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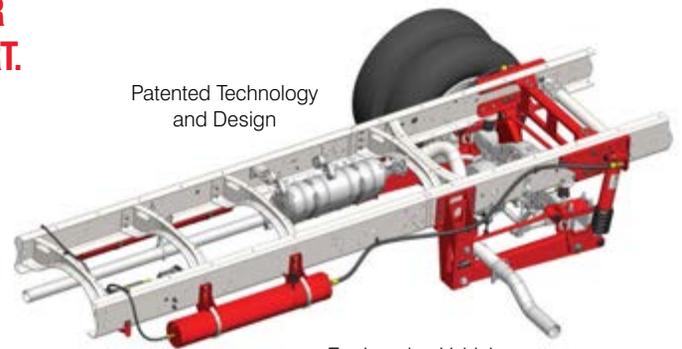


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# Roughing It Smoothly®

January 2020 Volume 17, Number 1

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Owners and RV enthusiasts are enjoying the *Roughing It Smoothly* digital magazine: [rismag.org](http://rismag.org)

In January 2020, Tiffin's owner-acclaimed quarterly magazine began its 17th year of publication. In November 2017, we launched and tested the digital magazine our readers can enjoy online the same day we upload the typesetting files to the printer.

You can read all back issues (16 years) of *Roughing It Smoothly* online at [rismag.org](http://rismag.org)

On this contents page, click on the page number for the story you want to read and it will jump directly to that double-page spread. To go back to the contents page, put "4" in the page selection box at top center of screen. You can enlarge/reduce the type with the +/- symbols at top center of the screen.

The most useful feature is the "Search" function. In the upper right corner, clicking on SEARCH will open a column of options on the left side of your screen. Put in a word (such as "Utah" or "trains") or multiple words to find a story. Then click on "Search" at the bottom of

the column. You can search for a particular motorhome floor plan, such as Phaeton 40QTH or 33AA for a featured review or a Q&A in Tech Talk. Search for a travel story to use in planning your next trip to a state or national park, and much more.

The web address (URL) for each advertiser is "hot," meaning that you can click on it and go directly to the website.

This software was originally developed for daily newspapers and we have not succeeded in getting the software to print the pages of the story in the magazine format in which it originally appeared. However, you can double-left-click anywhere on the story to open a reformatted story in manuscript form (it fills an 8.5 x 11 page). This will allow you to print the pictures and the text in an easy-to-read digest. The programmers are working to create a software update to print the pages exactly as they appear in the printed edition of the magazine.

Online readers will receive the magazine three weeks ahead of the approximate date *RIS* appears in mailboxes. Check [rismag.org](http://rismag.org) on Jan. 15, Apr. 15, July 15, and Oct. 15 to read the Winter, Spring, Summer, and Fall editions respectively.

The digital magazine is presented online in facing pages; it is formatted for laptops, iPads, iPhones, Android OS, and most tablets that are WiFi capable. Some of the digital newspaper features (e.g. Facebook, Twitter, Pinterest, etc.) are applications that we are still developing for *RIS*.

We designed the expanded digital magazine to better serve both our readers and advertisers. We hope you will enjoy the digital *Roughing It Smoothly*. Please send your suggestions to [fred1902@gmail.com](mailto:fred1902@gmail.com).

### Magazine Continues to Grow

Over 34,000 Tiffin owners are now receiving *Roughing It Smoothly* through the U.S. and Canadian postal service. Over 43,000 have chosen

to read *RIS* online at [rismag.org](http://rismag.org). Our dealers are distributing 17,000 copies in their showrooms. As *RIS* begins its 17th year, it is the largest magazine published by an RV manufacturer in number of pages and total distribution.

In each issue you will still find three cards for sending information to the editorial office in Monroe, Georgia. Using the "From the Road" card, we invite you to tell fellow Tiffin coach owners about your experiences and the special places you have discovered in your travels. If the card is not large enough, please type a whole page double-spaced, and mail it to Fred Thompson, Book Production Resources, P.O. Box 1150, Monroe, GA 30655-1150. Be sure to include your name and address, phone number, and email address in case we need to edit or ask for more information. Color prints are welcome and we will use them if we have the space. We do not return color prints or manuscript. You can also send your "From the Road" contribution by email to [fredthompson1941@hotmail.com](mailto:fredthompson1941@hotmail.com). You may attach your images to your email. Images should be at least one megabyte in size. On the subject line of the email, write FROM THE ROAD.

### Advertisers

To advertise in *RIS*, contact Dale Cathey at 817-247-5147. [dalecathey1942@gmail.com](mailto:dalecathey1942@gmail.com). An advertisement in *Roughing It Smoothly* does not constitute an endorsement of the product by Tiffin Motorhomes, Inc.

### 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, see instructions below to add your name and your motorhome's data to the mailing list. *RIS* is not published by the Allegro Club.

### New Subscription or Address Change Online

Please let us know if you like this new system. Go to [Tiffin.dragonforms.com/RISMAG](http://Tiffin.dragonforms.com/RISMAG). The landing site will give you four options:

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To facilitate your request, provide the account number and last name as it appears on the label of the last magazine you received.

### Change of Address

If you are not online, please use the enclosed change of address card in this magazine which is pre-addressed to the publishing office in Monroe, Georgia. Tape the label from the front cover to the change of address card and carefully print your new address below it.

### 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](mailto:RIStechtalk@gmail.com). Please include your name, address, and phone number. **If you need an immediate answer to a service problem, you should call 256-356-0261.**

**Don't miss the three new floor plans introduced for the first time this month at the Tampa RV show:  
2021 Allegro RED 340 38LL  
2020 Allegro RED 38KA  
2020 Allegro Bus 35CP**

## The Packard Place

by Bob Tiffin

As most of my readers already know, I have two hobbies: building motorhomes and collecting and restoring antique cars. Before a car can be called an “antique,” it must be at least 25 years old and recognized as such by the American Antique Automobile Association (AAAA). All of the 25 cars in my collection are at least 50 years old.

The oldest car in the collection is 88 years old and the most valuable: a 1932 Packard Twin Six Series 906 Sport Phaeton Custom Body in the style of Dietrich. I have been collecting cars since 1986 when I bought a 1940 Ford convertible from Johnny Beck in Napa, California. Four years ago Martin Hveem did a full frame-off restoration.<sup>1</sup> In 2017 and 2018, it won national awards in Antique Automobile Club of America (AACA) Shows. In 1988 I acquired my first 1957 Ford Fairlane Skyliner. I still own it today along with two other 1957 Skyliners.

Part of the pleasure in the hobby of collecting antique cars is restoring them to their original condition. While it takes con-

siderable care and maintenance, all of my restored cars are drivable, which for me is just part of the hobby.

Until recently, the cars were stored in our oldest warehouse built in 1959, not far from my office. Each car was protected with a fitted cover. Since I don't drive them in the rain, I really had to watch the weather for a long, dry weekend to drive one home to Florence on Friday and return it to storage on Monday. Being a weather observer all of my life, I can report that we usually get a light rain about every three days. However, our weather

---

Designed to accommodate 26 restored antique American automobiles, I had constructed over the last 18 months a 75 x 125 foot building that is climate controlled. The Packards are the centerpiece of my collection and are flanked by two collections from the 1950s—Cadillacs and Fords. The building was also designed to house two to three Tiffin motorhomes to be used in training the sales teams from our dealerships. When visiting our plant, they usually stay at a hotel only two blocks away.



1. See “Favorites in My Collection,” [rismag.org](http://rismag.org), January 2019, page 6.



is driest in September and October. As a general rule, we get a wind from the north for a couple of days and it goes full circle. Then the direction begins to change and the wind comes from the southeast, bringing rain. We have more rain in the late fall. In North Alabama, our annual rainfall is 44 inches. But sometimes we get as much as 75 inches. When we do get a lot of rain, our winter temperatures get a lot colder. That makes me think of an interesting weather story, but I will come back to that later. The bottom line is, I didn't get to drive and enjoy any of my antique cars very often.

About three years ago, I decided to build some type of climate-controlled structure near my home in Florence suitable for housing my collection. With just one pretty day, I could take a car for a drive in the country, and return it to its garage by evening. By the end of the 1990s, with only one or two exceptions, I narrowed my collection to three brands: pre-war Packards and post-war Cadillacs and Fords from the 1950s.<sup>2</sup>

The best automobiles built in the pre-World War II years, primarily in the 1930s, 2. See "Every Man Should Have a Hobby," [rismag.org](http://rismag.org), July 2015, page 4.

were Packards. The company registered more automobile-related patents between 1910 and 1941 than all of the other auto manufacturers put together. They also owned 55 percent of the total luxury car market in the U.S. One of their best patents was developed in 1936 and brought to market in 1937—independent front suspension (IFS). That year Packards gained significant momentum in the market because of their driveability and wonderful ride. The IFS we use today on the Allegro Bus is very similar to Packard's 1937 design. Packard's great V12 engine was modified to power the P-51D fighter

plane. Introduced into the Eighth Air Force in 1943 as a fighter, it was instrumental in defeating the Luftwaffe as it escorted Allied heavy bombers from Britain to Germany and back. Quality and excellent design have always been a passion of mine, so it is obvious why my collection moved strongly to Packards.

After the war, Packard was in excellent financial condition. However, top management made several serious management and design mistakes that eventually doomed the company. It produced its last automobile in 1958.

The cars I grew up with and experienced



in the 1950s have nostalgic meaning for me. During that decade my focus narrowed to Cadillac and Ford. Henry Ford's company continued to build everyman's car, now with many colors and several models. Cadillac's engineering and imaginative design took a commanding presence in the luxury market.

Not far from where we live in Florence, a utilities company closed a facility and put the lot up for sale. Judy and I liked the location and bought the property. I sketched out a 75 x 125-foot rectangular building and took my construction ideas to a local architectural firm to do the design work and create a bill of materials to project the cost.

The fully insulated structure with a Georgian brick exterior features a 6/12 roof capped at the top with a 6-foot wide raised section that accommodates windows on both sides, capturing light throughout the day. The brightly lit interior has a

---

Many antique car collectors are satisfied by just owning a restored car. For me, part of the experience is the enjoyment of driving any car in my collection. Since I only drive the cars in good weather, it was important to have them stored near my home here in Florence. Now Judy and I can enjoy short trips to nearby destinations and around town.



light gray epoxy-coated concrete floor that is impervious to oil.

I designed the proportions of the floor plan to allow both outside flanks to accommodate eight cars each. The back wall of the facility has room to park nine Packards under a lighted Packard sign that once graced a dealership. When visitors enter the building, their attention is drawn instantly to the sign and the elegant Packards from the 1930s. We decided to call our new facility The Packard Place.

The front wall has a centered 14-foot retractable garage door to allow us to bring in two to three motorhomes for training sales teams from our Tiffin dealerships. The sales teams for several years have stayed at the nearby Hampton Inn and made a 100-mile round trip each day for sales training in Red Bay. We will also have storable tables and chairs to quickly set up a classroom setting as needed.

Now I would like to tell you that interesting weather story. We have a lot of rain in winter and the weather here can turn very cold. But nothing like what happened on January 30, 1966. That was the coldest day in Alabama's recorded weather history. At Red Bay and New Market, the mercury plummeted to 27 degrees below zero. In Russellville, the weather station at WWWR recorded 24 degrees below zero. Hal Kirby, the radio station manager, was so shocked he sent the thermometer to the U.S. Weather Bureau for testing and they confirmed the device was accurate.

I was working at Tiffin Supply at the time. Every well pump in the area burst. Our company advertised that we sold and serviced everything needed to operate your home and farm. We had to go into emergency mode and prioritize the pumps to repair first. We started with farmers who had chicken houses and livestock. We went next to customers who had above-ground well houses serving their homes. Most of the homes in the country still had open wells from which they could draw water with a bucket.

With our service repair staff out on calls continuously, I became the repair person to fix the pumps that owners disconnected and brought to our shop in Red Bay. I worked 12 hours a day for two straight weeks until we ran out of parts. It took us a week to get more parts from Wayne Well Pumps in Fort Wayne, Indiana. After three weeks, we finally caught up.

I know you are wondering, what does this story have to do with motorhomes? As a 23-year-old employee, I learned a valuable lesson that was to help me years later in operating Tiffin Motorhomes. I learned that service is all about the urgency your customer is experiencing. So now when someone has an issue with a Tiffin motorhome, I can empathize with the urgency and feel their desperate need to get their motorhome repaired so they can continue using it.

This lesson has filtered down to all of our employees. Today, from the parts and shipping departments to our service techs on the phones and our techs who work in the bays, they all understand the importance of serving customers whose needs are often very urgent. 

