Pools trailhead, the Zion Lodge has a restaurant offering menus for breakfast, lunch, and dinner. The huge lawn in front of the lodge was perfect for spreading a lunch while viewing with awe the 2,000-ft. walls rising above you. You can take a one-hour tour in an open tram, hosted by a ranger who provides a great lecture and makes stops at the best points for photo-ops.

Bryce Canyon National Park



The Hoodoos at Bryce Canyon National Park

Bryce Canyon is actually not a canyon at all. Within its 56 square miles, the visitor will find varied and colorful rock formations, the most interesting of which are strangely shaped spires called hoodoos. These odd formations lie at the edge of the Paunsaugunt Plateau and are a part of the geologic rock layers sometimes called the Grand Staircase—an area covering 20,000 square miles that includes the Grand Canyon, all of which is part of the larger Colorado Plateau that was pushed up by the Farallon Slab discussed in the Grand Canyon story.

Because limestone is subject to weathering (both above the ground and in caves), the deposits near the edge of the plateau were worn down in winter by freezing and thawing, and in summer by wind and rain erosion. The weathering forces created ridges or thin walls that over thousands of years eroded into separate stacks or spires. The softer limestone is capped by a layer of more weather-resistant dolomite. Bowl-like areas that contained the so-called hoodoos began forming at the edges of the Paunsaugunt Plateau.

So how did the park become known as “Bryce Canyon National Park”?

Ebenezer Bryce (1830–1913) was born in Dunblane, Scotland. He was converted at 17 to the Mormon faith by LDS missionaries who first arrived in the British Isles in 1837. Bryce became a ship's carpenter, made his way to America, and then to Utah. He married Mary Park in Salt Lake city in 1854 and took his new wife to southern Utah where he farmed and raised cattle.

When visitors came to the area, Bryce often became a guide to show them the hoodoos and his name became connected with the attraction. Bryce designed and built the Pine Valley Chapel in 1868, the oldest Mormon chapel still in continuous use. It is unique in that it was built like an upside

down ship using a technique that he acquired as a shipbuilder in Scotland.

The Bryce Canyon Visitor Center screens a video explaining the geology and the natural history of the region. During the May–September season, a shuttle bus operates in the park, making regular stops at the overlooks and the campground.

There are several trails in the park ranging in length from the 1.8-mile round-trip Queen's Garden Trail to the 5.5-mile (one-way) Rim Trail from Bryce Point to Fairyland Point. If you plan to hike, bring good hiking boots and a good supply of water and energy snacks. Elevation changes on the trails range up to 2,000 feet.

Bryce Canyon is well known as a stargazer's paradise due to the low pollution in the area. Check at the visitor center for astronomy-related programs including professional lecturers.

The park has two campgrounds, but no hookups. Fresh water and a fee-for-use dump station is available in each camping area. Both campgrounds have restrooms with flush toilets. Showers are available in the general store. Senior Pass and Golden Age passport holders receive a 50 percent discount.



Five Years of Seasonal Volunteering

We are now entering our fifth year of seasonal volunteering in Florida, where we make our annual trek from Maine. We are currently working at the Crystal River National Wildlife Refuge located on Florida’s “Nature Coast”, where the focus is on the protection of manatees. The manatees spend their warm seasons in the coastal waters of the Gulf of Mexico and the Atlantic, often migrating as far west as Louisiana and north to the Mid-Atlantic. But in late autumn when the water temps fall below 70 degrees, the animals seek the coastal inlets, canals and rivers. A favorite destination is the fabled Three Sisters Springs in Crystal River where 10 to 20 million gallons of water per day pumps out of the sandy bottom at a constant 72 degrees. The result is about an acre of crystal clear water shimmering jewel-like in the surrounding tropical vegetation, often crowded with several hundred manatees seeking its warmth. Visitors may observe this phenomenon from the surrounding boardwalk or by actually swimming with them in small enough groups that the animals are not harmed or harassed. Our jobs are to help manage manatee-visitor interaction under guidelines set by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

Typically, governments offer free full-service campsites in exchange for about 24 hours of service per week, and this is no exception. Our accommodations are about as good as you can get in our 2008 Phaeton 40QDH. This is our third motorhome in our eight years of RVing and by far the best ever. Big enough to be comfortable and cramp-free for long term camping, it serves as



our winter home six months of the year. We love Maine summers.

Our previous assignments included two years with the Army Corps of Engineers in Stuart, Florida, and two years with the Air Force on an active bombing range in Avon Park, Florida. In Stuart we were involved in an outreach water safety program delivered to students K-4 in local schools, where we reached close to 8,000 kids per year. At Avon Park Air Force Range we worked at their Outdoor Recreation Program for hunters, fishermen and hikers made available to them during periods of non-military activity, usually occurring on weekends. We were introduced to volunteerism by friends who are also Tiffin owners. So not only were we impressed with their lifestyle, but smitten with their Phaeton enough to acquire a nice one-owner coach of our own.

Wayne Quint and Adora Peterson, West Bath, Maine

How About an Even Swap?

I just finished reading the latest issue of *Roughing It Smoothly*, and my wife and I absolutely fell in love with the 2016 Allegro 34PA. We have decided we will trade Tiffin our 2011 34TGA for a new 2016 34PA. Naturally we will drive to Red Bay and transfer our belongings out of the old into the new. Since this will be an even swap, we will advertise for Tiffin as we tour the country.

Curtis Martin, Hazen, Arkansas

Our Six-Week Trip to Alaska

We purchased a 32SA in April 2015 from Sierra RV in Reno, Nevada. The transaction went smoothly. I highly recommend them. Since then, we have made two trips from Southern California to Reno. In August we took a six-week trip from our home to Alaska. On the way north we took Interstate 15 to the Canadian border continuing north through Calgary, Banff, and Jasper to Dawson Creek. We then took the “Alcan” Highway to Delta Junction, Alaska. We traveled through Alaska and returned home via the Cassiar Highway connecting with Interstate 5 in Seattle, Washington. It was a great trip, and we met many

interesting RVers along the way, including several Tiffin owners.

Larry & Janey Cooper, LaHarra Heights, California

Lots of Tiffins at Lake George RV Park

We went to see American Pharoah run in the Travers Stakes in Saratoga Springs, and stayed at Lake George RV Park. What a great place: large, full-service, level sites; beautiful landscaping; swimming pools; tennis; dog park; bocce; restaurant; and a recreation hall with nightly movies. The Wi-Fi works great, and they also have a shuttle that goes to town. Lots of Tiffins here!

Dennis Napora, Buffalo, New York

Happy with Our Allegro 31SA!!

Barb and I moved to Phoenix in October 2014 with the understanding that we would buy an RV and travel north during the summer. We bought an Allegro 31SA and just returned from a four-month trip. All was good with the RV, a few minor issues but nothing major. Please thank all the Tiffin family and employees for making quality units. You all should be proud!

Russ Orms, Phoenix, Arizona

An Amazing Ride

I travel in a Phaeton motorhome with my two canine friends, Brussels Griffons Magic and Griff. As we travel either the Tiffin name or my Griffon travel companions create an opportunity to visit with new friends as well as friends we have previously met along the way. Together we have an amazing ride!

Near the beginning of this year we visited the Red Bay headquarters and were welcomed by so many great people. Our trip was to replace the recliner chair with a more comfortable one. I made a selection with the assistance of an associate. Not only did I acquire a more comfortable recliner but I was able to find a local buyer for the unneeded chair. In the Tiffin campground while waiting for the chair to be delivered I heard my name from nearby and was greeted by a former student and friend of mine. He and his wife had recently purchased an Allegro Bus and were in for some adjustments. We enjoyed our visit and wished each other a safe journey from Red Bay—again an amazing ride!

Since then, travel experiences have taken us to Branson and Gulf Shores with stops in Vicksburg, Oklahoma City, Hot Springs, Conroe, and Houston, Texas. As always each of those stops included great times meeting new friends and seeing the sights of the area. Some of my new acquaintances are full-timing or frequent travelers such as myself. Some were on their way to a rally, starting a new journey, or returning home—again an amazing ride!

While staying in the beautiful Hot Springs National Park at the Gulpha Gorge Campground, I met a couple on their way to Conroe, Texas for an FMCA rally that I also was planning to attend. Well, sure enough I saw them again in Conroe and was greeted as if we had been friends all of our lives. The Tiffin area representative, Mark Lane, was there and it was great to meet him and talk about one of my favorite subjects—motorhomes—again an amazing ride!

On a recent trip to Panama City Beach I stopped in Vicksburg overnight and, as I had just completed settling into my site, I looked up to see a caravan of several Tiffin coaches registering into the park. Once the travelers had settled in I could not resist taking the dogs for a walk and saying hello. I learned that each of these individuals was on their way home to Florida after attending an RVing Women’s rally in Shawnee, Oklahoma. One of these new acquaintances indicated she was on her way home and then to Lazy Days to pick up her fifth Tiffin. She was trading in a Phaeton for an Allegro Bus—again an amazing ride!

My travels have caused me to extend my family, friends, and experiences in a remarkable way. I frequently exchange contact information or cards and as a result have accumulated so many cards I have had to add additional storage containers to take care of the quantity—again an amazing ride!

Richard Knoll, Little Rock, Arkansas





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Interviews from Florida



Tom and Eleen Becker

Hometown: Little Egg Harbor, New Jersey
Interviewed: Naples RV Resort, Florida

- Tom and Eleen purchased a 2012 Allegro Open Road 32CA with a Ford chassis, V10 362 HP gas engine from Scott's Motorcoach RV Center in Lakewood, New Jersey.
- They have been married 45 years.
- They do not have children and presently consider themselves half-time RVers.
- Tom is a retired science teacher and went on to environment protection enforcement.
- His hobbies include boating, hiking, observing nature and wildlife.
- Eleen was a secretary and went on to Atlantic City as a casino games dealer.
- Her hobbies are similar to Tom's, and also include reading and solving puzzles.
- In the past they had a unique RV... a custom van that Tom designed and built.
- Their most memorable RV trip was 7,000 miles in Tom's customized 1978 van from New Jersey to California in just 3 weeks. They now have experienced more than one full year in their Tiffin motorhome.
- Tom and Eleen's favorite campgrounds are Boyd's RV Resort Nest near Key West, Club Naples Florida, and Sun & Fun in Sarasota, Florida.
- RV affiliations: Good Sam
- They continue to escape winters, experience new places and friendly people.



Bob and Nancy Miller

Hometown: Naples, Florida
Interviewed: Naples RV Resort, Florida

- Bob and Nancy own a 2006 Phaeton 40QDH with a 350 CAT on a Freightliner chassis, purchased new at Mark's RV in Fort Myers, FL.
- They have been married for 12 years. Both were previously widowed. Nancy has 2 children and 3 grandchildren. Bob has 2 children, 1 grandson, and 3 great-grandchildren.
- They have been full-timers since December 1997. They ferried the motorhome to Alaska and drove back to the states. They have traveled to Eastern Canada, Texas, Key West, and the entire east coast. So far they have visited 30 states in 125,000 miles, including Alaska, Wyoming, S. Dakota, and Oregon.
- Bob retired in 1994. Assignments included finance, human resources, and information technology; Nancy was a real estate broker.
- They love driving and seeing the US in comfort and style in their Phaeton.
- Their favorite campgrounds include Club Naples RV Resort in Florida; Branch Brook Campground in Thomaston, Connecticut; and Jellystone in Burleson, Texas.
- Bob enjoys hunting, fishing, shooting, and boating. Nancy designs crafts, sells jewelry, and likes playing cards/bingo.
- They plan to go to Texas to visit grandchildren in 2016.



Carol Roth and Mike Richardson

Hometown: Springboro, Ohio
Interviewed: Silver Springs, Florida

- Mike and Carole are both retired. They enjoy winters as Florida snowbirds or winter Texans. Carole was a trainer for Under Saddle Horses until she had a spinal injury.
- Their first motorhome was a 2000 Wind Sport. Their second motorhome was purchased in July 2014. Five months after acquiring it, they stopped at Camping World in Tampa to buy some chairs. Lazydays had parked several pre-owned coaches near the front entrance, including a Tiffin that caught their eye. After one walk-through, they were hooked. The day after Christmas they purchased a pre-owned 2013 Phaeton 40QBH with a Cummins 380 engine and a Freightliner chassis.
- They have two foster granddaughters. Their time with them usually centers around horses. In 2014 they camped 4 days at the Kentucky Horse Park. In April 2015 they enjoyed the Rolex three-day camping event at Whispering Hills in Georgetown, KY
- They love getting together with other campers to share stories about RVing mishaps similar to the Robin Williams movie "RV."
- Club affiliations: Good Sam, FMCA, RV Escapes, and Tiffin Allegro Club.
- Mike is looking forward to deep sea fishing. Carole enjoys reading and keeping a journal.



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.

Park Brake Failure on a FRED Chassis

I was extremely disappointed to discover a parking brake failure on my 2007 Allegro 37QBD with a Freightliner FRED chassis. It is equipped with a Carlisle hydraulic park brake (PB) assembly. This assembly consists of a hydraulic pump unit and a drive shaft braking unit. The brake unit is held engaged (park brake applied) by springs. When the motorhome engine is started and shifted out of park, 12-volt DC power is applied to the pump unit, sending hydraulic pressure to a piston in the brake unit, forcing the brake unit open against the springs and allowing the coach to move. How many points of failure can you count?

(1) Interruption of 12-volt DC power to the pump with loss of hydraulic pressure (HP) to the brake unit, allowing the brake to engage. This can be anything from a fuse to a wire shorting out. (2) Failure of the pump motor itself. Again loss of HP and PB lock-up. (3) Failure of the hydraulic lines between the pump and the brake unit. Again, PB lock-up. (4) Failure of the hydraulic cylinders in the brake unit, allowing loss of hydraulic fluid. Again, BP lock-up.

Number (4) happened to me at 55 MPH on a back highway in the Texas Hill Country. Really interesting, not a sudden, severe stop, but a heart-stopping loss of power and no shoulder to pull over on. What do you do? Well, I did not intend to stop in a traffic lane with limited visibility and drivers coming up on me at 60-70 MPH. (Remember, this is Texas Hill Country). My course of action was to floorboard the Cummins ISB6.7 and bull my way ahead until I could safely get off the roadway. By then copious amounts of smoke were billowing from under the coach. Inspection showed it to be coming from the PB driveshaft unit.

I called FCCC Owner Assistance from the roadside, as the problem obviously

was a chassis one. They advised me that, yes, this was a known problem with my FRED chassis and the Carlisle PB unit had failed. They also advised me that the Carlisle PB unit was no longer manufactured and that no repair parts were available. They then advised me that they had developed Service Solution #3602 that completely removes the Carlisle pump and driveline unit and replaces them with a manually operated foot brake system. It also installs a brake pawl in the Allison transmission so that when you shift into Park, you have some holding ability, but that it should not be completely relied on, especially in hills. Freightliner graciously supplies the replacement parts for the brake replacement (about \$2400.00

worth) but the labor and the transmission refurbish is the customer's responsibility. Cost me \$7310.87 at Freightliner-Austin, Texas. It also took exactly three months to do! In on July 10th and out on October 9th. I obviously will not use that Freightliner service again.

Owners of FRED chassis and possibly MC chassis need to be aware of this problem. Freightliner Custom Chassis made the statement that they had replaced "dozens" of these Carlisle park brakes. Eventually every FRED owner will be faced with this serious safety problem.

This is a problem that all FRED owners must be made aware of as it can have disastrous results if it occurs on a heavily traveled road such as a freeway. I am surprised that NHTSA has not required a recall for this problem.

Anthony Baune, Canyon Lake, Texas

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Robert Borden

Supervisor, Sand and Super Clear Line

Robert Borden, of Iuka, Miss., has been employed with Tiffin Motorhomes for 15 years.

During that time, he has seen many people and practices change in the paint department. Now, as a supervisor in the sand and super clear line at the paint shop in Belmont, Borden sometimes stands back and thinks of all the things that have changed since he joined the company.

“When I started in the paint shop at Red Bay, we did one full body paint job a day,” he said. “Now, we do 12 a day. It’s amazing how it’s grown. We used to do a lot of decal work, but when we went to full body paint on every unit, everything changed.”

Borden said he has also seen many different people come and go during that time.

“I have worked with a lot of good people during the last 15 years,” he said. “I am the only one left from the ones I worked with when I started.”

He also said that his job at TMH has been fulfilling for him and good for his family.

“I really enjoy painting,” he said. “This gives me a chance to do it for a living and I also paint some on the side. It’s just something that I really like to do.”

He also credits the stability of his job as one benefit that he appreciates.

“The company has been good to us. It’s always been steady. Things have gotten slow before but we’ve never shut down.”

Borden and his wife, Dianne, have three sons, T.J., Evan, and Kaylee.

When he is not painting at work or as his hobby, Borden likes to hunt and fish as much as possible.

“I love hunting and fishing,” he said. “Being outdoors is one of my favorite things; it’s something I really enjoy.”



Darren Grissom

Prepping Department, Paint Shop

Working at Tiffin Motorhomes is a family affair for Darren Grissom.

The Phil Campbell native is one of four family members currently working for TMH. Along with his wife, Stacy, who is a material handler at the Red Bay plant, Grissom also has a mother and brother who work for the company.

Grissom, who now works in the prepping department at the Belmont paint shop, joined TMH in 2001, and has seen substantial growth in the paint department during that time.

“The paint process has changed a lot,” he said. “Most of the motorhomes used to have decals and then we started doing clear coat on the Buses and eventually started doing that to all the units.” In the prepping department, he helps tape the units and get them ready to be painted.

“Everything about what we do has changed since I first came here. It’s like day and night, but it is a lot more streamlined now than it was back then and there is a particular process for everything we do.”

Grissom is grateful to the Tiffin family and TMH for standing by his family during times in which he has faced medical issues. “They have been very good to us,” he said. “When I started here I weighed 470 pounds and they worked with me and allowed me to be off to have gastric-bypass surgery. Whenever I have needed to go to the doctor for other health issues, they also worked with me on that, so I can’t say enough good things about them.”

The Grissoms have one son, Hunter, and two daughters, Whitney Cole and Magen Johnson, and one grandson, Xander Cole.

He is a fishing and hunting enthusiast.

“This has been a very good place for me and my family to work,” he said.



Brian Self

Final Finish Department, Paint Shop

Brian Self has done a little of everything at Tiffin Motorhomes since joining the company three and a half decades ago.

The Red Bay resident will celebrate his 35th anniversary at TMH in August. He has worked running wires, cleaning motorhomes and for the largest amount of time, he worked placing upholstery in the units. He now serves as a utility worker at the paint shop in Belmont as part of the final finish department.

“It’s really changed quite a bit,” he said. “There have been so many changes from the inside and out, the old ones look like a cracker box now. They were state-of-the-art at the time.”

Self has seen the days in which the plant produced three units a day, up to eventually reaching as many as 15 a day at times.

“This job has always provided security and a good work atmosphere so I have liked it. I have been here a long time, so I guess I must have liked it,” he said with a laugh.

It has also been good for his family. His daughter, Brianna Hester and her husband, Brad, also work for the company.

Self and his wife, Vickie, have two grandchildren, Allie and Cameron.

“I like to hunt and fish, but the grandkids are my hobbies now,” he said. “I ride a motorcycle some, not as much as I did, but I like doing that.”

Though he has spent many years at TMH, he said he is always surprised at the next steps of innovation and change to the product line.

“They just keep adding things and getting more sophisticated each year,” he said. “It’s something to think back on the way the motorhomes used to be built compared to the way they are built now.”

Indications that Your Pet Should See a Veterinarian

by Dr. John Pilarczyk

Pets are valued members of the family and as pet owners, we provide a good diet, exercise, regular vaccinations, and visits for annual checkups. As we travel along the highways with our pets, we might notice changes in their behavior or they may exhibit unusual symptoms that require our attention.

We may mistakenly assume that these symptoms or behavior changes are just a part of the aging of our pet. Animals can be very skilled at hiding their symptoms when they are not feeling well. As owners, we need to be attuned to these subtleties to determine whether our pet needs to be seen by a veterinarian.

Physical appearance and/or changes in posture may indicate something is wrong with your pet. Does your pet move slower or look paler? Is your pet gaining excess weight or losing weight for no apparent reason? Excessive weight loss, especially in cats, can be a sign of hyperthyroidism and/or diabetes.

Restlessness may be a sign of anxiety or pain. Most pets travel well, but when something is bothering them, they become uncomfortable and might pace a lot. Sometimes pets have a change in their vocalization. They may show signs of being hoarse or possibly shake, shiver, or moan occasionally. Pets that are sneezing, coughing, or having ocular or nasal discharges, and show these symptoms longer than one or two days, need to be checked by a veterinarian.

Another sign of illness or disease might be an obvious change in eating habits. Most dogs and cats that are normally “chow-hounds” may stop eating or start leaving some food in the dish.

If this persists, your pet needs a checkup. Most owners that observe vomiting or diarrhea that lasts over 24 hours will take their pet to their veterinarian to be examined.

Problems with chewing or eating, or salivating a lot can indicate dental problems. Acting head shy may indicate ear infections or pain around the head and neck area.

Monitoring your pet’s water consumption is important. Large increases in water consumption could indicate diabetes, kidney disease, or dehydration.

Urinary accidents or missing the litter box might be indicative of disease or the development of behavior problems. If your pet is having accidents in the house or needs to be let out more often than usual, it could be a sign of a bladder infection. Changes in skin tone and color can indicate something is wrong on the inside.

All of these symptoms are sometimes taken as a sign of our pet just getting older, but any such symptoms do need to be addressed. Some symptoms might develop very gradually and not be very noticeable, but if we can pick up on the smaller signs early, we might be able to ward off a major crisis or a visit to the emergency clinic.

Remember to keep your pet’s vaccinations up to date, and those of you staying in the South for the winter, remember to keep up your heartworm prevention. Mosquitoes do not take a vacation in the South.

Keep a close eye on your pets because they cannot speak for themselves. They can only give us signs.

Happy Travels, John and Kay



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Campers Inn RV

THE MOCKSVILLE, N.C. STORE

If you live on the eastern seaboard of the United States, you are within a half day's drive of one of Campers Inn RV's 13 stores. Five of the 13 are Tiffin franchisees and all are qualified to perform service on Tiffin's Class A coaches. One of the five is the Mocksville,

N.C., store, which is part of a business plan conceived several years ago by the company's owner, Jeff Hirsch. Before we do our Dealer Profile on the Mocksville store, there is a great story about the business and organizational development of Campers Inn RV.

Campers Inn RV Approaches Its 50th Anniversary

JEFF'S PARENTS, ART AND FRANCES HIRSCH, STARTED THE business in 1966 in their front yard. Located in Acton, Massachusetts, their seasonal operation called Nashoba Valley Trailers sold 14 units by the end of the first summer. The couple's three sons, Bob, David, and Jeff, worked in the business during their school years. Sales continued to grow while Art, a machinist and skilled metalworker by trade, installed hitches under a shed roof. In 1970 he built a service building for the princely sum of \$7,500. In 1972 Bob graduated from college and joined the company. David followed suit two years later. Along the way, Nashoba Valley Trailers became Campers Inn.

By 1976 Art Hirsch realized he had a viable business and opened a new store in Nashua, New Hampshire. Jeff returned in 1977 to work full time at the growing family enterprise. As his dad began to consider retirement, Jeff moved into a leadership role and initiated a growth plan that began with a new store in Kingston, New Hampshire in 1987. He followed with a fourth

store in Raynham, Massachusetts in 1992 and two years later closed the original store in Acton.

Jeff Hirsch spent the next decade building capital for an ambitious business plan he launched in 2004 along with the company's flagship store in Merrimack, New Hampshire. It replaced the 28-year-old store in Nashua. Campers Inn RV was now on a roll, opening eleven new stores over the next decade: Leesburg, Florida (2006); Macon, Georgia (2008); Elkhart, Indiana (2010); Mocksville, North Carolina (2011); Kings Mountain, North Carolina (2013); Union, Connecticut (2014). Within 18 months after opening the Union store, Hirsch acquired five more stores in Jacksonville, Florida; Atlanta; Fredericksburg, Virginia; and finally in Pittsburgh and Philadelphia. The Elkhart store was closed in 2013.

"Many of our customers are snowbirds who travel the north-south corridor from the New England states through Virginia, North and South Carolina, Georgia, and into Florida," Hirsch explained. "Our dealerships give them the same service quality as they travel. . . . We are planning to do even more by expand-

ing with new locations or acquisitions in order to be a better resource to our owners who travel far and wide."

In the October 2013 issue of *Roughing It Smoothly*, we featured the company's flagship store in Merrimack, New Hampshire. At that time, Campers Inn RV had seven stores with a schedule to open its eighth store in Union, Connecticut in early 2014. See RIS 10:4 for a more detailed account of the company's growth.