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**3 STEP EASY CARE PLAN**

**STEP 1 // WIPE REGULARLY**

Wiping bugs and road grime off your vehicle, with a wet soft cloth, as soon as you get a chance is essential to keeping your film looking great. This will also reduce the risk of staining and discoloration from bug acids, runoff stains, and road grime left on for an extended period. When done apply **303 Aerospace Protectant!**

**STEP 2 // WASH MONTHLY**

Washing monthly will give your film the deep clean it deserves and will ensure the film remains crystal clear. We recommend using **Advanced RV & Auto Wash** and a soft cotton or lambswool mitt to apply. Do not use any abrasive brushes, rags, cloths, or compounds. When you're done don't forget to apply **303 Aerospace Protectant!**

**DO NOT:** Use Rain-Ex products or Bug & Tar Removers

**STEP 3 // WAX QUARTERLY**

Waxing your film on a quarterly basis, or more, will add that extra layer of protection to your film. Keeping it waxed will prevent damage from bug acids and road grime, and allow the film to effortlessly be wiped clean. We recommend using **Advanced RV & Auto Wax**, a synthetic polymer cream wax designed specifically for Diamond Shield.

**ADVANCED RV & AUTO WASH**

Washing your film on a per trip or monthly basis will ensure it remains crystal clear and free of bugs, dirt, and road grime. **Advanced RV & Auto Wash** is specifically designed and recommended for use on Diamond Shield, graphics, and other automotive surfaces.

**ADVANCED RV & AUTO WAX**

Waxing the film regularly will ensure long lasting shine and continued performance. We specifically recommend **Advanced RV & Auto Wax** for Diamond Shield and other automotive surfaces. Make sure to use a soft applicator pad or mitt.

**GENERAL CARE PRECAUTIONS**

Several cleaning techniques and products that should **NEVER** be used on areas protected by Diamond Shield:

- DO NOT:** Pressure Wash
- DO NOT:** Use Rain-X Products
- DO NOT:** Use Any Abrasive Brushes, Rags, Cloths or Compounds

This general care list is not comprehensive. Please call **Diamond Shield** at 1-888-806-5862 before using any products not specifically listed on our website. Using unapproved sprays, cloths, or waxes may cause damage to the film, which may not be covered under warranty.

Recommended products are available online at [www.Diamond-Shield.com](http://www.Diamond-Shield.com)

**Recalls for 2018-2020**

**Kidde NHTSA # 17E-062, Tiffin NHTSA # 17V-841, Kidde Fire Extinguisher Recall**

Customers with Tiffin units from all models 2003 to early models of 2018 should immediately contact Kidde to see if your fire extinguisher is involved. If so, you can request a free replacement fire extinguisher and instructions on returning the recalled unit as it may not work properly in a fire emergency. Contact Kidde toll free at 855-262-3540. Monday-Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. EST; Saturday & Sunday 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. EST; or online: [www.kidde.com](http://www.kidde.com) and click on "product Safety Recall" for more information.

**NHTSA Recall # 18V-328, Tiffin Recall # TIF-109 2013- 2018 Allegro Open Road Reinforcement of Frame Rail at Tow Hitch**

Tiffin Motorhomes has decided that a defect, which relates to motor vehicle safety, exists on the following models of motorhomes: **2013-2018 Allegro Open Roads**. Tiffin Motorhomes has become aware that the steel of the frame rail where the hitch is attached to the motorhome needs to be reinforced to strengthen the hitch attachment to the frame rail. If the steel is not reinforced the hitch may come loose from the

motorhome and that may result in the loss of the tow vehicle, which could result in a crash causing injury or damage to property. Tiffin Motorhomes will provide a steel insert that will double the amount of steel at the points where the hitch is attached to the frame rail of the motorhome. Tiffin Motorhomes previously issued a recall in March of 2017 concerning an issue with the failure of the hitch attachment on certain Allegro Open Road motorhomes due to the sizing of the bolt holes in the frame rail. *All motorhomes included in the original recall that did not have a steel gusset box installed will need to complete this new recall repair.* If this new recall repair is not completed, the hitch may fail even after completing the previous recall repair. **Notice:** As of October 1, 2018, Tiffin Motorhomes will not pay the customer for doing the work to install the steel insert on the Hitch Recall NHTSA 18V-328. Tiffin allows the steel insert to be sent to the customer as a courtesy so customers can find a dealer or service center near their current location. Having the part already allows the recall to be completed more quickly. It was never our intention for the customer to make the repair. That being said, from

this point on, if customer decides not to heed our warning, customer is assuming the liability for the repair were it to fail in the future. Tiffin will not be responsible for any future warranty repairs to that hitch or for any damage that may arise from the recall not being completed properly.

**NHTSA Recall # 18V-341, Tiffin Recall # TIF-110 PTL Entry Door Lock Adjustment, 2018 models**

Tiffin Motorhomes has decided that a defect, which relates to motor vehicle safety, exists on the following models of motorhomes: **2018 Allegro Open Roads, 2018 Allegro RED's, 2018 Allegro Breezes, 2018 Allegro Buses, 2018 Phaetons and 2018 Zephyrs built between January 2, 2018 and May 15, 2018.** These specific motorhomes have an entry door equipped with a PTL door lock. Tiffin Motorhomes has found that under certain circumstances these doors could open in transit. These specific doors could open because they are equipped with a door lock that was over-tightened at the time it was manufactured. The over tightening of the door lock can make it more

*Continued on page 88*

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## Tiffin Allegro Club Rally, Amana, Iowa

June 8–11, 2020

By Sally Moore

Join us in the historic Amana Colonies in Amana, Iowa on June 8-11, 2020 for our summer Tiffin Allegro Club rally! *(For the most advanced notice of Tiffin rallies, be sure you have subscribed to our online newsletter, TiffinSideroads.com.)* This is a beautiful area to visit and explore. Visit the April 2012 edition of *Roughing It Smoothly* magazine ([rismag.org](http://rismag.org)) to learn more about the unique history of the Amana Colonies. We will host 300 coaches at the Amana RV Park located on 80 acres along the beautiful Iowa River. The Amana RV Park has been voted the #1 RV park in Iowa by Readers Digest. We will have a display of beautiful new Tiffin Motorhomes available to tempt you!

The campground has 50 AMP electrical service, sewer and water. Wi-fi is available. Our rally begins on Monday, June 8th and coaches will depart on Friday, June 12th. If you wish to arrive at the RV park prior to the rally or stay after the rally, contact the park directly at 319-622-7616 for reservations.

WILLKOMMEN is the German greeting for 'Welcome' and we want to be the first to say Willkommen to you! Visit

[amanaheritage.org](http://amanaheritage.org) for information on things to see and do in the Colonies such as the Amana Heritage Museum. There are numerous day trips in eastern Iowa for you to explore before or after the rally. The Herbert Hoover Presidential Library is located in West Branch, Iowa just 34 miles from Amana. The John Deere Tractor Plant offers multiple tours in Waterloo; the 1989 Field of Dreams Movie Site is located in Dyersville, Iowa, and open for daily tours. Kinze Manufacturing hosts the Kinze Innovation Center as well as factory tours Monday through Thursday in Williamsburg which is only 11 miles from Amana. The Riverside Casino and Golf Resort is located in Riverside, Iowa only 35 miles away. Visit the websites of these attractions for more information and details on arranging tours. Whatever your schedule, be sure to allow time to visit the delicious restaurants, cheese and meat markets, and gift shops.

Your rally fee will include multiple catered meals, ice cream socials, live entertainment, four nights camping, seminars, shopping with RV suppliers and local vendors, and other fun activities. Your rally fee also includes our terrific technicians performing up to three minor repairs on your coaches. You have made a

sizable investment in purchasing a beautiful motor coach. Take this valuable opportunity at our rallies to learn all you can by attending our seminars and talking with representatives from Tiffin suppliers such as Freightliner, Onan, Triple H Electronics, and others.

The cost for one coach and two adults is only \$499. (Coach with one adult is \$399.) Additional guests staying in the coach with you will be \$150 per person. **We will begin accepting reservations on Tuesday, February 11th at 11:00 AM Central Time.** You must have a current membership in the Tiffin Allegro Club to register for rallies. Our rallies sell out very quickly! Don't delay if you are interested in attending! *The only way to register for the rally* will be online at [Tiffinmotorhomes.com](http://Tiffinmotorhomes.com). (The Registration Form *will not be available* until registration opens and it will be removed when the rally is full.) Click on the Owner's tab, select Tiffin Allegro Club, and click on Rallies. *Open the Registration Form by clicking on the space as instructed.*

Required information to complete form:

- Tiffin Allegro Club membership #
- Name, address, cell #
- Model, year & length of Tiffin coach
- First time rally attendee?
- Request for handicap parking area?

Complete the required information by filling in the blanks and click SUBMIT. Pay for the rally on the next page by entering your credit card information into this secure PayPal site. It is not necessary to have a PayPal account for payment. You can pay as a "guest" the same as those who have an account. If the rally sells out before you register, don't despair! Add your name to our waiting list and we will contact you if a space becomes available.

An outside vendor accumulates all registration forms and provides them to the Club in the order in which they are received. This eliminates the problems with overloading our email server, jamming the fax machine, etc. *No registrations will be accepted by mail, in person, or by telephone.* Anyone not having access to the internet can ask a friend or family member to register for them. This rally will sell out quickly so don't delay in getting your registration completed online. Call our office at 256-356-8522 ahead of time if you have any questions.

We hope your 2020 travel plans include spending time with us at a Tiffin Allegro Club rally! The comradery with other owners and local chapters is invaluable. Tiffin representatives from Red Bay will be on hand. Make your plans now!

## Tiffin Fall Foliage Rally Lewisburg, West Virginia

By Sally Moore

Cool but sunny skies welcomed 316 Tiffin motorhomes to the State Fair of West Virginia campground in late October for our fall foliage rally. Coaches arrived as much as a week early in order to enjoy the beautiful, rolling hills of Greenbrier County. Several took advantage of the opportunity to spend the day on the Cass Railroad with a tour to the top of Bald Knob Mountain. The leaves were just beginning to show their gorgeous colors for fall and the open-air train cars were perfect for photos. Many others enjoyed spending time at the famous Greenbrier Resort and participating in the historical Bunker Tour. Anytime you participate in a Tiffin rally, you are encouraged to arrive in the area early or stay after the rally to enjoy the sights. Once the rally begins, everyone is busy with rally activities so sightseeing is best planned for pre or post rally!

Smiles were frequent as our team of volunteers greeted each coach and assisted them in parking their rig. The rally kicked off on Monday evening with announcements by Kelly Moore and welcoming comments by Bob Tiffin, founder of Tiffin Motorhomes. After a delicious meal catered by Blue Ribbon Catering, everyone enjoyed getting to know their neighbors and making new friends. Door prize drawings were held to distribute Tiffin bags, blankets, gift cards and much more!

Everyone enjoyed a touching tribute to all the veterans in attendance. The flag of each branch of the US military was presented. Veterans stood as their flag was displayed and their anthem played. First responders were also acknowledged. The salute ended with Lee Greenwood's "God Bless the USA." Everyone had been given small American flags which they proudly waved as they stood to their feet. Thank you, veterans! We are privileged to honor

## 2020 Tiffin Allegro Club Rally Schedule

Mark your calendars now and make plans to join us at one of the following 2020 Tiffin Allegro Club rallies! Our rallies provide you the opportunity for comradery with other Tiffin owners, minor repairs/service by Tiffin service techs and factory representatives, meals, entertainment, seminars, and other fun activities. The newest and latest Tiffin coaches will be on display! Each year our rallies sell out within minutes, so don't delay in registering. Give us a call at 256-356-8522 if you have any questions about the rallies. Registration forms will be available online at [tiffinmotorhomes.com](http://tiffinmotorhomes.com) at 11:00 AM Central Time on the day the rally opens for sale. Complete the form and pay online. No registrations are accepted by email, fax, telephone, or in person—register online at [tiffinmotorhomes.com](http://tiffinmotorhomes.com) only.

### Sarasota County Fairgrounds & Robarts Arena, Sarasota, Florida

Arrive: Monday February 24, 2020  
 Depart: Friday February 28, 2020  
 On sale: Oct. 8, 2019 at 11:00 AM CDT  
*For Tiffin Class A and Wayfarer coaches*

### Amana RV Park and Event Center Amana, Iowa

Arrive: Monday June 8, 2020  
 Depart: Friday June 12, 2020  
 On sale: Feb. 11, 2020 at 11:00 AM CST  
*For Tiffin Class A and Wayfarer coaches*

### Palm Creek Golf & RV Resort Casa Grande, Arizona

Arrive Monday October 26, 2020  
 Depart Friday October 30, 2020  
 On sale: June 23, 2020 at 11:00 AM CDT  
*For Tiffin Class A coaches only*

### Palm Creek Golf & RV Resort Casa Grande, Arizona

Arrive: Monday November 2, 2020  
 Depart: Thursday November 5, 2020  
 On sale: June 25, 2020 at 11:00 AM CDT  
*For Tiffin Wayfarer coaches only*





The Underwood Center provided spacious accommodations for our dinners and meetings. The Jack O'Lantern decorating contest produced winners in three categories: Scariest Pumpkin, Sherrel Bunn; Best Camping/RV Pumpkin, Bob & Joanne Brown; and Most Unique Pumpkin, Jerry & Shirley Kirkessner. As always, we love our volunteers who arrive early and stay late.

you in any way we can! Our freedom to assemble at events such as this is due to your sacrifice!

After the veteran's tribute, everyone enjoyed a few games of TIFFIN Bingo! We call out "ALLEGRO" instead of Bingo!

Rainy weather skies greeted us on Tuesday morning, but the fairgrounds came to the rescue with gravel where needed and the good times continued to roll!