Jeff Hirsch operates in "overdrive" most of the time. He was in the middle of a two-year term as the chairman of the board of the Recreation Vehicle Dealers Association when we published the story on the Merrimack store in October 2013. After completing his service to RVDA, he was elected to serve as the chairman of the Recreation Vehicle Assistance Corporation, a for-profit subsidiary of RVDA whose mission is education and training of employees in the recreation vehicle industry. "RVDA took a tremendous amount of time and effort. It's like having another department in your business," he said. "Now I am serving as chairman of RVAC. I am passionate about the survival and success of the independent RV dealer in order to give the consumer the best lifestyle experience. Through their diverse programs, both organizations educate, inform, and lobby on important legislative issues that affect RVing."

The five Tiffin-franchised stores are Merrimack, Mocksville, Union, Raynham, and Macon. The Mocksville store serves a major population area in the western half of North Carolina, plus a significant part of southern Virginia.

Under the leadership of Ben Hirsch, David's son and Jeff's nephew, Campers Inn RV has created a management structure that assures the corporate values and managerial functionality of the company's flagship store are fully disseminated into all of the stores in the chain. Ben first served as chief of fixed opera-

tions and now serves as chief operating officer. A graduate of West Point, he served 12 years in the Army, rising to the rank of captain. His résumé could have easily earned him an upper-management position anywhere in corporate America, but he decided to join Campers Inn RV because "my grandparents had a great passion for this business and I want to contribute to our family's legacy."

Under Ben's guidance, Campers Inn RV established four regional directors. Each director oversees three to four stores, managing the operations for sales, parts and service, F&I, advertising, marketing, and inventory. The four directors are Alan Good (Atlanta, Kings Mountain, and Mocksville); Rick Chynoweth (Macon, Leesburg, and Jacksonville); Ed Unger III (Pittsburgh, Philadelphia, and greater Washington DC area); and Ted Gulezian (Kingston, Merrimack, Raynham, and Union).

Since the Hirsch family has always regarded service as paramount at Campers Inn RV, Ben recognized the management need to establish four regional parts and service directors, with the service directors overseeing the same store groups as the regional directors. Those managers are Cameron Brooks, Deon Victor, Terry Reed, and Chris Bellomo. Each store has a parts and service manager who reports to the respective regional parts and service director.

The regional parts and service managers are directly involved in recruiting and hiring, training, and general operations. "Our goal is for all of our stores to operate in a similar way so our customers can anticipate and expect the same consistently high level of service in each of our stores," Ben said.

Russ Underberg was appointed the national parts and service director to oversee service and parts operations for the company's 13 stores.

Campers Inn RV in Mocksville

THE RV SUPERSTORE OF MOCKSVILLE FIRST OPENED IN 2004. Its spacious showroom, offices, and 10-bay service center were built in 2007. Stung severely by the 2008 recession, the original owners, who had once carried the Tiffin line, sold the facility to Campers Inn RV in 2010. When a Tiffin franchise again became available for the North Carolina region, the Campers Inn RV company was offered and accepted the opportunity.

Jim Weiss became the general sales manager for the store in 2013. He also oversees Finance and Insurance and facility operations. Weiss brings 24 years of experience to his job, with 18 years in retail dealership management. He spent six years in manufacturing, working for K-Z, Holiday Rambler, and Monaco. Before coming to Campers Inn RV, Weiss was a regional manufacturer's representative for K-Z, reporting to Andy

Baer who is now national sales manager for Tiffin Motorhomes.

Campers Inn RV of Mocksville currently employs nine sales professionals: five in motorized sales and four in towables. The company's Class A diesel inventory is exclusively Tiffin coaches. All of the motorized sales staff are factory-trained. "We rotate our Tiffin sales staff through factory training in Red Bay every two years to keep them fully abreast of TMH's technology and construction methods," Weiss said. "We also take advantage of the training provided by our manufacturer's rep Mark Phillips." The Mocksville location sells all of Tiffin's brands including the Zephyr.

Sales training at Campers Inn RV focuses on product knowledge and finding the right motorhome or towable for each RVer based on his or her camping lifestyle and desired expenditure.

"We focus on product knowledge and train on every facet

Text and photography by Fred Thompson



PHOTO COURTESY OF JESSICA WRIGHT

Sales Team

of the features of each coach,” explained Jim Weiss, general sales manager for the Mocksville location. “I ask each sales person to study the specifications and materials on all of Tiffin’s brands and know all of the standard and optional features for each brand.”

The five salespersons who sell motorized RVs are proficient in assisting a customer in selecting from the many options in décor, appliances, furniture, floor coverings, and exterior paint options.

“Tiffin does a great job of providing dealers with extensive décor books,” sales consultant Kenneth Combs said. “It is a fun process for the customer and for us as we help them find the coach of their dreams.”



Service Team

The Sales Team at Campers Inn RV in Mocksville has nine sales professionals. *Back row from left:* Jim Weiss, Kirk Wells, Kenneth Combs, Jason Hoyle, Paul McCullagh, and Wes Athan. *Front, from left:* Joey Brown, Scott Zimmerman, and Steve Galvin. ♦ The Service Team, *back row from left:* Eric Walser, service tech; Jesse Ratlidge, parts dept.; Jerry Smith, parts dept.; Barry Adkins, service tech; Shawn Stewart, service tech. *Front row from left:* Kim Duncan, parts manager; Stephanie Johnson, service writer; Marlene Miller, warranty administrator; Ron Bradley, service tech; Cameron Brooks, service manager; James Campbell, service tech. ♦ The Mocksville facility boasts 10 service bays, each with 50-amp service, water, and sewer connection, plus high pressure air service for power tools. The portable power lift system is capable of handling 45-foot coaches and can be used in any the service bays.



10 Bay Service Center

They get exactly what they want and the satisfaction level goes up tremendously.”

“At Campers Inn RV in Mocksville, all of the sales staff had extensive business experience before joining our team,” Weiss continued. “Kenneth Combs was formerly the general manager of a construction company that closed during the recession. Sales consultant Steve Galvin worked in the manufactured housing industry and Scott Zimmerman, who started here in 2009, had many years of experience with an automobile dealership. He is currently our top salesman with a long list of satisfied Tiffin customers. Campers Inn RV takes pride in maintaining a professional and talented sales staff to ensure the best customer experience.”

“Everyone on the sales and service teams considers his job as a long-term career. That’s very important because our principal asset is talented people,” Weiss said. “The company’s HR policy is to value our employees’ contributions and treat them with respect and dignity so they will treat our customers the same way.”

In his frequent visits to the Mocksville store, Jeff Hirsch emphasizes the company’s two most important missions: take care of the customer and take care of the employees, Weiss noted several times in our interview. “Jeff believes that a happy employee is more likely to give a customer a great experience. That business philosophy makes it easy for me to do my job,” he said.

Campers Inn RV offers a variety of financing plans to cater to a wide range of customer needs. “Young families may not have a lot of financial ability to buy an RV while an older couple nearing retirement usually has more financial strength,” said Joey Brown, the business manager at Mocksville. “Campers Inn RV works with 18 banks that specialize in RV lending. It gives us the ability to serve a full spectrum of credit profiles. We look at financing and insurance as a service to our customers. We provide convenience and very competitive rates, along with other products that will protect the customer’s investment.”

Jeff Hirsch agreed and added, “The camping experience brings parents, children, and grandparents together and is so important in helping to build strong families,” he said. “At Campers Inn RV, we have a real purpose and we truly help families make memories that will last a lifetime.”

Cameron Brooks, one of four regional parts and service directors, was in the Mocksville store the day we visited and provided an overview of the company’s MO for parts and service.

“My division has three stores: Atlanta, plus Kings Mountain and Mocksville here in North Carolina,” he began. “We have 75 parts and service personnel in the three stores. Each store has one service advisor.

“In the Mocksville store we have 10 service bays, each with high-pressure air for power tools, a 50-amp service, water, and a sewer connection. Each bay is 20 × 50 feet. We have a portable lift system that can handle 45-foot coaches,” he continued. “We have nine to 10 technicians during the summer. Chad Hudson is our shop foreman.”

The Mocksville location offers body work for collision and repair, but currently sub-contracts painting to a nearby firm. Chassis warranty work is done by Freightliner and Cummins in nearby towns.

When an owner brings a coach in for service, the service advisor using a check-in sheet goes over each service issue and uses painter’s tape to mark the problem areas. After the write-up is completed, the owner receives a copy.

The technicians use a laptop in each

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While we were in Mocksville to do the dealer profile story on Campers Inn RV, we had the opportunity to meet Geary and Joann Herndon from Woodbridge, Virginia, who were taking delivery of their new 2016 Allegro Bus 45LP. From left-to-right, Jim Weiss, general sales manager; Geary and Joann Herndon; and Scott Zimmerman, sales professional.

bay to log-in and log-out, tracking the amount of time spent working on each service issue. The techs use cell phone cameras to record the repairs and create a visual record. This technology gives technicians an information conduit to obtain technical support and parts from the factory.

“When warranty work is required, we work directly with the manufacturer while the repair job is in process,” Brooks said. “Each time the work record touches a desk (warranty, technician, or service advisor), the customer is called with an update on his coach. We eliminate 90 percent of service complaints by staying in touch with the owner and keeping him informed. We are process driven to keep the job working continuously and the customer well-informed.

“Of all the manufacturers we deal with, Tiffin Motorhomes is the best in getting parts to us. Our records show they get the right parts to us 98 percent of the time,” he said. “One of the many reasons we enjoy being a Tiffin dealer is the Tiffin family is committed to the customer experience.”

“When a repair job is completed, the technician in charge does a walk-through with the owner,” Brooks continued. “We want the owner to have an on-going, working relationship with his technician who will take care of him next time.”

Campers Inn RV is passionate about training. Of the eight technicians at Mocksville, two are certified, two are master certified, and four are working on their certifications. “We expect every service manager and every parts manager to be RVIA-RVDA certified by the end of January 2016,” Brooks said. “This company is more driven to get certification training for all employees than any other company I have worked for. We know that our customers have a better service experience with employees who have certified training. As part of our commitment to customer service, we offer all Tiffin owners a free 12-point inspection, including checking the motorhome’s roof for caulking and seals.”

“Our challenge is to set the highest benchmark for customer service in the RV industry,” Brooks said flatly. “This is not a cookie cutter repair shop. There is a great variety of repair problems that come through our doors every day. RV technicians must have a wide variety of skills to meet the challenge and be successful.

“We have very low turnover. You never want to lose a master certified technician,” Brooks emphasized. “We begin by hiring high quality people and then providing incentives for them to study and reach the next level of certification. This company has a very good family atmosphere where your work is appreciated when you do a good job. I love what I do and enjoy my job.”

The Mocksville store maintains a \$200,000 parts inventory. “We track consumption reports carefully for every month, quarter, and year, and then we stock deep on heavily and frequently used parts,” Brooks explained. “We often have all the parts in our inventories that are needed for a repair.”

“Our ‘season’ runs from January 1 through Thanksgiving,” Weiss noted. “December is our only slow month. We begin exhibiting at RV shows the second week of January and on into February. That includes shows in Greensboro, Charlotte, and Raleigh. This year we will be one of Tiffin’s dealerships supplying coaches and services at the FMCA International Rally in Perry, Georgia.”

Weiss pointed to the Tiffin Motorhomes website as an internet resource for directing sales traffic to Mocksville. “You can put in a zip code for western North Carolina and we will pop up,” he said. “Buyers will shop our inventory online before they come into the store. We have a very comprehensive website with 30+ images for each coach.

“Last year at Tiffin’s dealers meeting, we were honored as one of the top 10 Tiffin dealers nationally,” Weiss noted. “Our prices are very competitive, but we are also pretty old-fashioned in recognizing that service after the sale is just as important to a Tiffin customer. We believe a local dealer should be a customer’s first stop when contemplating a purchase. Campers Inn RV respects this principle and believes our customers deserve the time and dedication to ensuring they get lasting value.”