Our cheerful, hardworking volunteers helped shuttle the guests between their coaches and the buildings as quickly as possible.

Seminars were held each morning during the rally with great attendance and participation. We appreciate the sup-

pliers of Tiffin components taking time away from their busy schedules to attend our rallies to present informative seminars on their product. We wish they could be with us throughout the rally so their classes could be repeated, but their schedules do not allow this.

An ice cream social was enjoyed by everyone on Tuesday afternoon, sponsored by Girard Awnings, along with a meet and greet session with several Tiffin chapters. All chapters were invited to participate and many recruited new members during the rally.

With Halloween fast approaching, we planned a Jack O'Lantern decorating contest for this rally. Amazingly talented

people participated and all rally folks enjoyed voting on their favorite! The winners of the three categories were:

Scariest Pumpkin: Sherrel Bunn, Wilmington, North Carolina.

Best Camping/RV Pumpkin: Bob & Joanne Brown, Cape Coral, Florida.

Most Unique Pumpkin: Jerry & Shirley Kirkessner, Camp Hill, Pennsylvania.

Thanks to everyone who participated and made our stage so festive!

Tuesday night was off to a great start with the announcement of the first Tiffin coach sold during the rally by Colton RV! After another delicious buffet and even more Tiffin door prizes, rally guests were treated to a great show by Tiffin's sweetheart, Sarah Getto. Sarah is from Norman, Oklahoma, and has entertained at several Tiffin rallies. We always enjoy having Sarah perform and she is an inspiration to everyone!

The rainy skies began to lighten on Wednesday and everyone enjoyed being out making new friends with other Tiffin owners. The Tiffin and Colton service technicians were hard at work making up time lost due to the inclement weather Tuesday. These technicians are so appreciated at our Tiffin rallies! They work daily from early morning to late evening to insure they can visit every coach. Occasionally they do not have the required part, but they are usually able to assist everyone with minor service problems that

*Continued on page 88*



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## Mark and Jane Lane Plan an Active Retirement

by Fred Thompson



FOLLOWING A VERY PRODUCTIVE 19-year career at Tiffin Motorhomes as the company's regional sales manager to its South Central territory, Mark Lane retired last month. His 35-year career in the RV industry began and ended in Gregg County, Texas, where he grew up.

The company celebrated Mark's career with a luncheon on December 19 at the Weatherford A&E Centre in Red Bay. As a remembrance gift for the Lanes, Mark Richardson, marketing specialist, filled a crate with a potpourri of products from northwest Alabama, including a woven blanket featuring prominent buildings, sites, and places in Red Bay.

After the usual shouts for 'Speech,' Mark recalled his first visit to Red Bay in the summer of 2000 for an interview with Bob Tiffin. "When I got close to Red Bay, I called the office for directions to the administrative offices. Jack Elliott answered the phone."

"Turn north at the second light and cross the tracks," Jack said.

"Wait a minute," I replied. "You don't know which direction I am coming from."

"Doesn't make any difference," Jack re-



plied. "It's the second red light either way you're coming in."

Jerry Williamson, the national sales director since March 2000 and a long-time friend from their days together at Fleetwood, gave Mark a tour of the factory and introduced him to Tim and Van Tiffin.

"And then it was time to meet Bob Tiffin," Mark smiled as he glanced toward Bob and Judy Tiffin. "I was pretty nervous and had memorized everything about the dealerships in the territory where I had been representing Fleetwood. Bob's opener put me at ease: 'Tell me about your family, Mark.'"

The two men talked for an hour and 45 minutes. "I told him about where I grew up and went to school, how Jane and I met and about her teaching position, about Jackson, our then nine-year-old son, about how much I enjoyed my job and how things were changing at Fleetwood. Bob never asked me about the dealers or my credentials. As my monologue slowed, Bob began flipping his ball-



point pen on the edge of his desk and I knew the interview was over. I stopped and Bob said, 'Welcome aboard, Mark.'" The luncheon crowd laughed knowingly.

Bob and Judy Tiffin joined the sales and marketing department's Christmas dinner in Florence Thursday evening. Mark and Jane flew to Dallas-Ft. Worth Friday morning for a brief visit with Jackson and his wife Alex. A 2013 Texas A&M grad, Jackson has just taken a position with GridLiance as a financial analyst in the company's mergers and acquisitions department.

I found them at their home in Liberty City Sunday afternoon where we continued our interview about his 19-year tenure with TMH.

"This has been a really gratifying job because I helped new RV owners realize life-long dreams," he said. "I also focused on helping sales people at my dealerships become successful. I believe 80 percent of what a sales person should do is listen to discover and understand the buyer's needs and camping style. The other 20 percent should focus on helping the customer buy the right coach.

"With the smaller dealerships in my territory, it became very important for

me to evaluate the dealer's management assets," Mark explained. "Taking a dealership that was inexperienced and struggling and helping them realize their potential was really gratifying. When I saw that happening, it just made my work so worthwhile."

In 2006 the Lanes began looking for property to give them some elbow room. After all, a residential lot in a subdivision is just not enough room for two native Texans. While Mark was away on a business trip, Jane happened upon 48 acres of gently rolling land with a "For Sale" sign on the fence. It had a perfect spot for a lake which was one of Mark's requirements. When Mark returned, they walked the acreage and within an hour decided to buy it.

Building a dam in just the right place created a five-acre lake that Mark stocked with bream and large-mouth bass. He claims he hooked and landed a nine pounder. A few years ago they bought a nice mobile home, located it in a pleasant setting, and added a huge deck. "We spend as much time as possible at our retreat," Jane said.

Jane retired from her teaching position four years ago and now enjoys volunteer-

ing with the school system's education foundation and the local Alzheimer's association.

"I am a member of a book club," she noted. "In our meetings, a member reviews a recently read book and leads a discussion. Mark is an avid reader and I am encouraging him to join our club."

"I am currently reading *Fantasyland: How America Went Haywire* by Kurt Andersen," Mark interrupted. "Andersen explains why Americans are so gullible and latch on to any conspiracy theory. I am not into fiction. I like to read books on why and how things happen."

"I take yoga classes and we both are working with a personal trainer," Jane noted. "We want to stay active to enjoy our future grandchildren."

The couple is planning a trip to New York City in early May to take in several Broadway shows, museums, and shopping. "We love to take short overnight trips to music venues," Mark said. "We enjoy a wide range of music including eclectic stuff, blues, R&B, old & new. We have been to Ireland, Rome, and Florence and hope to return. We want to spend time in Scotland, France, and Italy."

*Continued on page 88*



# California's Secret Coast

## Discover Hidden Treasures in San Luis Obispo County



Text and photography by Suzanne Clemenz

MOONSTONE BEACH'S BLUFFS IN CAMBRIA

### Halfway between San Francisco and Los Angeles

is a wide-open land of golden rolling hills, endless sunny beaches, and busy villages full of new discoveries and irresistible food. Join me in exploring an area that begins in the north with a castle and ends in the south with Monarchs. True, California's Central Coast area hasn't got the cachet of San Francisco, nor the glitz of L.A. Here the twentieth century uncharacteristically skipped California's frenetic growth, making its wonders even more special. The climate can only be called caressing, with winter's average high temp a mild 65 degrees, the average low far above freezing. Beach water is 57.5 degrees annually.

This is a land where mission bells still echo through the hills, the surf sighs softly for unbroken miles, wineries prosper, and history is alive. If you center your visit in Morro Beach, it's under 25 minutes to this article's farthest enticements—and they are many. Smiling shop clerks are happy about where they live, and glad to share it.

Hopefully what you learn here will tempt you to visit and help prioritize your time. All the locales visited are along California's Highway 1, and all but San Luis (Lew-iss, not Lew-ee) Obispo are right on the coast. San Luis Obispo is called SLO, pronounced 'slow,' both commercially and personally, so that moniker is

used here. SLO is the largest town we'll visit, at 284,000 residents. Morro Bay, 12 miles northeast of SLO, has about 11,000. Cambria boasts 6,000, Cayucos 2,600, and Los Osos, a SLO bedroom community, 15,000. San Simeon is mentioned because of Hearst Castle and an elephant seal rookery; Pismo Beach to the south has a special winter attraction—overwintering Monarch



SAN LUIS OBISPO MISSION, 1772



butterflies. This journey will start centrally, with SLO and Morro Bay, then visit north to south with the smaller communities. It may be Morro Bay that steals your heart. It's hilly setting on

the sparkling bay, its diversity of attractions, walkability, and convenience to other destinations makes it a winner. It has several great RV parks for dropping your Tiffin's anchor.

## CHUMASH INDIANS: THE FIRST SETTLERS

It's easy to admire the Chumash peoples who have called the Central Coast their home for 10,000 years. Spanish and Mexican explorers noted Chumash settlements from Morro Bay south to Malibu. The Chumash were and are skillful, artistic, peaceable, friendly, and inventive. Living in an area of abundance meant they didn't have to move seasonally for their livelihood. They mastered the use of the region's bountiful resources. Their last native speaker, Mary Joachina Yee, died in 1965. The Chumash are not one tribe with one chief. Although sharing a common heritage, they settled far enough apart for local dialects to develop. John Peabody Harrington, an early twentieth century field anthropologist for the Smithsonian's Bureau of American Ethnology, studied many Indian tribes in depth,

including the Chumash. His work covers 700 linear feet of shelves at Smithsonian. He worked extensively on understanding and documenting the Chumash language with Mary Yee, and her mother and grandmother. Mary Yee became a linguist herself, working daily on the Chumash language for 11 years with Harrington and another linguist. Harrington brilliantly made wax cylinder recordings of Chumash music and songs, which then sat unnoticed at Smithsonian for decades. Then, in 1978, Gary Tegler, Research Associate at the Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History, copied Harrington's wax cylinders onto tapes and transcribed the words and music. Imagine being there to share Tegler's amazement when he first heard the won-



Diorama showing a Chumash Indian mother and baby.  
— SANTA BARBARA MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY

A very unique antique Chumash necklace has arrows graduated in size.  
— SAN LUIS OBISPO HISTORY MUSEUM

derful Chumash music and the range of their lyrics—from lullabies, to legends, to gambling songs, and more. Because of Harrington, Yee, and Tegler's work, there is a rebirth of Chumash language and culture among today's survivors. Their challenges are related in the book *Chumash Renaissance*, by Paul H. Gelles.

Like modern Western cultures, the Chumash developed a 30-day month and a 12 month calendar. They had an astrology system related to character traits. Women wore skirts of fringed, ornamented buckskin, a fur top, necklaces and earrings. Men wore only a cloak reaching the waist, although the chief's cloak was long. They pierced their ears and nostrils. Chumash houses were sturdy 14- to 20-foot wide domed huts framed with interlaced willow branches and,

if available, whale bones. The frame was tightly thatched with overlapping, water-shedding horizontal rows of rushes and grasses. Inside, beds were raised on frames and had privacy screens. The Chumash menu reflected the local abundance of plants, mammals, and seafoods. Grizzly bears roamed the San Luis Obispo area in great numbers and were hunted. Like deer, smaller mammals, seals, and fish, bears provide meat, furs, and bones—living hardware and clothing stores!

Chumash traders' money system utilized strings of small shell beads of various lengths, used like cash. The number of times the string wrapped around a hand determined the value. Their numeric system is based on four. Their baskets (forty still

exist) are among the very finest in America, water-tight and incorporating small decorative figures, and eventually, Spanish words and symbols. Musical instruments include whistles, flutes, rattles, and a drone sound made by whirling a stick above one's head. They designed dance and ceremonial costumes. They used abalone shells to scrape up natural asphalt tar for adhering arrows onto shafts and as waterproofing. They mined specific rock types for smoking pipes, cooking pots, animal charms, and ornaments. They traded with distant tribes to obtain obsidian for arrows and other necessities not found here. The Chumash made fine wooden plates and bowls. Bones were shaped into needles, work tools, grooming aids, and more. In modern economic terms, their Gross Domestic Product was stellar!

Wooden canoes called *tomols* were the Chumash Indians' masterpieces of craftsmanship. Though mostly made from nearby pines, canoe-builders favored driftwood redwood logs,

when found. *Tomols* were way beyond dugout canoes. Canoe-makers split the logs into uniform  $\frac{3}{4}$ " planks which were smoothed with sandpaper-like shark skin. Sticky tar held the planks' seams together. Seams were reinforced by milkweed fiber ropes laced through holes drilled in plank edges. Additional waterproofing was painted on with a mixture of pitch, tar, and red ochre. Then decorative elements were applied. *Tomols* were typically 12- to 18-foot long, sometimes 30 feet. Mastering these ocean-going vessels, the Chumash traded widely with other coastal tribes. They also paddled to Chumash villages on the Channel Islands near today's Oxnard, and as far as Santa Catalina Island. They traded extensively inland with tribes from the Mojave desert, the Colorado River, the San Joaquin Valley, and Mount Tehachapi. Trading trails that their footsteps wore deeply over millennia eventually guided surveyors for railroads, paved roads, and major highways. They led. We followed.