Continued on page 80



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Frank Andrew Wyzywany

FROM CHASSIS ENGINEER TO MANUFACTURER'S REPRESENTATIVE

The Tiffin Motorhomes sales department has nine regional sales managers who report to Andy Baer, Tiffin's national sales manager. I have interviewed and written stories on eight of them to date. When I informed Frank Wyzywany that Andy had asked me to interview him for my next Tiffin Management Team story, he responded quickly saying, "I will do a little autobiography and that will get you started." He emailed his "autobiography" and I read its eleven pages with frequent smiles and a fast-growing admiration for his family, the way he was reared, and the values that he has and brings to his job at TMH. Big companies search diligently for talent like Frank Wyzywany, individuals who have superior work ethics, interpersonal skills, and value systems that make a positive impact on the company, its employees, and its customers. I could have rewritten his autobiography into an interview-style story, but I might have lost the flavor of his style. So, good readers, heerrrrz Frank!

-Editor

I was born in Southfield, Michigan, a suburb of Detroit, in 1970, the last of four Wyzywany children: three boys and a girl. "My father's parents were Polish and Ukrainian and my mother's parents were from Belgium. My mother's father died before I was born and as a result my grandmother lived with us. She would tell me stories from the early 1900s of this fabulous melting pot city called Detroit. The neighborhoods that were named after the immigrants who took them over, how everyone trusted and helped each other, the great places to eat and hear live cultural music, the beautiful churches, and the finest automobile builders in the world. They were all a bus ride away.

Soon after I was born, the future of Detroit was jeopardized by the onslaught of foreign automobile competition. The combined failures of business, education, and government to cope with new challenges caused the city to succumb to an

economic slump from which it is still struggling to recover.

Many in my extended family still live in and around Detroit and have been able to see the other side of the story: great restaurants, strong heritage and culture, music, art, and many areas that have made the turn for the better. Detroit is still a proud, powerful city with unlimited opportunities. The people are as strong and resilient as any that I have met in my travels around this great country of ours and I'm proud to say that I am originally from Detroit!

My father was a commander in the Navy on the destroyer USS Everett F. Larson and served during the Vietnam War, retiring with 23 years of service. In the mid-seventies, he was offered a job working for the State of Michigan in Lansing. The opportunity to get out of the city of Detroit to a rural area with a smaller school system for his children was a goal he had been working on for years. My



parents landed in the small farm community of Holt, Michigan, where my mother found a secretarial position at Okemos Middle School. To this day, anyone that attended Okemos Middle School for about a 30-year span knows exactly how to pronounce Wyzywany (wiz-wany)! Holt is a suburb of Lansing which is the birthplace of Oldsmobile and Fisher Body, and the location of the state capital. I grew up in a neighborhood surrounded by woods and fields with the Sycamore Creek running through both of them. Riding bikes and motorcycles, building forts, shooting BB guns, and organizing neighborhood baseball and football games were the order of the day back then.

We could stay outside playing until it was literally dark. If you needed a drink of water, it came from the end of the garden hose attached to the house! Bottled water was unheard of and the thought of dirtying up a bunch of glasses was simply out of the question. It was a great life and things were simpler than they are today. While we cannot stop technology, and it

Above left: Three generations of Wyzywanys support the Detroit Tigers as often as possible. From left: Frank T. Wyzywany with sons Frank Andrew, Kenneth, and Jack, and grandson Jake. ♦ Frank and Denise found time to take a cruise on Lake Michigan. ♦ Frank laying down the mandolin with his group, Frank-O and the Americans.



has done marvelous things in the name of progress, I often wonder how the lack of personal and physical interaction will affect today's youth. Many jobs now have people emailing and texting throughout the entire day. While those are important means of communicating with clients, nothing works better and faster at solving problems than good old face-to-face communication! This is something I picked up on when I met Bob Tiffin during my first trip to Red Bay. His office door is never closed and he is either on the phone with a customer or he is talking to customers seated in front of him. If there is any one thing that I have learned over the years, it's the power of personal communication. I've met many smart, successful people during my career. They all have one thing in common: they are all great communicators!

My father taught me early in life the lessons of hard work and commitment. When I was 12 years old and looking for ways to earn money, he enrolled me in caddy school along with a few other friends. After three weeks of classes, we started our jobs as caddies at the Country Club of Lansing. It was only 11 miles away, but usually took 20 minutes to get there because we had to go directly through the city. We carpoled to keep the cost down but my father would wake early on the weekends and get us there by

6:30 a.m. It was like being an independent contractor: you were never guaranteed you were going to work that day. To caddy for a club member, you had to hang out, sometimes for hours, until your name was called. As a beginner, you earned \$6, plus a tip if you were good. For the \$9.00 I was usually paid, I had to spend at least 10 hours at the course. The low pay and long hours taught me to focus on the end goal rather than the immediate payoff.

As I moved up in rank, I caddied for many successful people in government, administrators at Michigan State University, and business leaders. I got to know these golfers fairly well and always listened to what was going on. This provided many lessons that were valuable to me later in my life.

My father continued transporting me to and from work until I saved enough money to buy a moped. Not long after I turned 15, the country club hired me to pick up and clean the driving range every night. If you missed a night, you were fired. The job gave me the opportunity to develop relationships outside the school and the small community where I grew up. I was networking before I had a driver's license.

Influenced by my grandfather who was a toolmaker for Henry Ford and the strong automotive presence in the Lansing area, I started college with engineer-



ing and design technology in mind, hoping to land a job with one of the automakers. While finishing up my degree in drafting and design technology, I landed an internship at the Ollafson Corporation, a company that built custom CNC metal turning machines for GM, Chrysler, and Ford.

I began dating my future wife, Denise, during my last year of college. Although we went to the same high school, and even had a class together, we ran in different circles and really never got to know each other.

After I graduated college, I accepted a position at Capitol Tool & Die that was a short drive from home. This company built custom heavy-duty wreckers in addition to many other jigs, fixtures, and tools that supported the automotive industry—not quite the automotive industry, but I was getting closer!

My next opportunity came as a design engineer for Progressive Stamping Dies, a Tier 1 supplier to GM, Chrysler, and Ford (another step closer to the automotive industry). After a few years of learning how to design stamping, transfer, and progressive dies, a former classmate alerted me to a position at Spartan Motors in Charlotte, Michigan, a company that was constantly getting good business reviews in state and national newspapers.

The interviews went well and I was hired. Spartan was rapidly becoming one of the world's largest custom fire truck manufacturers. They were also starting to build diesel pusher chassis for the recreational vehicle industry. I worked for a wonderful mentor and friend who taught me how to design a chassis from the ground up. His philosophy was that if you hire people who get along well and have similar interests (such as fishing, golfing, hunting, boating, auto mechanics, etc.), you will stand a much better chance of developing a true “teamwork” environment. He was spot on! I never experienced a true team environment like I did in the early days at Spartan.

My career at Spartan began in engineering. I eventually became a project engineer where I ran my own project from start to finish. Back then we designed and drew everything in CAD, worked directly with the suppliers, developed the steering geometry, performed the cooling tests, and even built the proto-

types in the R & D lab. Each of those areas today are separate departments with assigned engineers. The project engineer manages all of the work and individual efforts of his sub-groups but never really gets to do the work himself. To learn all of those disciplines today would take years.

In 2000 I moved to the sales department as an OEM sales account manager. I had the opportunity to work not only in the RV chassis department, but also helped out in the fire truck and specialty vehicle department. I was also able to attend some conferences on hybrid vehicle development, which was and still is cutting edge technology.

As an OEM sales account manager, I made my first trip to Red Bay and began a relationship with Tiffin Motorhomes. The Spartan chassis was originally under the Zephyr. With persistence and good timing, I was able to put our chassis under the Allegro Bus and the new 42-foot Phaeton. When Tiffin began building their own chassis in 2006, a good chunk of my business dissolved and my visits to Red Bay were fewer and fewer.

Of all of my professional relationships with manufacturers throughout the U.S., the Tiffins and how they conducted their business left a huge impression on me. There was something unique and genuine about them that I had not seen or witnessed anywhere. When the opportunity came in October 2013 to represent one of the truly unique American success stories in our country, there was no hesitation for me to want to be part of that piece of RV history!

As my career advanced, my family grew. Denise and I have two daughters, Chelsea, 25, and Alicia, 17. Denise works for the Michigan Dental Association and administers Blue Cross and Blue Shield insurance for all of the dentists throughout Michigan.

We are blessed to have all of Denise's siblings and two of mine near where we live, plus our parents on both sides. Our only sibling that does not live near us is my oldest brother, Lt. Col. Kenneth F. Wyzywany, who is stationed at Barksdale Air Force Base in Shreveport, Louisiana. He has made a career out of navigating B-52 bombers and protecting our freedom in multiple wars for over 30 years! I am very proud of the two members



Above left: During their vacation in Hawaii, Frank and Denise hiked the Kalalau Trail on the island of Kauai. ♦ Frank’s photographic talent captured this boiling explosion of lava flowing into the ocean. ♦ Pictured Rocks National Lakeshore in Michigan’s Upper Peninsula is a favorite hiking and camping location for Frank and Denise. ♦ A Fourth of July celebration on Silver Lake Sand Dunes on Lake Michigan.

in my immediate family who were and still are associated with the armed forces.

Although my main interest was manufacturing with an emphasis on automotive, my college had an excellent photography program. I managed to take Photography for Beginners to learn how to really use my 35mm camera. I’ve always been an avid outdoorsman and nature photography has been a passion for years. Some of my photographs have been used by the Nature Conservancy.

My parents took us camping at a very young age. Every state park in Michigan is on a great lake, an inland lake, a stream or at a significant natural feature. One of my first dates with Denise was to go camping and canoeing. It rained and all we had was a tiny two-person tent for protection! The fact that she survived and still had a great time was a foreshadow of what was to come for the two of us. My career in the recreational vehicle industry is more coincidence than irony.

As with most Michiganders, I have invested in land throughout the state. Over the years my brother and I have built a few cabins on them where we can get away from the hustle and bustle of our daily lives and get in tune with the natural beauty of our state. One particular cabin is 343 miles away on the Big Two Hearted River, a mile from Lake Superior. Not surprisingly, only 30 miles away there is a town called Paradise, just down the road from Tahquamenon Falls State Park. This is the third largest falls east of the Mississippi after Niagara and Cohoes Falls both in New York State. They say it’s some of the cleanest air in the United States because the wind blows from west to east across 350 miles of fresh water before it reaches land.

If you have never experienced Michigan in early October then you have never really experienced how awesome Fall colors can be. It’s an explosion of reds, oranges, yellows, greens, and every

shade between them. We have backpacked the national parks, canoed the crystal clear northern rivers, and have had fires on the shores of the Great Lakes to keep us warm as we watched the sun set into the water, probably over a thousand times. And I can’t wait until 1,001. This is what we do. We call it strengthening our bond with Mother Nature while recharging the batteries in our soul.

Every person we have taken to the Upper Peninsula has never forgotten the experience. And, at the end of the day, that is what camping is all about. Those experiences you have when you camp are all about sharing and being together, no matter if it’s your spouse, your whole family, or a group of good friends. Experiencing and enjoying nature is a pretty cool thing—especially when it is the backbone of your industry.

My Polish grandmother was a wonderful cook and an excellent musician. After we moved away, my father went back to Detroit every other weekend to play pinochle with his uncles, father, and in-laws. While I remember the pots of strong coffee, the thick cigarette smoke, and all of the yelling they were doing around the kitchen table, it was the time I spent with my grandmother that I remember best. She played the piano and accordion like I’ve never heard them played before or after. She would sing songs in Polish and just wail away on each of those instruments. During family reunions in Detroit’s suburban parks, she would break out her accordion and start singing in Polish. Talk about stopping people in their tracks! It was amazing and I don’t think she ever thought twice about what others would think of her. This is a quality that I’m particularly fond of to this day. If you are too afraid to do something, you will spend the rest of your life regretting it and constantly wondering what would have happened if you had done it.

This musical talent was passed to my father and to me. While there were always musical instruments around the house, I started formal music classes in 1981 with the trumpet. Other instruments followed including acoustic guitar, harmonica, mandolin, square-neck dobro, stand-up steel string guitar (think Hank Williams), and bass guitar. My first public perfor-



mance was like most—in church. I was involved with an acoustic Bluegrass/Americana band called The Harvestmen for about 10 years and recorded two albums.