## EXPLORERS AND SETTLERS

Portuguese navigator Juan Rodriguez Cabrillo became the Columbus of the California coast in 1542. He named Morro Rock, 'morro' meaning crown-shaped hill. Two hundred years later, Spain, fending off Pacific Coast incursions by Russian, French, and English explorers, prioritized coastal California, using reports and maps from previous explorers. Spain envisioned a chain of missions which would use native workers to create self-sufficient settlements, while converting the tribes to Catholicism and training them.

No doubt many Chumash understood the complexity of Spanish ships, the durability of metal tools and fittings, the intricacy of woven fabrics, and the strength of adobe brick. Tilling the land and growing reliable crops eliminated scouting for native plants, so there were time- and labor-saving perks. Some Chumash didn't resist learning. Others lost choices when their villages were



burned. An alarming unintended consequence for both cultures was the decimation of native tribes by European diseases. Pre-contact Chumash populations are estimated to number 25,000. In the original 1852 California census, the Chumash numbered only 600. Some married Spanish settlers or took Spanish names, making their Chumash heritage less obvious. After the newly-independent Mexico took over Spanish lands in California in 1821, the subsequent diseases, forced labor, and harsher treatment gave the disgruntled remaining Chumash little to lose. They planned. They acted.

Chumash workers in the three missions south of San Luis

Obispo rebelled in 1824, burning one mission and forcing the military and Franciscan priests out of two others. Mexican soldiers were the real target. Ultimately, diplomacy by two of the priests resulted in the rebels' pardon and their return to the missions. Many Chumash, now baptized Catholics, felt respect and affection for the priests.

The U.S. had barely gained jurisdiction over California when gold was discovered in California's northern Sierra Nevadas.



Many eastern Gold Rushers traveled a southern route to reach the gold field. They assumed former Mexican mission lands were theirs for the taking. Gold Rushers simply ignored the America's first peoples' presence and contribution to the missions. Many Chumash dispersed to become ranch or farm workers, or to take menial jobs in towns. The foresight of people like John P. Huntington, Mary Yee, and others, in documenting and

Portuguese navigator Juan Rodriguez Cabrillo became the Columbus of the California coast in 1542. He named Morro Rock. ♦ In an organized rebellion, Chumash workers burned one mission south of SLO and forced the military and priests out of two others.

researching Chumash culture, plus surreptitious preservation of ceremonies and oral traditions by Chumash individuals, is, thankfully, bearing fruit in today's Chumash renaissance. For a detailed, illustrated account of the irrepressible Chumash peoples, read the enjoyable, succinct *California's Chumash Indians* by the Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History. Better yet, head

70 miles south of SLO to Santa Barbara and visit their revered Museum of Natural History. Absorb their in-depth Chumash Hall, with its plank canoe, basketry, and daily artifacts. Also enjoy the Museum's engrossing natural history displays, talks, and events. Attend their monthly star party and their January 4, 2020, Christmas Bird Count.

### A MISSION IN BEAR COUNTRY

Spanish Franciscan priest Father Junipero Serra had founded missions south and north of today's San Luis Obispo by 1772. He chose Mission San Carlos de Borromeo de Carmelo—today's Carmel—as his headquarters. But unreliable Spanish supply ships were starving out his mission's group. Thirteen of Serra's men went scouting, eventually discovering a valley full of grizzly bears. Returning to Carmel with several tons of dried bear meat on loaded mules, Serra saw the wisdom of establishing a mission in 'the canyon of the bears.' The Chumash were pleased with the reduced numbers of dangerous mammalian neighbors. But Chumash life began to change forever. Construction of Mission San Luis Obispo de Toloso commenced with mostly Chumash workers. The mission's farmers created self-sufficiency by 1776. Surpluses were shipped to other missions. The quadrangular SLO mission had a church, a priests' convent, dormitories for families and bachelors, barracks, stables, and storerooms. Farm fields expanded. The Chumash day was filled with work and job training, weaving, animal care, tanning hides, and much more. By 1804 over 900 Chumash had been baptized.

Eventually, large demands on a small water supply and crowded living fostered the spread of diseases. Productivity and land values fell. The Mexican government, needing money, di-



vided mission lands, gifting many large parcels to government workers and Mexican families. The best lands were sold. That helped Mexico's coffers, but deadly typhus and cholera plagues decimated the population. The new state of California inherited many problems. In 1875 a fire destroyed the roof and other parts of Mission San Luis Obispo. Then the mission limped along for decades. In the mid-1920s, an imaginative new pastor, Father Daniel Keenan, planned and advertised an SLO Festival of the Flowers with a colorful parade and diverse entertainment. With the exceptions of Depression and WWII years, that fiesta covered the mission's expenses, restoring equilibrium. In 1946, Harry Downie, who had restored Mission Carmel, began research and excavations for a restored and improved 160-year-old Mission of San Luis Obispo.

The lovely town that you see today gradually pushed agricultural fields farther away. In the late nineteenth century, the arrival of the Southern Pacific Railroad, the bridging of San Luis Creek, the paving of streets, the creation of a reservoir and sewer system, and the breaking up of more land parcels, created a surge in commercial, residential, and civic development. Newspapers, schools, churches, banks, and merchandise stores opened. At nearby Avila Beach the Port San Luis Obispo Lighthouse was built, and a new 1800 foot pier attracted passenger and freight ships. Hay, livestock, crops, flour, and wood products were shipped out from San Luis Obispo County. An even longer pier built just north of Pismo Beach further improved trade. Hotels sprang up in advance of Southern Pacific's arrival, so SLO was ready when tourism began. Railroad workers from China, Italy, Portugal, and the British Isles settled in SLO. A Chinese immigrant named Ah Louis is known for importing and organizing several thousand Chinese workers to help build the

Visit the San Luis Obispo Railroad Museum on Saturdays 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Their Railroad Days Festival has venues all over SLO County. ♦ The SLO Railroad Museum has some old rolling stock outside and

appealing exhibits inside. ♦ The agricultural Edna Valley, close to SLO, has thousands of acres planted in grape vines. There are 30 wineries and 15 tasting rooms.



railroad, tunnels, and grades. It was a very treacherous project.

In 1894, SLO journalist Mary Angel led local advocates in lobbying the state for an SLO vocational college with a 'learning by doing' model. The state said yes. Co-ed classes at California Polytechnical College—Cal Poly—began in 1903. Today the university is located on 6,000 acres, has a student body of over 20,000, and offers 70 majors and 40 degrees. Cal Poly greatly enhances the Central Coast economy and lifestyle.

San Luis Obispo weathered twentieth century wars, depressions, recessions, and the occasional earthquake, and matured beautifully. Downtown is pretty and lively. At the southeastern city limits, the Edna Valley offers golden hills patched with huge live oaks, 27 wineries, and 15 tasting rooms. The hills are laced with hiking trails. Among other info at the SLO Visitor Center, hikers and bikers will want the Open Space Information Map, detailing with topo lines for 12 valley areas with 52 miles of trails.

## TODAY'S SAN LUIS OBISPO



SLO's Mission bells are hand-rung before Sunday masses, daily at noon and 6 p.m., and for special occasions. Trained volunteers ring them. Listen as a bell-ringer plays the wedding pattern at [sanluisobispo.org/matrimony](http://sanluisobispo.org/matrimony). Step inside the simply-painted church, and don't miss the excellent museum left of the church entrance doors. Many Chumash and pioneer items found during renovation bring the Chumash and mission days to life. Other rooms display period sleeping cells for priests, a dining room, and a large antique altar. Check for special events held on the mission's plaza, like the colorful November 1st Day of the Dead celebration. It features swirling folklorico dancers, the singing, guitars, and trumpet of a mariachi band, attendees' skull-painted faces and wild costumes, and food trucks.

Five hand-rung bells in the upper windows, named Diego, Antonio, and Carlos, are rung in different patterns for Mass, weddings, and events. In the foreground, folklorico dancers have swirled their skirts at many fiesta's in Mission San Juan Obispo's history. This is the Day of the Dead celebration. ♦ SLO's Mission is not original. The original burned and was rebuilt with adobe bricks. Renovations in the late 1800s and 1946 created today's buildings.

Park your tow car in a garage, then stop at the SLO Chamber of Commerce at 895 Monterey Street. Ask for their one-page walking tour map numbering downtown SLO's attractions. If you're a hiker, pick up their terrific Outdoors SLO County hiking/biking map. In walking downtown you'll get distracted by inviting shops, busy boutiques, lovely galleries, and taste-tempting eateries. The colorful old Carnegie Library at 696 Monterey Street exhibits SLO County's history and 20th century development. The History Museum also created a downloadable cell phone tour with short videos for each downtown and railroad district destination. Downtown, besides the Mission, scope out the colorful outdoor cafe patios along the San Luis Creek, with foot bridges from the Mission plaza. SLO's weekly Thursday evening Farmer's Market, from 6-9 p.m. on Higuera Street, uses the SLO Valley's bountiful produce as an excuse to set up booths, barbecues, street food, and upbeat musical entertainment. Other downtown features include the restored 1942 Streamline Moderne-style Fremont theater at 1035 Monterey Street. It has live concerts and extra screenings during SLO's annual Film Festival, March 17-22, 2020. Two blocks away, the

Downtown Cinema is a multiplex showing current, classic, and Imax movies. But wait—there’s more! In this college town, a solar-powered third theater, The Palm, at 817 Palm Street, shows art, independent, foreign, and current movies. Create your own binge-watching film festival, or coordinate your trip with SLO’s exhilarating Film Festival.

The San Luis Obispo Railroad Museum is close to the Amtrak train depot at 1940 Santa Barbara Avenue. The Museum is open Saturdays from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Explore exhibits and memorabilia from the Central Coast Railroad history. The annual Central Coast Railroad Days Festival has venues throughout the county. A 1200-square-foot scale model of the Central Coasts Railroad is an ongoing project of county railroad enthusiasts. The RR Museum has an ice cream social and a monthly Fourth Saturday Modeling Skills class. Your grandkids will also love the big SLO Children’s Museum at the corner of Monterey and Nipomo Streets. This is a fun, hands-on museum for kids from one to 10. There are programs, field trips, and a play yard.

San Luis Obispo County’s Edna Valley and nearby Paso Robles grow 27,600 acres of wine grapes. Cabernet sauvignon and merlot grapes dominate, but there are many varieties. San Luis Obispo County has 110 wineries, with 30 of

them, and 15 tasting rooms, in the Edna Valley. You can visit on your own, or book a fun, educational van tour to three or four tasting rooms. Of course, the craft beer industry is well patronized in this college town. There are about 14 brewpubs, each with uniquely formulated beers. Most pubs have food and entertainment. Read reviews and visit your choices. You’ll be impressed with the food as well as the beers.

There’s not a big art scene in SLO, although there are several boutiques with finely made craft pieces. The SLO Symphony’s remaining concerts are in early February, March, and May. Google **San Luis Obispo Performing Arts Center** for their busy schedule of events. Birders should check Laguna Lake Park for wintering birds. Play nine holes of golf at Laguna Lake Golf Course or Dairy Creek Golf Course.

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*Clockwise from top left:* Originally a Carnegie Library, the SLO History Museum now has exhibits on SLO’s early 20th century pioneers and leaders. ♦ SLO’s famous Farmer’s Market has fresh produce, food booths, and live entertainment. ♦ Biddle Ranch Winery has an airy tasting room with a picnicking patio (not shown). They also rent a house that sleeps 12. ♦ Restaurants and sidewalk cafes, like these along San Luis Creek below Mission Plaza, compete for your business with a notable degree of excellence.



## MORRO BAY AND ITS GIANT PAPERWEIGHT



The first thing you notice at Morro Bay is a mountainous, dome-shaped, hunk of rock. The rock's creviced surface has overlapping diagonal and arched contours resembling quick strokes of a giant palette knife. Morro Rock, 575 feet tall, anchors the north end of the bay. Its appearance changes with the time of day, the weather, and your angle of view. After registering the visual impact of Morro Rock, you begin to notice the pleasure and commercial fishing boats, tour boats, kayaks, and canoes gliding below the Rock on the sparkling or mirror-like bay. Embarcadero Street's waterfront shops, galleries, and eateries beckon to be explored. Even a cursory exploration may evoke a very authentic feeling—as if you saw Morro Bay decades ago, and it's still the same. You've made your reservations at one of the town's clean, convenient RV parks—Morro Strand RV Park, Morro Dunes RV Park, or Morro Bay State Park, all close at hand. Set up your Tiffin and go explore!

At the south end of town a good-sized estuary flows west, hits a wall of dunes at the ocean, and curves north. There it forms long, narrow Morro Bay, which has a spit of dunes up the bay's west side. That dunes spit terminates at a small opening to the Pacific Ocean across from Morro Rock's south face. The dunes are a nature preserve and protect the bay from the Pacific's wilder whims. Crossing the water's bar between ocean and bay is tricky to navigate, as the town's Coast Guard can attest. Morro Rock is called the Gibraltar of the Pacific. It is the last in a chain of peaked buttes which are once-molten plugs born in volcanic vents. These Nine Sisters, as the chain is called, stretch from SLO to Morro Bay. Bishop Peak is highest at 1546 feet, and several Sisters can be hiked. Morro Rock is a State Historic Landmark and a sanctuary for nesting peregrine falcons and other birds—no climbing permitted. Sign up for the birdyful Morro Bay Birding Festival January 17–20, 2020, which has over 100 field trips and events, hundreds of humanoids, and 200 bird species.

The city's setting, with hillside homes stepping down to the shore, and its mild, Mediterranean climate, make it unique. Seafood at restaurants is right off the boat, and other entrees receive equally thoughtful creativity. Go ocean fishing yourself on a charter boat. Rent a stand-up paddleboard, a canoe or kayak—bay waters are often calm. Look for misty spouts on a Pacific whale-watching cruise where you may also spot sea birds. Take bay excursions on a small paddlewheel boat, a boat with underwater viewing, wildlife tours, or day-long charter harbor cruises.

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Embarcadero Road parallels the waterfront and is the major retail street in Morro Bay. Boutiques, galleries, tour boats and dockside cafes abound. ♦ This view south on Morro Bay encompasses fishing boats, the long retail area, and the serene bay. Distant hills drain into the bay's estuary. ♦ This Starfire charter fishing group caught rockfish, lingcod, and ocean whitefish in November. In summer bass, salmon, and halibut are caught. ♦ The surf at Morro Rock beach is consistent and reliable. Surfing is year-round, but late fall to late winter has stronger wave action.

One hour tours are quite inexpensive, and quite entertaining. You're here, so go for it!

Morro Rock Beach begins on the Rock's north side. Surfers learn their skills on frequently-manageable waves that curl along six miles of sandy beaches stretching north. Take surfing lessons or bring a picnic and watch the surfers. There are also many days when the surf brings out more advanced surfers, and observers hold their breath.

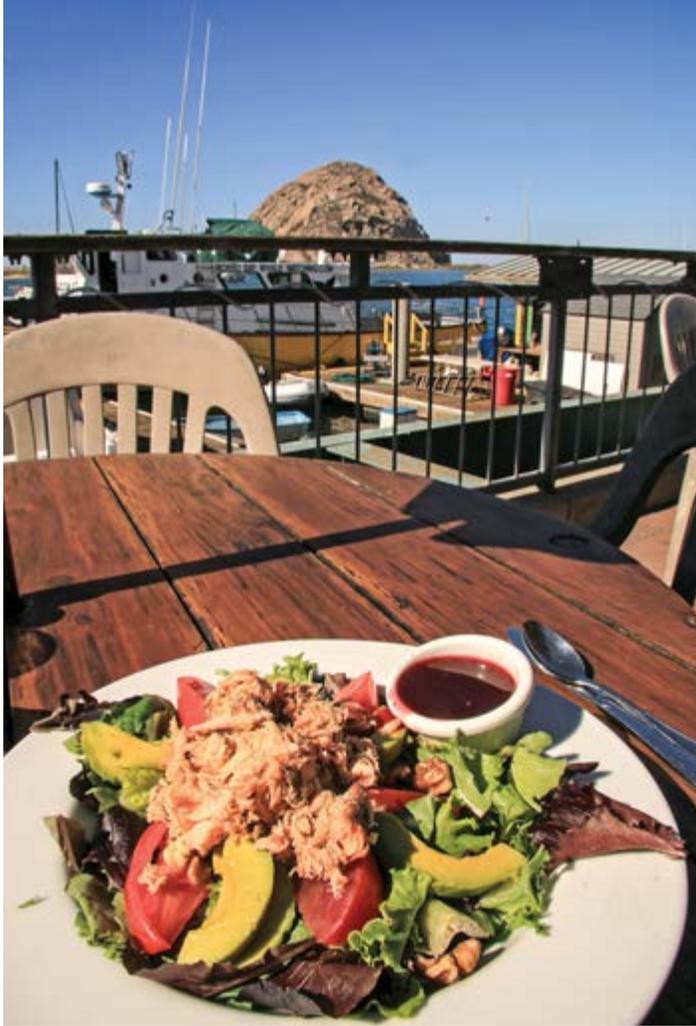
On Embarcadero Street, little courtyards with shops on them lead to a pier-side boardwalk that runs quite a distance down the view-windows side of restaurants and shops. Tour boat companies' ticket windows and boarding ramps are accessible from these courtyards. As you stroll the boardwalk it's fun to glance at outdoor diners' plates. If you start to drool, get a table there. Near sunset those same restaurants have big view windows to enjoy the sky turn glowing amber or flaming pink and gold, silhouetting and mirroring Morro Rock.

Savor the delicious, original breakfasts and lunches at the tiny Frankie & Annie's Café at the north end of Embarcadero. Further south, Port House Restaurant's flavors are scintillating, with views to match. The lamb osso bucco with polenta is definitely praiseworthy. Choose how to accessorize a big, juicy burger at House of Ju Ju. Choose beef, ground turkey, or portabella with all the trimmings on a bun—or in a wrap, or on salad greens. Dutchman's Seafood is a very popular casual place

where it's fun to hang out sipping cool ones until you lay waste to a hot bowl of cioppino. Dorn's Café uphill on Market Street is a third-generation Morrow Bay restaurant with a large menu and a high vantage point of the Bay. Devour their Scallops Sauté dinner and return for an oyster omelet for breakfast. Shine Café is a tiny vegan café with healthy, beautifully presented food up on Morro Bay Boulevard, next to David J. Rodgers gallery. It's hard to find a merely average meal in Morro Bay, as all the most visited areas are blessedly devoid of fast food chains. Forget about dieting.

Embarcadero Street's finer art galleries include Robert Gray Art, By the Bay Gallery, Paula Radke Art Glass, and Fiona Bleu Gallery where the hand-crafted furniture is exquisite amid the gallery's more colorful offerings. Many other Embarcadero businesses have fine crafts, decorative art, and photography. Catch an enthused, knowledgeable docent at tiny Morro Bay Maritime Museum on Embarcadero's north end for an informative chat. Watch their videos and inspect the vessels on display. The Skateboard Museum on Market Street is fun, too. A couple of blocks up are the exciting David J. Rodgers watercolor gallery at 407 Morrow Bay Boulevard, and the bustling Art Center of Morro Bay, at 835 Main Street. The Art Center has ongoing classes, workshops, and special exhibits including 'For the Birds' in January, and 'Aquarius 2020' in February. If you love photography, take time to do only that, studying the light





Blue Sky Bistro on the Bay is growing an ever-increasing amount of their pesticide-free produce to serve with fresh seafoods and meats. ♦ Shine Café on Morro Bay Boulevard creates colorful, delicious vegan foods. It's in the green building next to David J. Rodgers Gallery. ♦ By the Bay Gallery in Morro Bay has exceptional art glass, marquetry, wood boxes, paintings, enamel sculptures, jewelry, and custom knives.

on Morro Rock at different times of day. Walk north on Morro Rock Beach when tides are coming in and out, or early and later in the day, and take some lower angle photos of Morro Rock reflections as water laps the beach. Everything is close, walkable, and upbeat in Morro Bay. The thrill of discovery seems ever-present. Some people say that the Central Coast has no seasons. In winter that's nothing to regret.

Morro Bay State Park is at the south end of the town's neighborhoods. Explore the sophisticated exhibits at the Park's engaging Natural History Museum. Stay at its campground where fishing and birding are just steps away. Dine at the park's Bayside Café. The Park's adjacent Morro Bay Golf Course has 18 holes and a eucalyptus grove where some Monarch butterflies winter.

#### NORTH TO CAYUCOS, CAMBRIA, HEARST CASTLE AND ELEPHANT SEALS

Let's head up Hwy 1 about 28 miles through Cayucos and Cambria to Hearst Castle. Hearst Castle rivals European castles, indoors and out. There's nothing like this lovely castle on a hill anywhere in the U.S. Built by publishing magnate William Randolph Hearst, it has 165 rooms and 123 acres of walkways, gardens, terraces, and pools. The Hearst Ranch is sited on 83,000 acres. The Castle provides eight tours, some of them seasonal. Since some tours are lengthy or have many stairs, ask about accessible tours, if needed. Choose from Grand Rooms, Upstairs Suites, Cottages & Kitchens, Designing the Dream (architectural), Art of San Simeon, Hearst & Hollywood, Evening, and Holiday Twilight tours. Tickets are from \$25 to \$100. The most popular Grand Rooms tour includes the living, dining, library, and billiards rooms, plus the magnificent pools and gardens. Guides are fountains of knowledge. In a one day trip from Morro Bay, you can do an early one-hour tour, stop at Elephant Seal Rookery, spend time in Cambria, buy cookies in Cayucos and be back in Morro Bay. If you book more than two tours, consider moving your Tiffin to San Simeon State Park's campground (maximum 35') for a night or two. Upon arrival at Hearst Castle, you'll get your tickets and board their bus for the winding drive to the castle. The bus ride includes a fascinating commentary about William Randolph Hearst's involvement with the castle's lengthy construction, and his unusual personal life. Take all the photos and videos you like at the castle—as long as they're not for publication. My written request for permission was denied because of restrictions Hearst put in place. Want a preview? YouTube has them. Hearst Castle is an awe-inspiring experience, permission or not.

Returning south on Hwy 1, stop at Elephant Seal Rookery's



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Both the west and the east parts of Cambria's Main Street provide visitor-friendly shops, restaurants, and galleries. ♦ The Vault Gallery in Cambria, almost 30 years old, features internationally known artists who live on California's Central Coast. Expect the unexpected. ♦ This 10-inch succulent festoons a planter by a Cambria store front. ♦ Linn's Restaurant on Cambria's East Main Street is famous for its olallieberry pies and deserts. ♦ San Simeon's Elephant Seal Rookery hosts juveniles in October, females in January, and wooing, combating males by mid-February. ♦ Cayucos, with 2,000 residents, has a sprinkling of restaurants, shops, and antique stores. The Brown Butter Cookie Company is a must-do. ♦ A kayaker watches a sport fishing boat that has crossed the rough bar between Morro Bay and the Pacific. A trawler on the horizon cautiously approaches the bar.



roadside vista point. In winter months juveniles are present, flipping sand on their yam-like bodies. Molting males are present August and September until their molt is finished. Females arrive December through January. They give birth a week after arrival. Breeding—and huge-snouted battering-ram males—are present mid-February to early March.

**Cambria** is an interesting, very linear little town divided north to south by Hwy 1. West of the highway is Cambria's scenic Moonstone beach and seaside neighborhoods. There's a boardwalk atop the beach cliffs with long views of the sinuous coast and wave-like golden hills. Easy access to the one-mile boardwalk is from Hwy 1's Windsor Boulevard turnoff. From Windsor, turn right immediately onto Moonstone Beach Drive. Boardwalk parking is at left within seconds. Cambria's business areas are east of Hwy 1 off Windsor Boulevard. Turn right (south) immediately to Main Street. Park and work your way through the excellent restaurants, boutiques, galleries, and studios. Check out Bronze, Silver & Gold Gallery. Talk with artist Dennis Patrick at Patrick Gallery about his richly nuanced, colorful multi-media paintings. Look for Riccardo Spizzamiglio's A-frame studio where he creates his very engaging, tactile, kinetic sculptures, bas reliefs, and paintings. Riccardo enjoys visiting with fine art aficionados. Continue south, go straight at the





Cambria Drive stop sign. Proceed to Cambria's east Main Street shops. Don't miss Vault Gallery's colorful, unexpected, contemporary paintings and sculptures. The Vault is next door to the famous Linn's of Cambria restaurant and bakery, with its mouth-watering menu, their famous Olallieberry pie, and other desserts. You can easily spend a day in Cambria.

**Cayucos** is known for the Brown Butter Cookie Company in the red building on North Ocean Street. Watch them hand-roll and bake plump butter cookies of many flavors, plus a few other special cookies. They ship personal and corporate orders nationwide. Parallel to North Ocean Street is southbound Ocean Front Street. Stroll or fish from the long pier. Adjacent Cayucos State Beach has playground equipment, a foot shower, and rest rooms. Cayucos has several laid-back cafes with great seafood. Beach Bums Bevs & Bites is a sports bar with some nice appetizers and great views. The Cayucos coast north of town is known for its tide pools. Search online for *Cayucos Tidepools*, and watch that incoming tide!

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## LOS OSOS: AN ELFIN FOREST AND A RUGGED STATE PARK

On the south shore of the Morro Bay Estuary is Los Osos, with interesting places for botanists, bird lovers, photographers, and wildlands hikers. Take South Bay Boulevard and turn right on Santa Ysabel Avenue, then right on 16th Street to the boardwalk for Elfin Forest. This 90-acre preserve has tangles of contorted pygmy oaks, plus 200 plant species, 110 bird species, and a mile-long wheel-chair accessible boardwalk. Bring a camera for views across the estuary to Morro Rock and to Hollister Peak. There are benches, viewing platforms, and third-Saturday nature walks.