I now have my own band called Frank-o and the Americans. We play electric blues and Americana with an island-reggae twist. After visiting Hawaii with Denise years ago, I have always been intrigued with Latin rhythms and island grooves. There is something that speaks to me when I hear them and reminds me of those lazy days relaxing on the beach. Blend that in with the blues of the city and you get an interesting mix that does not sound quite like anything out there. This is a question I constantly ask myself when I think about the “marketability” of our music genre. I come to the same answer every time—it doesn’t matter. We are writing our own songs, our own music, and in the end it’s what makes the five of us feel good. If the music is good enough for us, then it’s certainly good enough to call art. As soon as you start to worry about how your art will be perceived or accepted, it compromises its integrity. We released our first self-titled album in December of 2015. Throughout my life it has always amazed me at how music transcends cultures. It doesn’t matter where you grew up, what you believe in or how you were influenced. Once the music starts and you’re all playing together, you’re speaking a universal language that removes everything that can muddy the picture in a normal conversation. This is a very powerful aspect of music that does not get the proper attention that it should. Because of this I have developed many relationships throughout the country that may not have started otherwise.

As far as the future is concerned, I am truly blessed to be working for Tiffin Motorhomes. We make great products and support our dealers and owners better than any of the other Class A manufacturers in the industry. As Tiffin’s Midwest Regional Sales Manager, my territory consists of 11 states: Michigan, Ohio, Northern Kentucky, Indiana, Illinois, Wisconsin, Minnesota, Iowa, Nebraska, and North and South Dakota. Within that territory, I handle the business of eight different dealers: General RV, Northside RV’s, Mt. Comfort RV, Pontiac RV, King’s Campers, Shorewood RV, Leach Campers Sales, and Capital RV. General RV stocks Tiffin’s product at six different locations, two of which are outside of my territory in Orange Park, Florida and Salt Lake City, Utah.

As the liaison between the dealer and Tiffin Motorhomes, I am responsible for managing the business relationship which includes tracking dealer inventory and ordering motorhomes (inventory stock and customer retail orders); training their sales staff; supporting the dealers at shows throughout the year; and getting involved with customers that need special attention or direction. Many times I am the first point of contact, acting as

Frank’s obvious love for the outdoors is reflected in his hiking, camping, fishing, and photography skills. Pictured here: Mosquito Falls, Pictured Rocks National Lakeshore. ♦ Pileated Woodpecker. ♦ Little Manistee Male Steelhead. ♦ Big Sable Lighthouse, Lake Michigan.

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Frank enjoys photographing the beauty of the Winter season in Michigan as evidenced by this giant frozen wave as well as a late Winter sunset on the shores of Lake Superior.


the “traffic cop” and directing the questions or concerns to the specialized technicians in the Red Bay service center. They are the best in the industry at what they do!

During the first quarter we spend a majority of our time supporting the dealers at their shows. This is a great opportunity to interact with the end users of our products. As much as I like to teach folks about our products, it amazes me how much I learn from just listening to our customers. I truly believe our best ideas come from the owners who are using Tiffin coaches day in day out. In two quick years I have already developed some great relationships with many of our customers and have learned countless lessons and tricks from them on how some of these complicated systems work (and what to do when they don’t).

I never pass up an opportunity to explain the many features on our six different brands. That is a very big part of my job when I interact with any of my dealerships. Fortunately, I did a lot of training when I worked at Spartan and was very comfortable building PowerPoint slide decks, using that media to get an idea or thought across to a group of people.

Our dealers take advantage of the slower fall season to send their sales and service teams to visit all of Tiffin’s manufacturing facilities for training. Keeping abreast of innovation and manufacturing developments is a major part of a regional sales manager’s job. If you find five minutes to visit with Bob Tiffin between phone calls or meeting with owners, you will never walk away without learning something. I don’t know of another person who knows more about motorhomes than he does. I tell all of my dealers that if they ever have a question on why we do something on our motorhomes, ask Bob because most likely there is a specific answer and he knows why. The same can be said about Tim, Van, and Lex. They have grown up in this business and have a wealth of knowledge on most any subject pertaining to Tiffin’s six brands. Fifteen hundred dedicated employees, talented design and engineering staff, tier-level supervisory management, and consistent family leadership have combined to create what it takes to build great motorhomes backed by the best service center and dealer system in the industry.

I have great satisfaction knowing that TMH consistently strives to make the right decisions for our owners. These machines are complicated. While we understand that nothing in this world we live in is perfect, it’s nice to know that you have a company behind you that will be there, supporting their products so that their owners can truly enjoy the lifestyle that these motorhomes provide.

My place in Michigan’s Upper Peninsula is a lot like Red Bay in that it feels like you have turned the clock back a few years (maybe a few decades) and slowed everything down. In both places the people will do anything to help you, they always wave to you, and they will stop to have a conversation for as long as you’re willing to talk. The fast-paced business of our society has erased much of that neighborliness and left those simple qualities hidden in small towns that still exist, but are typically off the beaten path. One of those small towns is Red Bay, Alabama. 



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Adventure of the Year

TWO EVENTS MADE THIS TRIP EXTRAORDINARY FOR B.J. AND SUSAN TURNER

Most every time B.J. and Susan Turner leave their home in Benbrook, Texas in their 2013 Phaeton 40QBH diesel, they're looking for a new adventure. They usually do it by taking a road to a place they haven't been before. That strategy worked, one might say in spades, when they made a 2014 Christmas week trip to Alpine, Texas. Two colossal happenings elevated that trip to an adventure they won't soon forget. Some of it was good, some not so very.

First was their eyes-on verification of a phenomena that many never experience though untold thousands have tried: the Turners *actually saw* the legendary "Marfa Lights," strange High Desert apparitions that have mystified believers (and made skeptics of others) for at least 132 years, maybe much longer.

The second was an unexpected bashing by Mother Nature. Though spring-like temperatures in the 60s had been predicted for the week, an invading cold

front blanketed their Lost Alaskan RV Resort in Alpine in ice that also sheathed roads home.

Why far West Texas in the first place? "We just wanted to get out of town for the week and I'd not been back to Alpine since attending Sul Ross University there for one semester 40 years ago," says B.J., senior vice president for Information Technology at GM Financial. "So I suggested: let's go to the Big Bend area." Susan and Matt, their 25-year-old son, were game.

The 498-mile drive to Alpine went smoothly though, Susan noted, scenic wonders are few and far between in the oil-country roads west of Abilene. Once in Alpine, they hooked up in a pull-through space at the Lost Alaskan. B.J. unloaded the trusty grill on which he turned out his acclaimed steaks, burgers, hot dogs and ribs for main-course meals until the day the parking lot got paved with ice.

On Monday, a fine day, they unhooked their dinghy, a 2014 four wheel drive Jeep

Wrangler Unlimited, to tour the Big Bend country. They visited Big Bend Ranch State Park, its 23 miles of Rio Grande River frontage, and drove the remainder of the 40-plus miles of Ranch Road 170 from Terlingua Ghost Town to Presidio. The next day they toured Big Bend National Park.

In Big Bend National Park, they visited Rio Grande Village RV campground and the old hot springs pools in the southeastern section. They passed through Panther Junction on the way to Chisos Basin and the village in the Chisos mountains that stand nearly 8,000 feet above the desert floor in the central part of the huge 800,000 acre park.

Returning down to desert level, they drove to the Santa Elena Canyon Overlook in the park's southwestern section. "Santa Elena is a beautiful canyon," B.J. says, noting how the Rio Grande river flows between 1500-foot- high cliffs. He and Matt couldn't resist a hike along the Santa Elena trail. Afterward, they exited the park to the west on a primitive unpaved road restricted to travel by high-centered four-wheel drive vehicles. "That was fun," B.J. recalls. It may be significant that Susan did not comment.

On the day they drove Ranch Road 170, they plunged down hills, climbed over mountains, bordered canyons, and were awarded with fantastic views both of the river and surrounding country on their way into Presidio. There they turned onto U.S. 67 for a 60-mile stretch north from the Rio Grande to Marfa. From Marfa, they took the U.S. 90/67 road southeastward toward Alpine. Nine miles out, between Marfa and Paisano Pass and

in seeing distance of the Chinati mountains, they passed the Marfa Lights viewing center maintained by the Texas Highways Department.

They drove on to their RV Park, had supper, then, "we purposely went back to that viewing platform," says B.J. By then, dusk had faded, the skies were dark and stars bright. The Turners didn't bother with field glasses or binoculars as they scoured the southeastern horizon, looking for the fabled Marfa Lights. Suddenly, B.J. declares, "They were there! The Marfa Lights are not just a legend. *They are real. They are there.*"

In fact, he confided, "I've seen them twice now. This time when I know I was sober—and once 40 years ago when I was a freshman in college and—ah—well, I may or may not have been completely sober."

This time, Susan and Matt saw them, too. "They were in pairs of two, spheres

maybe the size of basketballs, and they were bright white," she says. At first, B.J. reports, they spotted two pairs at low level that seemed stationery. Then, as they watched, the pairs began moving—slowly at first, then more rapidly. Next they say they spotted a pair at greater altitude, changing colors, mostly orange and green, and still another further southwest. Four pairs in all.

"Some people, I'm guessing mostly those who have never seen the Marfa Lights, have decided the lights are automobile headlights somehow reflected through the atmosphere to show up where cars should not be. Well, that can't be," B.J. declares, adding, "Marfa Lights were a mystery before the automobile was invented. And they show up in country too rough for any vehicle to travel."

He's right about timing. The first recorded modern-day sighting was in 1883

by a cowhand who feared the lights might be Apache campfires. Other sources claim Native Americans knew about the lights for centuries, believing them to be fallen stars. Many other unproved theories suggest possible sources. Among them: sudden temperature changes at certain altitudes and under certain atmospheric conditions; phosphorescent minerals; Elmo's fire; static electricity; swamp gas; and even ghost appearances.

So what do the Turners think the Marfa Lights are, now that they've seen them tee-totally sober? "I have no idea," B. J. says. "I don't think they are Unidentified Flying Objects from space, as some have suggested. I don't believe in UFOs, but I do have to believe that which I've seen with my own eyes. *The lights are real. They are there!* For us, they turned this trip into our adventure of the year!"

That second event that made the trip



B.J. and Susan Turner anticipate another trip in their Phaeton.

Text by Norman Spray

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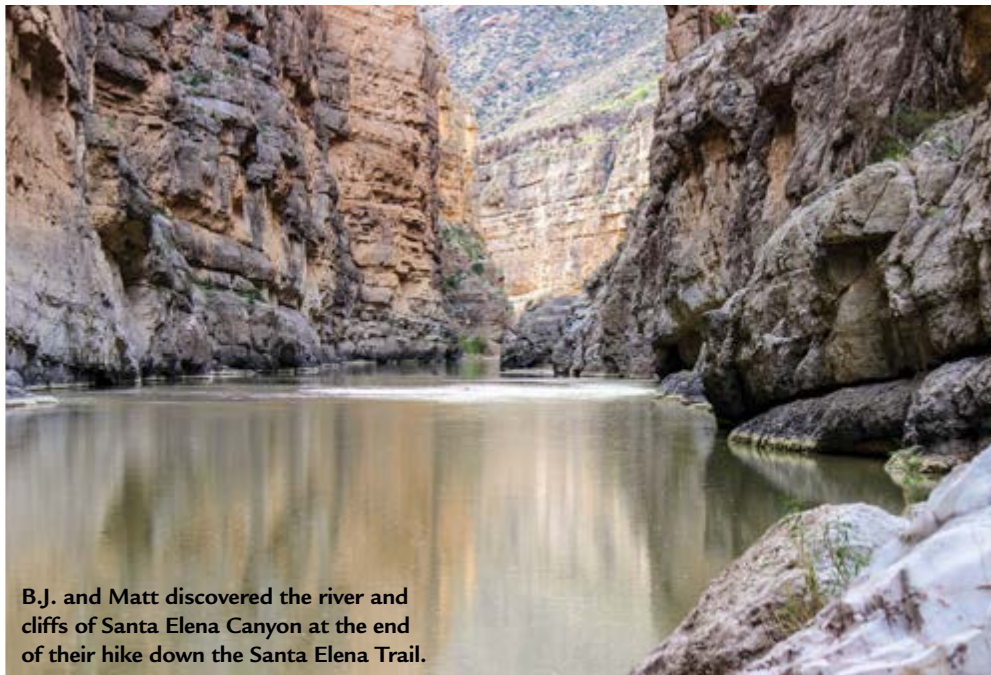
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Here's how the Turners found their Phaeton and tow-along Jeep after they were hit by a surprise snowfall at the Lost Alaskan RV Resort in Alpine, Texas during the last week of 2014



B.J. and Matt discovered the river and cliffs of Santa Elena Canyon at the end of their hike down the Santa Elena Trail.