Head to hilly 8,000 acre Montana de Oro State Park, driving west on Los Osos Valley Road. It becomes Pecho Valley Road. This road gets really narrow and wiggly. Stop at Montana de Oro's visitor center in the period-furnished Old Spooner Ranch House. Talk with the rangers about hiking trails and pre-



Birding and botany fans can walk a one-mile accessible boardwalk through Los Osso's Elfin Forest Nature Preserve on Morro Bay's estuary. ♦ This Lesser yellowlegs is a wading bird that relishes the muck at Elfin Forest Nature Preserve. Pygmy oak and 200 plants grow at the preserve.

cautions for both beaches and trails. The maximum length for RVs in the campground is 27 feet (no services). There are

miles of trails for hikers, backpackers, and horses. The park is rugged and very scenic. Study the park map plus info at

Alltrails.com's Montana de Oro State Park. Be mindful of the weather before longer backpacking or tidepooling. The Bluff Trail that starts at Spooner's Cove is a terrific day-trip hike. The coastal coves are beautiful, and the views are stunning.

## PISMO BEACH MONARCH BUTTERFLY GROVE

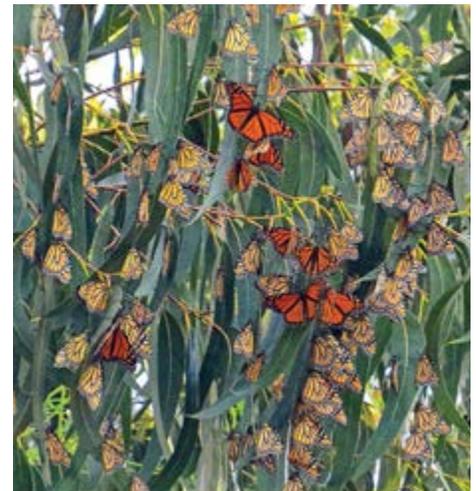


Let's dip south just enough to visit the phenomenon of overwintering butterflies at Pismo Beach's Monarch Butterfly Grove. From Avila Beach on Hwy 1/101, take exit 190B, turning right on Hinds Avenue. Work your way to the well-marked Monarch Butterfly Grove at 400 S. Dolliver. The Pismo Beach RV Resort's plush amenities are at right at 165 S. Dolliver. For a more modest roost, North Beach Campground at Pismo State Beach is a short grassy walk to the butterfly grove. The weather and a temperature over 55 degrees determine whether docents lead informative walks. Butterflies favor only certain eucalyptus trees. The 11 a.m. and 2 p.m. walks are timed to optimize witnessing the butterflies flying out or returning from foraging. It is a minor miracle to see those lovely creatures clustered together, or draping down like falling leaves. Then one opens its bright orange wings daintily outlined in white-dotted black borders. Wow! Butterfly numbers

These Monarch butterflies at the Butterfly Reserve roost and sleep with overlapping wings to preserve body heat. ♦ Clusters of Monarch butterflies can be difficult to spot until even one of them opens its wings flat. In dim light they look like dry leaves.

were down in 2018, but in late October, 2019, several hundred had already arrived. Staying a day or two lets you understand the butterflies' routine. Then, with permit, shovel, and bucket in hand, try your luck clam digging so you can make chowder in your kitchen.

So that's Central Coast 101. The objective was to whet your whistle for an exciting, yet laid-back, winter adventure. Mix it up. Spend the morning at SLO, the afternoon in Cambria, and the evening at Morro Beach. You know—sort of flitting around the Central Coast for fun and food, like butterflies. RIS





## Tiffin Opens Class C Service Center

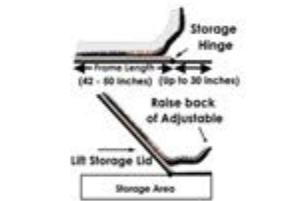
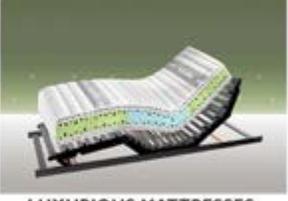
Tiffin Motorhomes recently opened a Class C Service Center near its Wayfarer plant in Winfield, Alabama. The 30,000 sq. ft. facility houses six service bays, a parts and shipping department, and a comfortable customer lounge. The service center is located on 27 acres at exit 30 on I-22. After exiting the interstate, turn south and take the first paved road to the left into the Industrial Park.

The center currently has 20 employees, including seven technicians, five in parts and shipping, six in reception and administration, and five in the call center.

To schedule an appointment for service or order parts, call 205-487-4710. Parts orders received by noon will be shipped the same day. Service can be scheduled online at [winfieldservice@tiffinmotorhomes.com](mailto:winfieldservice@tiffinmotorhomes.com). Hours of operation: 7 a.m. to 3:30 p.m., M-F.

The full service campground has 16 campsites with Wifi. If you arrive after the center closes at 3:30 p.m., you can hookup and wait for the center to open at seven. There is no charge for camping to Wayfarer owners who come for service.

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The winners of the Winter



**First Place**  
**Philip Welty**

*Merced River in Winter*  
**Yosemite National Park,  
California**

Phillip Welty probably thought of Ansel Adams as he framed this snowy, icy image by Yosemite's Merced River. Although shot in color, desaturating the image produced this stunning black-and-white version. He and his wife braved the forecast of a 5" snowfall in Yosemite Valley, and had it to themselves. This is cross-lit. Notice the shadows of the trees on the right hand snow bank. Catching Yosemite with every tree snow-covered—beautiful!

Nikon D810 camera, 24-70mm lens, f/5.6 @ 200th second



**Second Place**  
**Steve Silverman**

*Early Morning Reunion*  
**Circle B Bar Preserve,  
Lakeland, Florida**

This great use of back-lighting, combined with the right shutter speed, dramatizes the Roseate spoonbills' and egrets' glowing wings, and stops water droplets in mid-air. It is almost an abstract of motion and excitement. Species include Roseate spoonbills, Little blue herons, Great egrets, Snowy egrets, and White ibis—all in one dynamic shot!

Nikon D-5 camera, Nikon 80-400mm lens

# 2020 RIS Photo Contest



**Third Place**  
**Susan DeLisi**  
***Sunset at Zion***

**Zion National Park, Utah**  
The rain-washed glow on Zion's sandstone Watchman's Tower is enhanced by the late afternoon sun. The lighting is somewhere between cross-lighting and edge lighting, and the shaded parts have full detail. The trees are glowing a bit, and the sky's moisture picks up a goldish luminance as well. Nicely captured.  
Nikon D810, 24-120 lens at 34mm

## Comments on This Issue's Photo Contest

It was gratifying that every single submission for this issue's Photo Contest displayed a conscious observation of the angle from which the light was coming. What separated the winners was that their images are nicely composed, colors are properly saturated, distracting elements are not present, and the data file

is of a sufficient size that a printing press can render the photo properly. If your original image has a small section that really has everything right, you can't crop out 70% of the image and expect what's left to be sharp at 1/3 page size. But observing the light is crucial, and all submissions did a good job on that.

## The Spring 2020 Photo Contest

What can you do to maximize the wintery scenes that will be prevalent in most parts of the country January through mid-April? If the trees are bare, look for a spot of color, natural or man-made. Maybe you'll invent a scene of skis, snow shoes, and sleds placed attractively against an old wood building. Maybe you'll study the birds at your feeder long enough to isolate one that's sharp and appealing, without distracting clutter. How about kids sledding with a wake of flying snow? Remember that photos are usually *made*, not found. Snapshots are spontaneous and fun for family and friends. You'll go beyond that, finding a place, possibly with judicious props, or possibly only needing

better light, and capture a winter image. Lighting and cropping are as important as ever. Probably your Tiffin won't be included. Their shapes don't lend themselves well to artful compositions, except in ads. Leave nothing for the judge to do.

Email your "Winter Scenes Photo Contest" before March 1st to fred1902@gmail.com. Crop entries to about 8" x 10" size. DPI (dots per inch) must not be smaller than 300. Include your name, address, cell phone number, and email address. Send the photo's title and location, the camera make and model, and lens length. First prize is \$100; second, \$50, and third, \$25.

## RV Connections Recovers from a Devastating Hurricane

The Panama City, Florida, dealership was launched in 1999 by Jack Stewart. His high school classmate, C.O. England, joined Jack as general sales manager in 2005. Jack's son, Neal, today serves as vice president and general manager of the Panama City location and a recently acquired location in Dothan, Alabama. *Roughing It Smoothly* featured RV Connections in its Dealer Profile series in October 2014. To learn the full history of RVC, go to [rismag.org](http://rismag.org), click on 2014, and then the October cover. See page 16.

**A**HURRICANE CHANGES EVERYTHING. It even changed the local residents' timelines. After October 10, 2018, every event was remembered as B.M. or A.M. — Before Michael or After Michael.

Michael was sneaky. On October 7, it was classified as a tropical depression after nearly a week of slow development. By the next day, it intensified into a Category 2 hurricane near the western tip of Cuba, then turned northward and began building strength. Neal Stewart, the company's vice president and general manager, was in New Mexico with his wife and children attending a Group 66 service network meeting.

C.O. England, the general sales manager for RVC, has lived in Panama City since he was six. "I've never evacuated before. Since we have children and grandchildren here and we couldn't coordinate all of us leaving together, we decided to stay," C.O. said.

"We know hurricanes can strengthen fast, so on Monday, Oct. 8, we moved all of our motorized units to a property 13 miles north of here and parked them in a circular corral layout with the most expensive units in the center," he said, explaining the strategy.

With 150 towables on the company's main location at 3626 E. 15th Street, nearly everyone began working to get the units ready to weather the hurricane. "We filled all of the tanks in every unit



with water to make them bottom heavy. Then we parked them one foot apart, seven deep and six wide, and put the jacks down," he explained. "By Tuesday night, Oct. 9, we had done all we could do to prepare and we went home to sit it out."

The U.S. Weather Bureau in the final analysis classified Michael as a Cat 5 hurricane, the first Cat 5 to strike the United States since Andrew in 1992. It was the

third-most intense Atlantic hurricane to make landfall in the contiguous U.S. in terms of pressure, behind the 1935 Labor Day hurricane and Hurricane Camille in 1969. It was the first Cat 5 hurricane to impact the Florida Panhandle. As Michael tracked across the Gulf of Mexico Tuesday night, it built up deadly speed and first made landfall near Mexico Beach, 25 miles southeast of Panama

City, with winds peaking at 160 mph.

"We initially thought the winds would be east to west," C.O. said. His wife, youngest daughter, her husband, and their 3-year-old son decided to wait it out in the Englands' fourth-floor condominium. "When the eye hit Mexico Beach, it moved inland and we got the counterclockwise north-to-south winds. When we went to bed Tuesday night, it was still a Cat 2. By 11 a.m. Wednesday, it was getting really rough. By 12:30 p.m., we were in the middle of a Cat 5 that stayed on top of us until 3 p.m."

The extremely low pressure created by a hurricane (Michael was measured at 919 millibars) overtakes buildings with normal air pressure inside (approx. 1013 millibars) and causes them to explode. The high-speed winds burst through, continuing the destruction.

England had recently started remodeling his condo, cutting holes between the rooms to run new electrical lines. Though they could see the interior walls shifting with the hurricane's force, the holes apparently relieved enough pressure to keep the outside walls and windows from blowing out. As they watched air conditioners and infrastructure from the roof crashing to the ground, pieces of the building's walls disintegrating as they hit the pool's deck, and trees uprooting or snapping off like tinker toys, the Englands wondered if they would survive Michael's fury. They feared for the welfare of the employees at RV Connections and their families, and for their other daughter and her boyfriend with whom they had lost cell phone contact during the storm.

By mid-afternoon the storm had subsided enough for Panama City's residents to get outside and observe the extent of the damage. They were devastated!

Houses were gone. Walls remained with no roofs. Belongings, furniture, cars and trucks were strewn like broken toys across a landscape swept by rains driven

by 100+ mph winds. Resilient trees that didn't snap were forced to the ground in obedient arcs. Disbelieving eyes struggled to comprehend the havoc wreaked in less than three hours. In the following week, records indicated 43 died in the 40-mile radius point of where the eye struck Mexico Beach.

England was able to start his truck, but every highway and side road was blocked by fallen trees and debris. Utility employees, city and county service personnel, and anyone with a chainsaw went into ac-

tion to losing 43 trees and sustaining heavy damage to the seawall. They lived in a 5th wheel for several months while Crystal oversaw many subcontractors who rebuilt their home. Andrew Cook, parts and service manager, lost his home and moved back to Dothan. Many of the employees who decided to evacuate did not have livable homes to which they could return. Panama City lost 30 percent of its general population for the same reason.

On Friday, employees at RV Connections began to arrive to see what needed



tion. The Englands found their daughter and boyfriend Thursday morning where they had taken shelter in the corner of their house, now without a roof and saturated. Water from the damaged roof of the Englands' condominium building had poured into their own dwelling.

Other employees in the RVC family suffered similar losses. When Neal became aware that Michael would likely make a direct hit on Panama City, he searched for flights into Panama City and Atlanta. Everything had been canceled. Neal, Crystal, and their three children flew into Houston, rented a car, and arrived on Tuesday. The Stewarts' home was destroyed, suffering \$300,000 in losses, in addition

From left: C.O. England, general sales manager; Jack Stewart, president and CEO; and Neal Stewart, vice president and general manager. As a team, they collaborate monthly to review the company's progress toward its annual goals.

to be done to reopen the business. They had a whole new mission: hundreds of locals would soon be arriving in search of temporary housing. The previous week RV Connections had been a mecca for RVers looking to enjoy the Winter sun in the Florida Panhandle. Following the hurricane, RVC became an unofficial adjunct to FEMA.

"Our new office building and service center sustained less damage than anticipated, but we had no utilities," C.O. said.



As RV Connections returns to full operations in the spring, they expect to carry an inventory of 12 Tiffin coaches. The company has eight service bays under roof and another eight all-weather bays.

“By Saturday morning we opened for business with two mobile units for offices powered by generators. We brought in a dozen prepaid cell phones from New Orleans and got AT&T to route our business number to one of the temporary phones with a hot spot. With insurance company appraisers, we did triage on all of the units, identified damage, and repaired everything that made each unit usable as temporary housing. On each unit, we absorbed the deductible and the salvage price before the insurance company paid us the difference. Only 15 units escaped with no damage at all.”

The insurance company totaled 33 units, most of which had salvageable parts. Fewer than 10 units were towed to

the dump. Twenty-three units were sold with salvaged titles. The demand for temporary housing created record sales for the remainder of October and November through March. The buyers usually were not RVers, but locals setting up temporary housing on their residential lots.

The new “emergency shelter market” created an extreme demand on RVC’s service department. “We were able to put over 600 people in temporary housing,” explained Andrew Cook. “These people were not expecting to become campers and we did not anticipate developing a whole new MO to solve the problems of victims in distress. Each new owner received as much training as we could provide under the circumstances. We often

had to deliver an RV to a residential lot and set it up beside a heavily damaged house. Within a week I set up two mobile service trucks to provide on-site RV service. The demand for service was so intense we had to prioritize the service requests. Units that were unlivable because of heating, AC, refrigeration, plumbing, and cooking issues received first priority; units with minor comfort problems were put on the back burner.”

Campgrounds to the east of Panama City were destroyed. Campgrounds to the west quickly filled up with construction workers, most of whom are still working in the area a year after the storm. The demand for construction workers is unsatisfied, evidenced by the hundreds of homes and buildings still uninhabited and awaiting repair. Insurance companies struggled to find contractors to repair the homes of their insured clients.

“The area lost 30 percent of its population because there were no rental or private homes for the evacuees to come home to,” England noted. “Before Michael, we were selling 50 units per month, motorized and towable. After the temporary housing sales spurt from October to March of this year, we fell off to 30 units per month. Fortunately, that’s beginning to change as some of the beach-related campgrounds are opening to regular RVers. Over the last two months, we transitioned to selling more units to RVers than to hurricane victims. We expect to be back to normal in Spring 2020, selling at least 50+ units a month. By March, we expect to have at least 12 new Tiffins in our inventory.

“Our new building did not take a direct hit,” he continued. “The large plate glass windows did not blow out and the interior was not damaged. Overall, our administration and service facilities only had \$80,000 in hurricane damage. We were very blessed.”

Andrew Cook came to RV Connections in 2012 when he and his immediate supervisor, Matt Brown, both resigned from Camping World in Dothan, Alabama, to accept an offer from Jack Stewart, founder and president of RVC. Matt signed on as the company’s parts and service



**Sales Team.** *Standing from left:* Joey Waldroop, Jake Tankersley, Tim Dunkin, Brandon Denney, Bob Beaty, and C.O. England. *Seated:* Shaun Baker, Don Hasty. *Not pictured:* Rob Buckley, Gary Taylor, and Carl Ferrara.

**Service Technicians.** *From left:* James Banks, Travis Valdez, Rob Sowden, Lee Exum, Terry Pippins, Bill Merkle, Shawn Baumgardner, and Andrew Cook. *Not pictured:* Curtis Gilmore.

**Accessory Store, Service and Parts Team.** *Front, from left:* Louis Bonner, Krystal Jolivette, Gary Johns, Connie Oliver, and Dana Exum. *Rear, from left:* Andrew Cook, Rob Holmes, Bill Cockrell, and Scotty Hirsch.



manager and Andrew became the service advisor. “Matt took parts and service to the next level of competency and service quality. He gave structure to our operation and developed processes that created smooth follow-through,” Jack said at the time of our 2014 story. Brown’s management skills brought an attractive offer and he left in mid-2014, but not before his understudy was ready to take over.

“Matt taught me everything I know about managing both departments,” Andrew said. “He was a good trainer as well as a good manager. I moved immediately into his position when he left five years ago.

“Resource management is the key to our success in both departments,” he continued. “We have a finite amount of labor and space available to perform the services we agree to provide each day. Our success is determined by how effectively we manage both resources. Of course, materials supply is critical, too. While parts and supplies are not finite, resource management here depends on warranty application, ordering, scheduling, and tracking for on-time delivery,” Andrew explained.

“We have one master certified tech with 20 years of experience, several certified techs, and three in the certification process,” he continued. “We have had great success in using the RVIA’s and the Florida RV Trade Association’s online training programs as well as the mentor-trainee system. We hire trainees from mixed backgrounds that include plumbers, electricians, and the building trades.”

The service department repairs or re-



**Administrative and Office Management Staff.**  
*From left: Tina Smith, Melodie Creel, Steve Majure, Nan White, Lory Wheeler, Diana Fris-  
 toe, and Autumn Kotsiuba.*

places everything in the “motorhome box” plus plumbing and electrical in the basement, which includes repairing slide-outs and rebuilding the primary roof and slide-out roofs. “We do not work on chassis, but we do handle oil changes in gas motorhomes,” Andrew said. “We have strong service skills in collision repair: good body work plus an excellent paint contractor.”

Over the last year, the parts department has experienced huge sales increases in the retail store as well as an increased demand for repair parts in the service center. The billings for labor increased correspondingly. “As of today (Nov. 11), billable hours are at \$2.8 million YTD. The best at this date before Michael was \$2.1,” Andrew elaborated. “We will finish the year at \$1 million above last year.

“I have a great team around me,” he continued. “Everybody stayed and worked late during the recovery months.” With T-Mobile providing cellular service right after the hurricane, Andrew used the hot spot on his Android to keep in-out phone communications flowing. His phone got so hot he had to focus fans on it constantly. Andrew is 36. Except for two of his technicians, all of the service employees are older than he.

“In the near future, with each service advisor using iPads to write incoming service and repair orders, our goal is to be paperless,” he said. “Unfortunately, the

hurricane knocked us back into the Stone Age for three months. Our goal is to contact every customer at a minimum of every three days with updates on parts receipts, changes by discovery, and job progress.”

Service advisor Krystal Jolivette outlined the owner’s experience for setting up a service appointment. “For the best service experience, owners are asked to schedule appointments before arrival by calling 850-763-6910. We do not do online scheduling. Our hours are 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.,” she said.

“The service advisor goes over the RV with the customer as he lists needs, problems, and requirements. Each point of repair is marked with blue tape to make it easy for the technician to identify later. We do a walk-around to assess any prior damage to the RV. Then we go over each item on the list with the owner. RVs will not be plugged into 30 amps while waiting for service, so we make sure there are no perishables in the fridge or elsewhere. We have two sites for full-timers for brief overnight extensions of service. We have a dump station available only to owners who are waiting for service,” Krystal explained. “Even if the work is progressing on schedule, we still call the owner at least once every three days to reassure him or her everything is moving along. We evaluate manufacturer’s warranties, extended warranties, and customer pay as

soon as possible after the job is entered.”

The parts administration and service advisors teams include: Connie Oliver, parts manager; Dana Exum, warranty department evaluator; Lewis Bonner, Krystal Jolivette, and Gary Johns, service advisors; Bill Cockrell, parts specialist; Scotty Hirsch, Steve Saunders, and Bob Beatty, parts delivery to technicians; Rob Holmes, OEM parts; Vance White, parts and training; and Jerry Thomas, lot porter.

Connie Oliver, parts manager, has been in the RV business for 22 years. “I grew up in Panama City. After high school, I worked in a general department store where I got into inventory management,” she began. “Eventually, I accepted a position with Holiday on Wheels. When they sold out to Camping World, I spoke with the Stewarts about the parts manager position here at RVC. That was six years ago.

“Finding the parts or products that a company needs to satisfy customer demand is a lot of fun—especially when no one else can find it. I enjoy going to parts and accessories shows and learning about new products in the RV field. Other than OEM parts, I order all of the parts for RVC,” Connie said. She maintains the parts inventory based on turnover and flow, weeding out the products that do not sell well.

“It has been gratifying to supervise our group and build an effective team that manages and provides the parts and products in a timely manner when needed,” she continued. “I price shop everything in stock.”

Steve Majure was not a newcomer when he joined RV Connections recently as the company’s finance manager. Although he came to RVC from a finance manager’s position at another RV company, he had worked with C.O. and Nanette White at Panama City Chevrolet for several years. His background also includes 10 years in RV sales. Steve succeeds Nan as finance manager, allowing her to focus

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entirely on thoroughly researching titles.

“The hurricane created new challenges in finding loans for buyers who needed temporary housing,” Steve said. “In many cases, victims were having to apply for loans they did not expect to make. I had to work with a wide range of credit ability. We used Bank of America, Bank of the West, USBank, BB&T, and Huntington Bank.

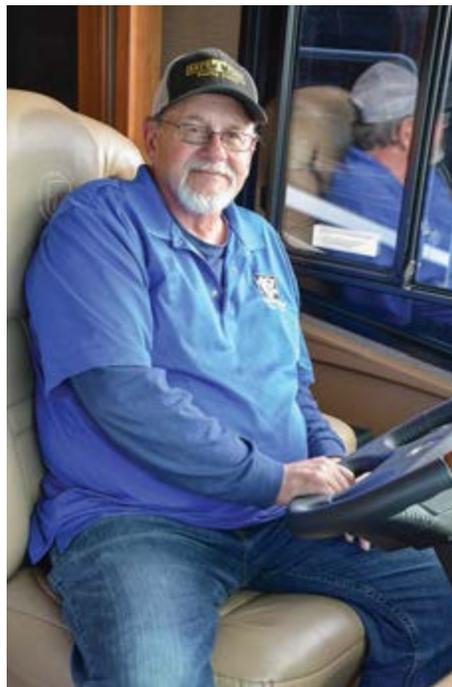
“The RV industry is beginning to slow a little this fall, so the banks are more aggressive and doing things to make it easier to do the loan,” Steven continued. “They are loosening up some on credit requirements. Depending on the applicant’s credit, each case is different regarding the amount and length of the loan, the amount down, and the interest rate. One of the reasons I applied for this position at RVC is the company’s excellent reputation for its good service department. The RV company where I had been working did not have a good service department and it made my job twice as difficult. Everyone at RVC works together like a family.”

Vance is known at RVC as Nan’s husband. Nan has been in the F&I field for over 20 years, seven of which she has served at RVC as the finance manager. Vance brings a diverse technology background to new owner training and orientation. He grew up on a farm near Baton Rouge, but was drawn to the local airport by his fascination with airplanes and flying.

“In 1968, my father traded half a

Connie Oliver brings 22 years of experience in parts and accessories management. She attends shows twice a year to keep the store well-stocked with the items that RVers use most frequently.

butchered cow for my flight instruction,” Vance began. “I learned to fly in a Cessna 150 and a 172.” He joined the Air Force following his graduation from high school and was eventually assigned to SAC, flying missions over Vietnam in



As a former company pilot who now flies a Pitts Special Biplane in airshows, Vance White brings a determination to insist on thorough orientation and training of new owners who purchase motorhomes at RV Connections.

B-52s until the end of the war.

“After military service, I went to work in R&D for Wang Labs, but I soon gravitated back to flying by working as a company pilot for several corporations. My passion through the years has been stunt flying in airshows in a Pitts Special Biplane,” he continued. “I had a stroke six years ago and was in a coma for 22 days. It took a long time, but all of my flying skills came back to me and I am again doing airshows. My only impairment seems to be an inability to remember names soon after meeting people.”

Nan suggested he apply for the position in owner orientation and training. Of course, Vance got the job and it has been a good fit. “Orientation and training of pilots is obviously more complicated and involved than the training required for learning to operate and drive a motorhome. But thoroughness, organization, and repetition is very similar,” Vance said. “I found Bob Tiffin’s article about ‘Training New Owners’ in the October 2017 issue of *Roughing It Smoothly* and I follow it as my outline for training our owners. Unless the owner of a new Tiffin coach has owned two or three Tiffins earlier, my orientation and training program takes most of the day. Going through training one time in all areas of the coach is usually not enough. Repetition and asking the owner to perform certain training tasks is important. I call owners later to see if they have questions and need help. They usually do.”

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Vance is expecting owner orientations and training sessions to ramp up as RV Connections approaches the Spring quarter. C.O. England, general sales manager, and Rob Buckley, sales manager, anticipate a full exit from recovery mode and a return to normal operations. “We will be back to a full inventory, both in motorized and towables,” C.O. said. “We are ordering now to increase our Tiffin inventory,” Rob said. “The beach-related campgrounds in Florida’s Panhandle are filling up again with RVers. We have the best service department in the panhandle, plus we are a Route 66 member.”