Driving out of Big Bend National Park on the Old Maverick Road jeep trail.

memorable, Mother Nature's trick, was easier to explain but not nearly so welcome. On New Year's eve, freezing rain moved in. The mercury plummeted to 17 degrees and never climbed above freezing as sleet and rain continued to fall. Trouble was, son Matt had to be back in Fort Worth to work on Friday, January 2. Even so, B.J. says, "I'd never have considered driving home on icy roads if we'd been in our old gas-powered motorhome (a 36 foot Fleetwood)."

As it was, having already driven the Phaeton 6,000 miles and favorably impressed with how easy it handled, how it "smoothed out" roads, and how safe he felt at a non-vibrating wheel, the Turners left Alpine for Fort Worth on New Year's Day. The first 300 miles or more were on ice. Speed varied between 20 miles per hour or less and sometimes up to 50, depending on traffic and conditions. They were 11 hours on the road, a trip they'd normally expect to make in seven or eight hours. "I think the precarious conditions had my adrenalin level so high it kept me wide awake and alert all the way," B.J. asserts.

It was white knuckled driving but "I was really scared only once." That happened shortly after he drove the Phaeton onto I-20 in Abilene headed east toward Fort Worth. "A west-bound FedEx semi coming toward us must have hit a particularly slippery spot. His tandem trailers began swinging wildly side to side. I thought sure he was going to jackknife or roll or both, maybe slide across the median at us. 'I hope he stays on that side!' I told Matt, but all we could do was hope. Any sudden move by us would have been disastrous. Somehow the FedEx driver regained control and we both went down the road in opposite directions. I breathed a sigh of relief and I'm sure that driver did, too."

So what advice do B.J. and Susan offer for negotiating icy roads in a motorhome? Both answered in unison and emphatically: "Just don't do it!" They won't again, they say.

They'd also advise keeping in touch with a reliable weatherman any time you're camping in the winter. Even though they kept their motorhome heated, their water pump froze, water heater lines froze, and freezing rain locked the satellite TV frozen in place. It could not be rotated and, in fact, the TV went black when they tried. Even so, the Turners said, theirs was a trip to remember. "We had fun and we loved visiting the Big Bend area. There are, however, parts of that adventure we don't care to duplicate," says B.J.

B.J. (the initials everyone knows him by stand for his full name, Billy Jack) will retire in a year. Then he and Susan plan to travel extensively in their Phaeton. Susan is ready, having retired after 34 years in public education, much of it in administration and as an educational diagnostician. "Looking forward to those years is the main reason we bought the motorhome, but it turns out we've sure enjoyed having it for our short 'adventure' trips in the meantime."

In addition to those excursions, their motorhome is a tailgating fixture on the stadium parking lot when the Texas Christian University Horned Frog football team plays in town. Usually B. J. takes the Phaeton the night before game day to the assigned spot he and Susan rent by the season. "We have a corps of about 20 people, friends, family, and fellow church members who join us most game days," Susan says. "We grill. We eat. We visit. We laugh. We have a ball. And lately, after a long dry spell, we even win a lot."

Both Turners are TCU graduates, B.J. with a BA degree in accounting, Susan with a BS in elementary education and a master's in special education. B.J. fishes, bicycles, and enjoys golf but says he's "only a fair-weather fan" when it comes to the Dallas Cowboys and other sports teams in the Fort Worth-Dallas area. "If they win, I'm with them." For TCU, it's different. "Just color me purple," he explains. "I'm diehard for the Frogs, win or lose."

B.J. and Susan are active in the Ridglea Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in which they married January 7, 1977. They were wed when B.J. got home on furlough during a four-year stint in the Air Force. It was not until the night before they married that Susan confessed that she thought B.J. was someone else when she first dated him. "We had met before," she says, "but I'd never heard him called anything but B.J. One night I was with girlfriends and he and friends were seated behind us. I heard him talking about girls in Cleburne, where he lived, so I turned and said 'You must be Alan,' the name of another boy I had met from Cleburne. He said: 'No, Billy Jack.'

"I'd never met anyone named Billy Jack nor had he been introduced by that name. 'Billy Jack' movies were popular at the time so I assumed he was just being a smart aleck, giving me that name as a joke. I still thought he was Alan even when he asked me for our first date. People we met when we were out kept saying things like 'Hi, B.J.' So I asked him his full name. Was I ever shocked to learn I was not dating who I thought I was!"

Three days after the wedding, the couple left for Germany, where B.J. was stationed at the time. Four months later, military doctors there successfully removed Susan's gall bladder. Their military life ended in 1979 with a four-month stay at Bergstrom Air Force Base in Austin. When he was discharged, they returned to Fort Worth and B.J. began his college career at TCU.

B.J. first worked for a local bank after graduation. Susan began her career in education. Daughter Jennifer was born April 15, 1986. Matt came along three years later, April 27, 1989. Now, this spring, a second Turner family wedding is their big news. Jennifer, also a TCU graduate and a registered nurse, and Leo Magana were married May 30 this year - in Ridglea Christian Church, of course.

Both B.J. and Susan have been committed to their church for

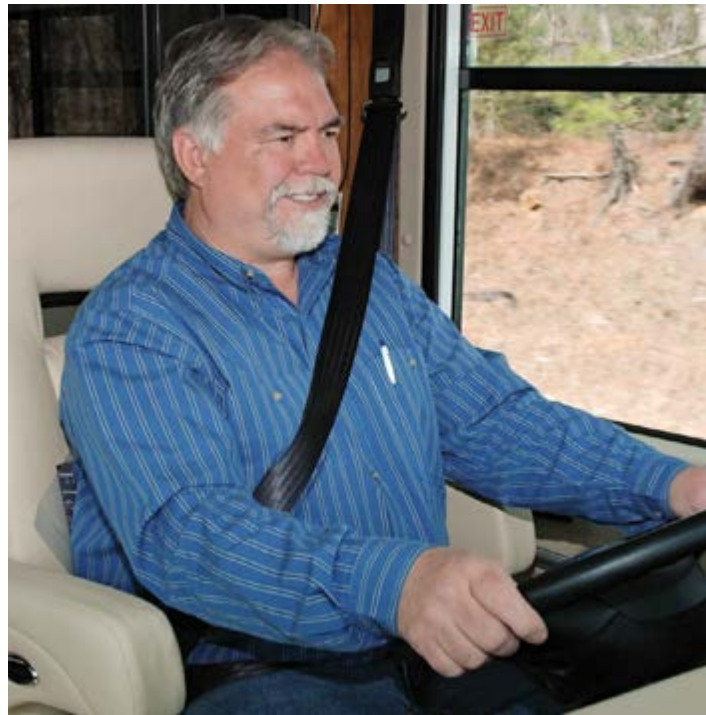
all the years they've lived in the Fort Worth area. They've both headed church departments. B. J. currently is an Elder and church treasurer. He has served also as a board moderator. Susan, an accomplished musician, sings in the choir, has served as a Deacon and an Elder and has assumed many congregational duties. She was in the third grade when she was baptized in this same 60-year-old church. B.J., by contrast, says: "I married into it."

Couldn't all their responsibility become stressful? The best way to handle stress, B.J. thinks, is to "just stay busy." That he does on the job, in the church, or engaged in his hobbies. Ask Susan about planning the wedding for a daughter, and you might get another answer. "Staying busy is a given, not a choice, when you're marrying off a daughter," she declares. Music is Susan's hobby and her way of relieving stress. But she does have a pet peeve. "I just hate it when people murder the King's English with poor grammar," she says.

Both look forward to their short stays in the Phaeton as they await the day when B.J. is retired and they have time for longer trips. "It's like we're in a different world when we're in the Phaeton, even if we only have time to set up one or two days at Benbrook Lake, right here in our own neighborhood," B.J. says. "Very relaxing."

Susan nods agreement. "Once we're in camp, we've left daily responsibilities behind. There'll be time to deal with them when we get back. Away in the motorhome, our priority is just to relax and make ourselves comfortable."

In the Phaeton, that's easy enough. "We did our home work, looked at and studied many motorhome models before we went to Vogt RV Centers in Fort Worth and said, 'this is *the* one.' We like the Phaeton floor plan. We like the quality that's obvious inside and outside. We like the way it drives, the quiet ride. There's not a thing about it we don't like." **RIS**



Inman's Answers

As the editor of "Serious Tech Talk," Danny Inman, a 42-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:

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

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

did this routine four times. I cannot locate an intermittent relay. Is it in the switch itself? I traced the harness but could not find a relay. The coach is built on a Freightliner chassis with a 300-hp Cummins engine. Thanks.

Joe Watson, Cleveland, South Carolina

Dear Joe,

The relay is built into the control switch. It could be the high speed relay in the controller or it could be the motor itself. The best way to figure it out is to check the power from the switch to the motor with a 12v test light. If power is getting to the motor, the problem will be the motor.

Slight Wall Separation Near Skylight in 2008 Allegro

The edge of the roof inside my 2008 Allegro 32BA has pulled away about 1/4-inch from the skylight over the shower and the wall. What should I do to address this problem?

Bob Hensley, West Simsbury, Connecticut

Dear Bob,

Looking at the pictures you sent with your email, it looks like you have some type of water leak that has caused the roof headliner to come unglued from the panel. The only fix will be to replace the damaged panel with a new one, plus finding and repairing the leak. This is a repair that needs to be made at the TMH Service Center in Red Bay or by a very experienced technician.

Faulty Brake Pedal Position Sensor on Ford F53 Chassis

Following is information for anyone with a new F53 Chassis. We bought a 2015 Allegro 32SA and had acceleration problems from the date of purchase that no one could explain. It really got bad in Alaska. We took the coach to Stanley Ford in Kenai, Alaska. They diagnosed the problem as a faulty brake pedal position sensor. A new part was ordered and the dealer installed it as soon as it arrived. We have had no further problems. This sensor ties the brake pedal, the accelerator, and cruise control to the engine's ECM. The sensor shorted out, and when I needed additional power it applied the brakes and thus by default took the engine to idle. I cannot say enough good words about Stanley Ford. They are great.

Larry Cooper, La Habra Heights, California

Dear Larry,

Thank you very much for the tip. Other F53 chassis owners may have had the same experience.

Multiple Problems with Non-Tiffin Components on 2007 Allegro FRED

I own a 2007 Allegro 34TGA FRED. After an initial meltdown with various failures when I first purchased the coach, I enjoyed four years of fairly trouble-free operation (except for the window shades). Then one component after another began to fail dur-

ing the winter of 2013: the steps, back-up camera, leveling jacks, convection-microwave oven, and refrigerator failed within a month of our arrival in Florida. A headlight also disintegrated and had to be replaced. Coincidence? What happened here?

Alfred Lowetz, Lowell, Michigan

Dear Alfred,

When things began to happen two years ago, we may have had a better chance to discover any root causes such as an electrical problem or a power surge when you were connected to shore power. Since four of the five items you listed are dependent on 12v power (oven is 110v), the possibilities could be batteries being hooked up wrong that would have created a higher surge in the system or some type of booster system (maybe a battery charger) being used that was set too high. The odds of five components failing within one month is extremely rare. But your luck may be as bad as mine and it happened. However, your coach is eight years old and we do expect some failures in that period of time, just not all at once.

A Check Valve Could Eliminate Cold Showers

The installation of a check valve in the hot water supply line just

before the shower valve should stop the "Cold Showers Can Be Invigorating, But . . ." as indicated in the Fall 2015 issue (12:4) of Roughing It Smoothly. The trick would be installing it in the existing plumbing system. I would suggest you incorporate this into all of your designs.

Sidney W. (Pete) Garrett, Huntsville, Alabama

Dear Pete,

In the past when we installed check valves in the hot water line, it created pressure as the hot water expanded in the hot water tank. That caused the pop-off valve on the water heater to weep and eventually put water on the floor of the tank's compartment.

Screaching Noise in 2014 Ford Engine Compartment

We have a 2014 Allegro 36LA. There is a screaching noise coming from the engine compartment that happens when we are traveling up or down a grade starting at approximately 4,000 RPM. I have been working with Tiffin's California representative for two years on this problem, but he cannot get any help from Ford. I am really disappointed in both Tiffin and Ford because the noise is extremely annoying.

Eric Kinsel, Tulare, California

Dear Eric,
It sounds like the screeching noise occurs as Ford's clutch fan kicks in when you are running a high RPM. We have to rely on Ford to track down this problem and correct it because they will not allow us to work on their equipment. If we did, it would void your warranty. We will get in touch with our California representative and see if we can get the ball rolling.

Steering Box in 2008 to 2010 Allegro Bus
I read Tony Leonbruno's letter regarding loose steering in his 2010 Allegro Bus on a Spartan chassis. I too had loose steering on my 2008 Allegro Bus. After alignment and reinforcement of a bracket that was flexing (recent recall), my repair shop discovered significant play in the steering box. I was told that some steering boxes from Spartan were recalled. Mine was not recalled, but I had it replaced anyway. My steering improved dramatically. Tony should definitely check the brackets and the steering box. Good luck!

George Barone
Morris, Connecticut

Dear George,
Thanks for the heads up on this. This will very likely help other owners who have a Spartan chassis.

2013 Allegro Bus Has Heavy Diesel Smell in Cockpit

I have two issues with my 2013 Allegro Bus 43QGP. There is a heavy diesel smell in the coach about 30 minutes after starting the engine. It lasts for several hours and then dissipates. The coach also has a severe creaking noise in the cabinet above the driver's head and around to the front slide-out. The noise is most severe when turning or torquing the frame when entering driveways or ramps. A visual inspection does not reveal any angle cracks.

Steve Shull
Rancho Cucamonga, California

Dear Steve,
This question is too broad to answer

since there are so many possibilities. After 30 minutes into the trip, it sounds like the unit is going into regeneration mode creating higher pressure on the exhaust system that causes the leak you are smelling. This would be more of a burnt diesel smell. If it is a raw diesel smell, it could be coming from some point close to the fill neck. Of course, the driver sits just above that point.

As far as the noise close to the driver's seat, you should have someone track the noise carefully while you are in motion and it is happening.

Avoiding a Surge of Cold Water in Your Shower

We have a 2012 Allegro 32CA. When I pause the shower, I turn the cold water faucet off. When I resume, I turn it back on first. The first water will be very hot, so I point the shower head away for two to three seconds. Then the water is returned to the temp I want. This works for us in our unit. Hopefully, it will work for others.

Cindy Moore
Harahan, Louisiana

Dear Cindy,
Thank you for a very practical suggestion.

Setting Up the Inverter Before Winter Storage

What should I do with the inverter to keep my batteries from going dead when I store the motorhome for the winter? I have an Allegro Open Road with an inverter.

Jim Rosowski
Elma, New York

Dear Jim,
For winter storage of your motorhome, be sure that all batteries are fully charged and the inverter is turned off. For greater assurance, disconnect the hot or the ground on the main battery cable.

Exit Door Mount on 2011 Allegro

We have a 2011 Allegro 35QBA. This is our second Allegro with a total combined mileage of 22,000 and counting. I

am concerned about the entry door stop at the top of the doorjamb. I am expecting the wind or an unsuspecting visitor to open the door too far and break the mount off or out of the fiberglass doorjamb. Is there a recall to fix or strengthen the mount? I am thinking of drilling all the way through and mounting a metal plate on the inside which can be hidden by the valance or curtain.

Tony Thornburg
Crawfordsville, Indiana

Dear Tony,
In this floorplan, the entrance door when open is adjacent to the awning arm. The current shock in use is the only device that we could find to restrain the door. There is nothing in the wall that will interfere with your running two bolts through the wall to connect with a plate on the inside wall. Positioned under the valance will keep it from showing.

1999 Allegro Bus Has Hydraulic Jack Problem

We have a 1999 Allegro Bus 35-foot that we purchased new. The only problem we have is the right front HWH leveling jack. It retracts very slowly and sometimes not all the way. I have not been able to get a response from the company. Do you have any suggestions besides changing the fluid—I just did and it did not correct the problem. We love our Allegro Bus.

Charles Westling
Arlington, Washington

Dear Charles,
It could be many things such as the pressure release valve; the jack could have a slight bend in it, making it difficult to retract; the two springs could be weak; something in the cylinder could be bad. Checking all of these items requires a lot of technical expertise.

Replacing Tires on a 2010 Allegro 34TGA

My 2010 Allegro is on a FRED chassis. It currently has 235 80R 22.5 tires. Would it be okay to replace the original tires with

255 80R 22.5? After weighing the coach, I found that the weight on the front tires is only approximately 150 lbs. from the max capacity.

Lloyd Van Duyn
Artesia, California

Dear Lloyd,
Owners have done this before, but there is a good possibility that the tires will rub against the wheel well which could cause damage. The different size will make your speedometer inaccurate and also slightly affect the shifting pattern.

2012 Allegro Breeze Underpowered

I purchased a new 2012 Allegro Breeze in 2012 only to find out it does not have enough power to pull my Jeep Wrangler. Is there anything I can do to boost the power?

Randy Easterling
Santa Rosa, California

Dear Randy,
The 2012 Breeze was designed as a downsized Class A, rear-engine diesel with fuel economy in mind. That prerequisite limited it to pulling a tow vehicle 4,000 pounds or under. We do not know anything you can do to the Navistar engine that will boost its power.

Two Suggestions for Our 2015 Allegro 31SA

We bought our 2015 Allegro 31SA a little over a year ago and we love it. There are a couple of small issues. (1) The bathroom is very well designed except for the placement of the toilet. It is mounted so close to the back wall that the lid and the seat will not stay upright. Placing it two inches forward would solve the problem. (2) We love the queen bed, but it would be much easier to make it up if we had three inches more space on either side.

Bob & Chris Boughton
Portland, Oregon

Dear Bob & Chris,
Someone inside Tiffin Motorhomes must be listening in on your wavelength

because both of these problems were corrected in the 2016 Allegro 31SA.

Coleman AC Units Replaced

We have a 2015 Allegro RED purchased on April 30, 2015. We have had several issues, but the most pressing situation is

the failure of the Coleman AC units. In July with only 3,500 miles on the coach, the rear AC unit was replaced at the Tiffin Service Center in Red Bay. Three months later, the front AC had to be replaced at a service center in Oklahoma. The problem centers on how the unit is attached

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to the coach. It comes loose, then the fan breaks. I was told the whole unit must be replaced each time. Right now it is a major inconvenience, but after my one year warranty expires, it becomes an expensive inconvenience! Neither Tiffin nor Coleman has any suggestions. What should we do at this point?

Dick Gilkey
Edmond, Oklahoma

Dear Dick,
We have had a lot of issues with Coleman air conditioners over the past year, but no one has indicated that it has anything to do with how the unit is attached to the roof of the coach. Most of the time when there is a problem with a new unit, we change the whole air conditioner rather than components inside the air conditioner. We know it is a major inconvenience, but it is something we cannot avoid and we do take care of it.

Owner Wants to Build Matching Table

I would like to identify the laminate that was used to build the countertop on my unit: 2005 Allegro 32BA with Cappuccino Interior. I would like to build a table and a counter extension but I want the laminates to match. We love our motorhome and will one day upgrade. Our coach has great construction and has had minimal problems. I can't say that about the other RVs I have owned.

Harry Williams
Tallasse, Alabama

Dear Harry,
It is very likely that our parts and wood-working department will have this laminate available. Send your VIN and a color photo and they will try to match up what we have in our inventory with what you need.

Day-Night Shades: Up or Down While Driving?

When driving, should the day-night shades be up or down? Or the day shades down and the night shades up? For safe-

ty, I like them both up for driving and for checking out the scenery. But if it's 90+ degrees in the South, then we put the day shades down. The tiny strings on our shades are slowly coming undone and will soon need to be restrung. Do you offer that service? What is the charge? You are doing a nice job on the *Roughing It Smoothly* magazine.

Stella Heimann
Louisville, Kentucky

Dear Stella,
The position of your shades is your preference when driving in bright sun or evening hours. The shade company we use locally here in Red Bay can repair and restring your shades. They charge \$15 to \$20 per shade. If you are here in Red Bay, they will remove them from your coach, make the repair, and then reinstall them. If you have to remove them and ship to our Service Center, the shipping charges will likely cost more than the repair.

Operating Power Awning on 2009 Allegro 32BA

I have a 2009 Allegro 32BA that I bought used. It has a Dometic A&E powered awning with the control panel located in a cabinet above the passenger seat. Along the top of the panel, I can see the words "Wind Sensor, Limit Switch, Patio Switch, Door Switch (with a small red light), Patio Motor, and Door Motor." None of these have an on/off switch. There is also a series of lights numbered from 12 to 24. If you push the only button, the lights will flash sequentially. I think this is to set the wind speed at which the awning will auto retract. My question is, "How do you turn it off?" The two lights stay on. One is showing "on" and the other is showing the selected "wind speed." The instructions say to use the remote control to turn the unit off. There is no remote. Is there another way to turn the unit off? I love *Roughing It Smoothly*. Keep up the good work!

Stephen Botelho
Newark, California

Dear Stephen,
There is not a way to turn the wind sensor off without going into the unit and disconnecting wires in the control panel. The best solution is to call Dometic or TMH Service Center and order a new remote control.

Slide-Out on 2014 Bus Will Not Fully Extend or Retract

The rear DS slide-out on our 2014 Allegro Bus 37AP will not fully extend or retract. Where should we take our coach to have this problem corrected?

Larry Floyd
Fayetteville, Arkansas

Dear Larry,
Not knowing the extent of the problem, your closest dealer is Crain RV in Little Rock. However, based on your location, you may want to consider coming to the factory service center in Red Bay.

Compare the Ride on a Phaeton to the PowerGlide

We have a 2014 Phaeton 40QKH that we love, but we are not so sure about the ride. It is not as smooth as we expected. Does the PowerGlide chassis ride better, and does the tag axle on longer coaches help as far as the ride goes?

Glenn Wesselski
Garwood, Texas

Dear Glenn,
The Allegro Bus will have a much better ride because the overall suspension is better, especially the independent front suspension. The steering system is significantly different and adds to the Bus's smooth and comfortable ride. The tag axle is primarily for supporting the longer and heavier coach, but it also helps improve the ride.

CAT C7 Engine Stalling Predictably

I have a 2004 Phaeton with a CAT C7 engine. I am having trouble with the engine stalling especially when I pull off for refueling. If I run the engine while filling the

tank, it will invariably stall when I try to drive away from the pump. I was following the example of truckers leaving their engines running while refueling.

However, if I turn the engine off while refueling, allowing it to cool a little, it will accelerate normally without stalling. But if I pull into a rest stop to check my map and leave the engine running, it will stall out when I try to accelerate and move back onto the interstate. When it stalls, it will take three to four minutes of pumping on the accelerator to get it back up to highway speed. Freightliner checked out the problem and installed a new sending unit for the accelerator but this did not help. I am afraid that one day this may turn into a major issue. Any suggestion appreciated.

Al Maddux
Cantonment, Florida

Dear Al,
The solution to this problem will have to be discovered at a Caterpillar Service Center. It is likely that the problem is affected by oil pressure. On the CAT engine the injector pump and fuel pressure is directly related to the oil pressure of the engine. A good guess is that the oil pressure may be dropping low when it idles causing the injector pumps to malfunction.

Low Water Pressure in Galley Sink

We have a 2012 Phaeton 42LH. The galley sink has very low pressure when we use either cold or hot water. If we mix the two to get warm water, then the pressure is adequate. The wall for the half bath is adjacent to the galley and the pressure in that sink is fine. We could not find any kinks in the supply lines. Thank you for your suggestions.

Jeane & Neil Knugsvig
South Jordan, Utah

Dear Jeane & Neil,
If all of the supply lines seem to be open, it only leaves the mixing head as a problem. It could have some type of debris in it restricting the flow. The best way to determine this is to take the mixing head

loose and backflush it with a standard water hose.

Two Problems with Our 2007 Allegro Bus

I recently purchased a 2007 Allegro Bus 42QRP that has two unresolved problems. Water is flowing down from the AC

vents when the ACs are on and the coach is traveling down the road. This does not happen when the ACs are on and the coach is parked. Please advise.

The latch to open the door has become very difficult to operate. There was an incident when the door would not

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open from the outside at all, no matter how hard we pulled on the latch or where we positioned the key in the lock. We finally got it to work, but we are concerned that it might malfunction again and lock us inside the coach. The lock was made by TRI MARK. I understand there is a replacement for this lock that is much more reliable and made by another manufacturer. Please advise.

Paul & Laurie Davis
Ocala, Florida

Dear Paul & Laurie,
On the air conditioner, it is possible that the seal on the AC itself has failed between the return air and the output air, which is allowing the water to be picked up by the fan and come out the vents instead of draining properly into the drain line.

On your second question, there is a replacement door lock available through our parts department. Have your VIN number ready when you call to order the new lock.

Resetting the MPG Register on a 2010 Allegro Bus

Thanks for your articles. I have two things I would like ask you about.

In Vol 12:4, page 75, Bill Lemanski

asked about lights on the curved entrance door switches. I have a 2010 Bus (Power-Glide) and fixed the same problem by adding an additional resister. Can you provide me his phone or email or provide mine to him so I can tell him how to fix the problem?

Same issue and page on resetting average MPG. I have looked for your answer on how to reset mine with no results. Can you provide a reference.

Leonard Barbee
Broomfield, Colorado

Dear Leonard,
If it is a 2010 Bus with DEF fluid, the MPG register can be reset at the dash instrument. First pull up the MPG display. Then hold the button down for five seconds to reset it. Prior to that, only a technician at a Cummins service center could reset the register with a program in his laptop. They will charge for this service.

Oil Leaking from Air Dryer on 2013 Allegro Breeze

When we visited Bayou Outdoor Center in Shreveport, we discovered oil leaking from a part that was identified as the air dryer. Bayou referred us to Pliler International in Shreveport and they replaced

the dryer in February 2015.

I recently noticed oil still leaking from the dryer. When I notified Pliler on Nov. 25, 2015 that the problem still existed and had not been corrected, they said the problem was not the dryer but the air compressor. Concerned about the possibility of damage to the systems served by the dryer and air compressor, they assured me that as long as the air compressor maintained adequate air pressure, there was no problem.

At this point, I do not have confidence in Pliler International providing reliable information. Could you please provide some clarity to this problem?

James Overton
Shreveport, Louisiana

Dear James,
It is not uncommon to have an oily film coming out of the air dryer. However, it should not be dripping. If you get oil through your air tank when you bleed it, the problem needs to be addressed. If you bleed your air tanks and no oil comes out, it's probably nothing to worry about.

What Air Pressure Should I Use After These Add-Ons?

A little history first about my coach: I was having serious problems with steering control on my 2010 Allegro 35QBA. The body was listing to the PS when parked on the level floor in my garage. Gary Harris, production manager in the TMH chassis plant, had me install a spring spacer on the rear PS spring, which helped a lot. He recommended running 85 psi in my tires that are rated for 110 psi. The local Ford dealer's service department did a front-end alignment and recommended I run 110 psi. Running 85 psi has helped the handling.

I had Camping World install a Safe-T unit on my tie rods and it helps as well. They noticed a feathering problem on my front tires and recommended rotating the front tires to the back to increase tire life and further assist in the steering problem.

So now my question is: What air pres-

sure should I carry in my tires? I am really not concerned about getting 100,000 miles out of these tires, although they still look good with 30,000 miles after running them with 110 psi for five years. UV deterioration is not an issue since my coach is under roof when not in use. Thanks for your help.

Herschel Anservitz
Winchester, Kentucky

Dear Herschel,
The only way to be sure is to fill the unit with water and fuel and the supplies you normally carry on a trip. Go to a truck scale and weigh the coach, and then weigh separately the front tires and the rear tires. In your manuals that came with the coach, you should find a Michelin tire guide. Match your tire size with the weights of the front and rear of your coach. The chart will calculate the air pressure you should be using.

Onan Generator on 2004 Allegro Will Not Crank

I have a 2004 Allegro 32BA with an Onan Micro Quiet 4000 genset. The coach has 11,000 miles. and the genset 68 hrs. The genset has been hard to start. Recently the genset ran rough for about one minute then stalled. Now it will not start. I am unable to locate any fuel filter and am hoping you can help me with the location and how to access it.

Darrell Greenwood
West Linn, Oregon

Dear Darrell,
The only fuel filter is located just inside the case where the fuel line enters. If you change the fuel filter and that does not help, due to the low number of hours I suspect the problem is going to be a gummed up carburetor. A good product to use to clean your carburetor is a fuel additive called Sea Foam that can be purchased at your local parts store. You should also use Sea Foam in your gas tank. Check the fuel in your tank to be sure it has not gone bad by setting too long.

Dashboard Lighting Too Dim Even at Night

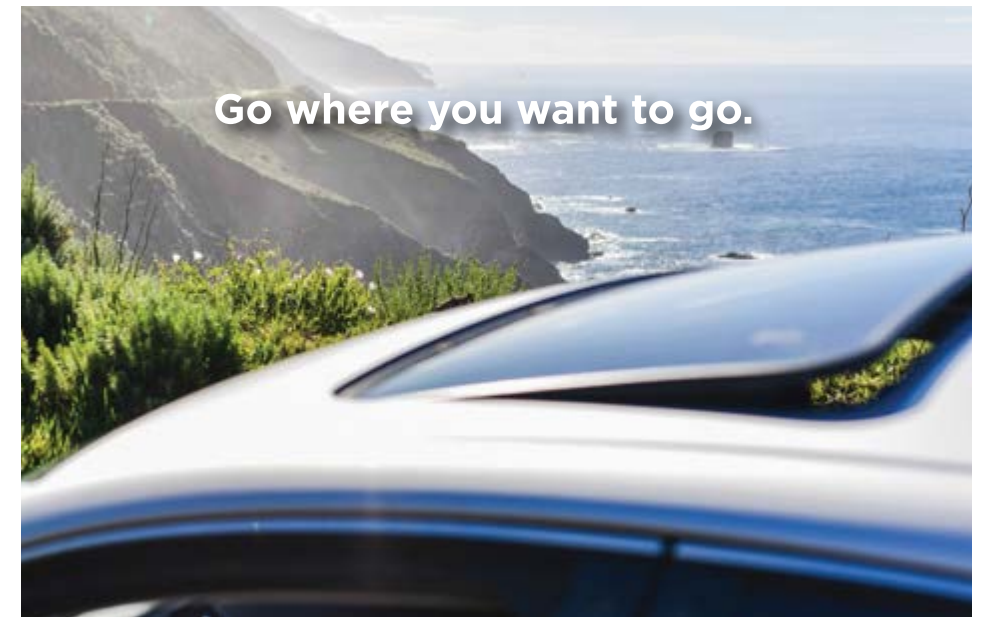
You have said several times that the reason why the warning lights and the indicator lights on the dashboard are so dim is because of a lot of sunlight coming in through the windows.

Well, if that is true, please explain why at night, the lights are still dim and barely readable. I have a 2015 Allegro Bus 37AP.

I think the problem may lie elsewhere — perhaps too low voltage supplied to the dash instruments. I hope your electrical engineer will check out this possibility.

Paul Trombetta
Fort Walton Beach, Florida

Dear Paul,
Of all of the Allegro Buses I have driven in the last few years, and I have also asked the delivery drivers for their experiences,



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we sometimes have to use the rheostat to turn the brightness down at night. If yours is consistently dim, this is something that needs to be checked by a PowerGlide service center. The dash lights in all of our diesel brands seem to be okay. It's the Ford dash lights that get the most complaints and we have no control over them.

ADA Compliance with Control Knobs and Opening Devices

My husband and I purchased a 2014 Allegro RED in February 2014 that we enjoy very much. We have encountered one problem that is significant for us. I cannot drive the coach if there is a possibility of needing to use the windshield wipers as my hands cannot manage the tiny knob on the dash. Can Tiffin offer a replacement that is ADA compliant for people with hand or nerve disabilities? We also had to replace the knob on the bathroom door with a lever. This is something Tiffin Motorhomes should consider as there are many people with arthritis or other hand-nerve problems that preclude their being able to open doors with knobs or operate controls with small knobs.

Jill Toler
San Jose, California

Dear Jill,

There is not an alternative switch available in our parts inventory that we can use to replace the current one. You could pull the existing knob off and glue it to a larger knob you can grip and then slide it back on the post.

Chalking on Side of 2013 Phaeton

I own a 2013 Phaeton 40QBH. I have a problem with a constant white chalking coming down the sides of the coach when it rains. The tech I spoke with in the TMH Service Center suggested waxing the roof. I have done that three times and it does

not fix the problem. I wanted to paint or put sealer on the roof, but the Service Center technician said not to do that. Do you have any suggestion that will correct the problem? Thanks.

Joseph Beatrice
Titusville, Florida

Dear Joseph,

Your 2013 unit is reaching the point where the caulking needs to be resealed anyway. Most likely this is where the streaking is coming from. Take a wash brush and cleaner and wash the caulking and remove any loose caulking. Then reseal the old caulking, covering it completely with the new.

House Batteries Go Dead on 2-Year Old Allegro

We purchased our first Tiffin motorhome about two years ago — an Allegro 36LA. We have been so impressed with the design, the features, and the quality of construction of our coach.

We did, however, have one unwelcome problem during the last annual maintenance trip to our dealership: all four of our house batteries had gone bad after less than two years of use. Our motorhome is in storage about eight months each year. When we are traveling we are almost always connected to shore power. When the coach was in storage, we checked the water levels in the batteries almost monthly, ran the generator every 4–6 weeks for at least a half hour, and always turned off the 12-volt switch when we left. The dealer was unable to detect any short or other obvious draw on the batteries that would cause this problem. Would that be your advice as well?

They did indicate when a coach is stored for this length of time, the switch on the inverter also needs to be turned to the off position. We did not find this

advice anywhere in our manual or the CD provided by Tiffin. If it is accurate, it would be good to add this to the information provided to new owners.

Jim Meier
Antioch, Illinois

Dear Jim,

Your dealer was correct about turning the inverter off during long-term storage. It will put a draw on the batteries. But the batteries did have enough power to start the generator. Therefore, they must have been holding a pretty good charge. With proper maintenance and checking, the batteries should last at least two years. I don't know what could have caused all four of your batteries to go bad simultaneously.

Minor Repairs on a 2013 Allegro

My husband and I own a 2013 Allegro Open Road. The hose that you see curled up fell down and was covering the accelerator while driving. Brian McKenzie, service manager at Bucars in Balzac where the vehicle was purchased, said just curl it up to keep it out of the way (where was it in the first place?). Plus we have no way of holding up all the wires that you see hanging down.

On another overnight trip, the padded cover on the front of one of the drawers under the bench dinette fell off and the drawer came crashing out with our toaster oven inside. We do not see a way to reattach the padded cover to the drawer. Do you have solutions for our problems?

Hilda W. Reiner,
Calgary, Alberta

Dear Hilda,

The excessive hose that dropped down onto the floor goes to the heating and air conditioning vents. It needs to be removed, cut to the proper length, and reinstalled. The drawer facing should be a simple repair by using longer screws or the same screws in a different place if the holes have been reamed out. Whoever installs it should be careful not to use screws so long that they might pierce the vinyl.

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THE 2017 ALLEGRO BREEZE 32BR *Continued from page 12*

Red Bay and the Franklin-Colbert county line, I decided to run at 60 miles per hour. I had full wet tanks (gas and water). I was just a little surprised when the Breeze held the 60 mph target setting without sliding back at all.

The next test was hooking up my 3,500 lb. Saturn L-300 and running the same route. From the bottom of the long hills to the top, the speedometer dropped only five miles per hour.

With its independent front suspension and new steering box, driving the 2017 Breeze is comparable to driving a Chevy Suburban. The low ratio steering means almost zero play in the steering wheel. On a level straightaway pulling the Saturn, I took my hands off the wheel to see how long it would run true — over 10 seconds. This is a coach that the ladies will love to drive.

You will also be pleased with the Breeze's fuel economy. Early

tests are showing solid double-digit numbers.

If you are a couple moving up from a towable to a motorhome, the 2017 Breeze would be an excellent choice. The power and performance of the Cummins rear engine diesel and the build quality of a Tiffin coach create one of the best choices on the road today.

On the other end of the spectrum, if you are seasoned RVers who wish to downsize and make changes to your RV lifestyle — but want to hold on to some of the features of a full-size Class A — then you, too, will find the Breeze an excellent choice: rear engine diesel, air ride suspension, and the interior features of a big Class A.

Remember, Tiffin wants you to enjoy roughing it smoothly — and wherever you go, we go. Our hallmark service begins with the sale. **RIS**

DEALER PROFILE *Continued from page 56*

"We would like to stock 15 Tiffin coaches to present the six brands that Tiffin builds," Weiss said. "However, because Tiffin does offer so many options, at least a third of our customers enjoy planning their motorhomes to reflect their personal tastes.

"About 30 percent of our owners who plan their coaches go to Red Bay to watch them being built. We encourage them to do so

because we know they will have a greater appreciation of how Tiffin coaches are built. They see the craftsmanship that goes into every Tiffin and all of the quality control procedures that are implemented. They are our happiest customers," Weiss explained.

"Customer satisfaction is the bottom line for Campers Inn RV," Weiss assured. "You won't be in business very long if you can't build on customer referrals and repeat business." **RIS**

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