A native of Washington state, Rob joined the company two years ago. “I was born and bred in Lake Tapps, Washington,” he said. “For many years I worked as a fisherman in the salmon fishing industry off the coast of Alaska. It took us three to four days sailing time to get to the fishing grounds. There is still a huge demand for wild-caught salmon. The pay is great, but it is a very dangerous business,” he related. “I planned a year off and got into RV sales in Fife, Washington, through a best friend from childhood. Fife is a center for RVing in the state. I had never sold anything before. My friend did very good on-the-job training and I began my new career selling towables for three months. The company moved me into motorized and I became sales manager nine months later. I moved to Holiday Motorhomes in 2004 and in 2009 joined Poulsbo where I first started selling Tiffins.”

After their children were grown and in their own careers, Rob and his wife,

Tina, decided to relocate to the Florida Panhandle to be closer to her family. Tina grew up in Panama City and her mother still lived here. The Buckleys moved in 2017. Rob was hired for a sales position soon after they moved.

“We are living in a condo in Panama City Beach and love it,” Rob said. “I learned to do pole fishing on the beach where I usually catch pompano, but I also enjoy regular fishing from a boat.” In a stroke of irony, Panama City Beach escaped Hurricane Michael almost unscathed.

In talking with two “RV Outfitters” (RVC’s job title for sales associates), I saw the optimism that prevails throughout the company.

“We are getting back to the normalcy of camping for pleasure,” Shawn Baker said. “Since I grew up in Panama City, I was grateful and felt a part of RVC being able to help so many people find temporary housing. But, of course, that’s not the way we want to look forward to selling here in the panhandle. We really have a good group here at RVC and I just enjoy coming to work every day. Last week I sold two special order Tiffins, one to an owner in Illinois and one to a local buyer.”

Don Hasty owned a boat business in Panama City for 24 years and was known as “Mr. Yamaha” in Bay County. “I had known Jack for many years and had sold him boats on at least two occasions,” Don began. “I had to sell the business due to my heart. I had a heart valve replacement in 2003 at the University of Alabama-Birmingham Medical Center and it’s been working like a clock since

Whatever it takes, getting to a repair in a difficult place did not stop Shawn Baumgardner and Curtis Gilmore from securing the protective shield under a Cougar 5th Wheel.

then. I joined the company in 2014 and did a plant tour in Red Bay as part of my training. The assembly line at Tiffin is a remarkable process. I have sold many Tiffins in the last five years. I really like the new REDs. In our area, it fits most of my clients’ budgets better. TMH has elevated the quality and amenities so much that it is not difficult to sell them at all.”

On-site customers and callers will never guess the home country of Tina Smith, the voice of RVC you hear when you call. Her name is Adamantini Coumalatsos Smith. The accent is interesting, easy to understand, but not southern. Tina obviously married a Smith, disguising her Greek heritage. Born in Montreal to Greek immigrants, she speaks and writes Greek fluently. She and her husband live two doors down the street from Neal and his family. When she heard Neal was looking for a receptionist, she applied and was hired. That was four years ago.

Neal Stewart, 37, is married to Crystal. They have three children: Landon 13, Jackson, 12, and Amelia, 6. Neal began to take over and run the company in 2013. “Dad still comes in an hour or two a week to observe, meet with C.O. and me, and to tighten things up,” Neal noted. “Ahead of Hurricane Michael, with the assistance of our insurance company, we put a hurricane evacuation plan in place for moving the motorized units out of harm’s way. Dad, C.O., managers, and all available staff began moving units on Monday.”

Fifteen months after the hurricane, Jack, Neal, and C.O. are building a 2020 business plan. “We are starting to shift back to our traditional RV business: young families just getting into RVing and retired couples who are ready to travel,” Neal said. “For six months we were all engaged in cleaning up a massive mess—at a personal level at our own homes and at a business level here at RVC in serving our regular customers and those who needed RVs as temporary living quarters. We were working constantly with our

insurance company, with victims who needed our RVs as temporary housing, and with RV owners who were streaming in to get their towables and motorhomes repaired that were storm damaged.

“The Florida Disaster Relief helped us so much,” Neal continued. “I want to help with their work in the future when storms strike elsewhere. There were no restaurants. Grocery stores and supermarkets were closed and residents had no electricity. The local Catholic Church set up a huge kitchen and lines stretched for a block or more. Sonic opened up with generator power and served one meal: burger, fries, and soda. Will, our service manager in Dothan, brought us 16 pizzas on one of his parts deliveries – a fantastic treat.”

“The motorized inventory that was moved 13 miles north suffered less damage, but still required repairs along with customer units that were here when the storm hit. We were in emergency mode for so long,” Neal explained. “Negotiations with our insurance adjuster were an everyday occurrence. We devised new MOs and processes that became routine because of the hurricane.”

Neal worked closely with his Spader 20 Group who offered advice on balancing inventory with demand in a stricken area. “You will sell through your inventory and ‘hit a wall,’” one company owner counseled, meaning that RVers would not likely come to a hurricane-blighted area looking for new towables or motorhomes.

“We finally crossed that threshold two months ago when more than 50 percent of our sales and service originated from the RV camping market, not the temporary housing and servicing situation,” Neal said. “We will continue to take care of those who bought RVs as temporary housing. Most of them are still not out of the woods in getting their primary homes repaired or rebuilt.

“The 2020 RVing season in the Florida Panhandle will be back to normal,” Neal projected. “We are increasing our advertising outreach on social media and we are already meeting our forecasts in new and pre-owned motorized. Ride Marketing does the design on our website and

Wheeler Advertising out of Texas handles our social media, creating new posts every day in human interest areas. We meet with them once a month to evaluate our performance in social media in terms of live chats and inquiries which are downloaded to Rob Buckley, our sales manager, to distribute to our RV Outfitters who specialize in given areas.”

RVC plans to stock the Allegro Bus, Phaetons, REDs, Breezes, and Open

Roads. “We are also stocking Wayfarers and Vanleigh fifth wheels,” Neal added. “We have the best service center in the panhandle and frequently get units in for service that were sold by other Tiffin dealers. We place customer orientation and training on a high priority. Customer training will never be lowered to the level of a ‘walk through.’ Shop our website, buy here, and get the best delivery process in the business,” Neal emphasized. 



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## WAYFARER



## BREEZE



## ALLEGRO RED 340



## OPEN ROAD



## PHAETON



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**The Breeze**  
2 Floor Plans  
Powerglide Chassis  
Cummins B6.7 340 h.p.

**The Allegro Open Road**  
4 Floor Plans  
Ford Chassis  
Ford 6.8L V10 320 h.p.

**The Allegro RED 340**  
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3 Floor Plans  
Freightliner Chassis  
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**The Allegro Bus**  
6 Floor Plans  
Powerglide Chassis  
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3 Floor Plans can option  
Powerglide Chassis  
Cummins X15 605 h.p.

**The Zephyr**  
2 Floor Plans  
Powerglide Chassis with Tru Track  
Cummins X15 605 h.p.



## New for 2020: Wayfarer

### Interior/Exterior Options

*Décor:* Solafina, Oasis, Soho, Sparrow  
*Ultraleathers:* Fossil, Tavern, White Sand  
*Floor tiles:* Sand Castle (std), Sea Oat (opt)  
*Cabinets:* Landis Ash, Linen, Russet  
*Wall Covering:* Brodie Khaki, Reston Ivory  
*Exterior colors:* Cordova, Golden Fire, Mountain Peak, Frontier, Imperial, Sea Mist

### New Features (pictured below)

1. Solar panels
2. 16-ft. Girard awning with speakers

3. Countertop extension
4. Table top storage under bed
5. Truma continuous LP hot water heater (std)
6. New Mercedes Infotainment System
7. Hinged flip-over bed in overhead bunk

### New Features (not shown)

- Attention Assist in M-B Sprinter
- Heated exterior mirror
- 12v power outlet in driver seat base
- Improved Active Lane Keeping Assistant
- Multifunction steering wheel
- Rain sensor
- Adaptive cruise control
- COMMAND Online
- Electrically adjustable driver & passenger seats
- Heated driver & passenger seats
- Wet wiper
- System brake
- Wifi Extender
- Retractable hose for vacuum
- Alcoa Aluminum wheels



Bob Tiffin with the **second generation**. *From left:* Van Tiffin, Vice President of Class A Operations, Red Bay and Belmont; Lex Tiffin, Vice President of Supply Chain Operations; Bob Tiffin, President and CEO; Tim Tiffin, Vice President of Class C Operations, Winfield.

The **third generation**: Leigh Tiffin, General Manager of Vanleigh RV; Trent Tiffin, Wayfarer Dealer and Customer Relations; Brock Tiffin, Production Planner and Bill of Materials Management.



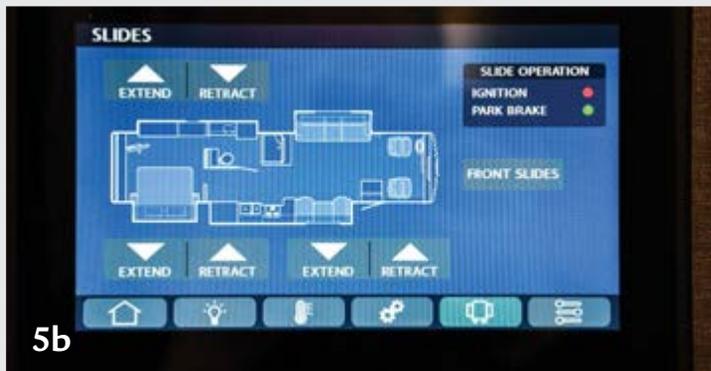
# New for 2020: Open Road

### Interior/Exterior Options

*Décor:* Sandbar, City Shadow, Cashmere II  
*Ultraleathers:* Belgian, Cocoon, White Maple  
*Floor tiles:* Sand Castle (std), Sea Oat (opt)  
*Cabinets:* Amber Glazed, English Chestnut, Mocha  
*Exterior colors:* Autumn, Barcelona, Nasa, Rocky Mountain Brown, Sunlit Sand, White Mahogany

### New Features (pictured below)

1. Updated flat panel cabinet doors
2. Door and drawer hardware
3. Hinged exterior entry door to refrigerator controls
4. Metal deco design in slide-out fascia and valances
5. Updated Spyder Controls home and slides page
6. Furniture restyling
7. Exterior TV sound bar (std)
8. Slide-out tray for house batteries
9. Carefree patio awning
10. Truma continuous LP hot water heater (opt)



**New Features (not shown)**

- Dinette design with seat belt bracket
- Rear cargo boxes will now be sprayed with Elastomeric coating
- Solar panel options: Prep for 1 panel or 2 panels
- Round recessed ceiling lights
- Dinette chair design
- Two refrigerator options: Residential or 2-door with pantry
- Entry step tread material
- Glass panels in overhead cabinet doors in driver's compartment
- Manual galley window shade



## New for 2020: Breeze

### Interior/Exterior Options

*Décor:* Solafina, Café, Mist

*Ultraleathers:* Belgian, Cocoon, White Maple

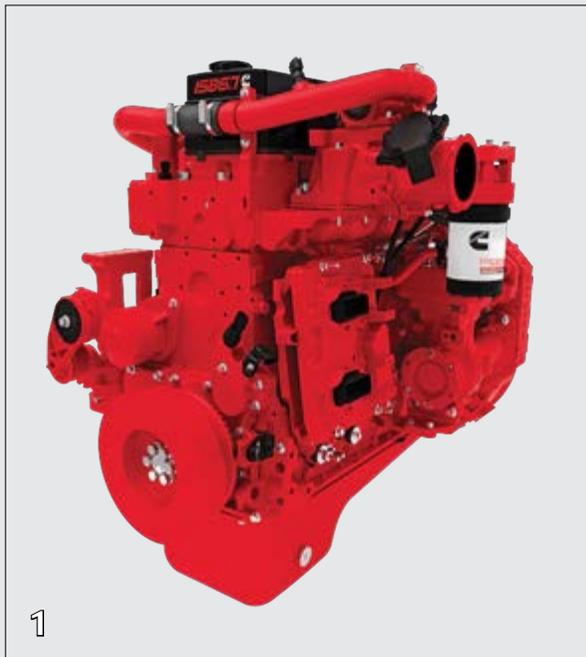
*Floor tiles:* Sand Castle (std), Sea Oat (opt)

*Cabinets:* Natural Alder, Mocha, Sterling (requires Luster Sheen finish)

*Exterior colors:* Fire Opal, Frosted Granite, Rocky Mountain Brown, Silver Sand, Spice Java

### New Features (pictured below)

1. Engine: Cummins ISB 6.7L, 340HP with Allison 2500MH transmission
2. Updated slide-out fascia
3. Digital dash IPO standard instruments
4. Bedroom cabinets above bed (std)
5. Front overhead TV (opt)



- 6. Updated flat panel cabinet doors
- 7. Truma continuous LP hot water heater (opt)

***New Features (not shown)***

- Bedroom cabinet option: Window with no overhead cabinets
- Solar panel options: Prep for 1 Panel or 3 Panels

- Galley power vent in 33BR for kitchen ventilation in place of (IPO) power range hood
- Unitized galley cabinets to create a cleaner look
- Manual galley shade



# New for 2020: Allegro RED 340

### Interior/Exterior Options

*Décor:* Sand Bar II, Cashmere II

*Floor tiles:* Sand Castle (std), Sea Oat (opt)

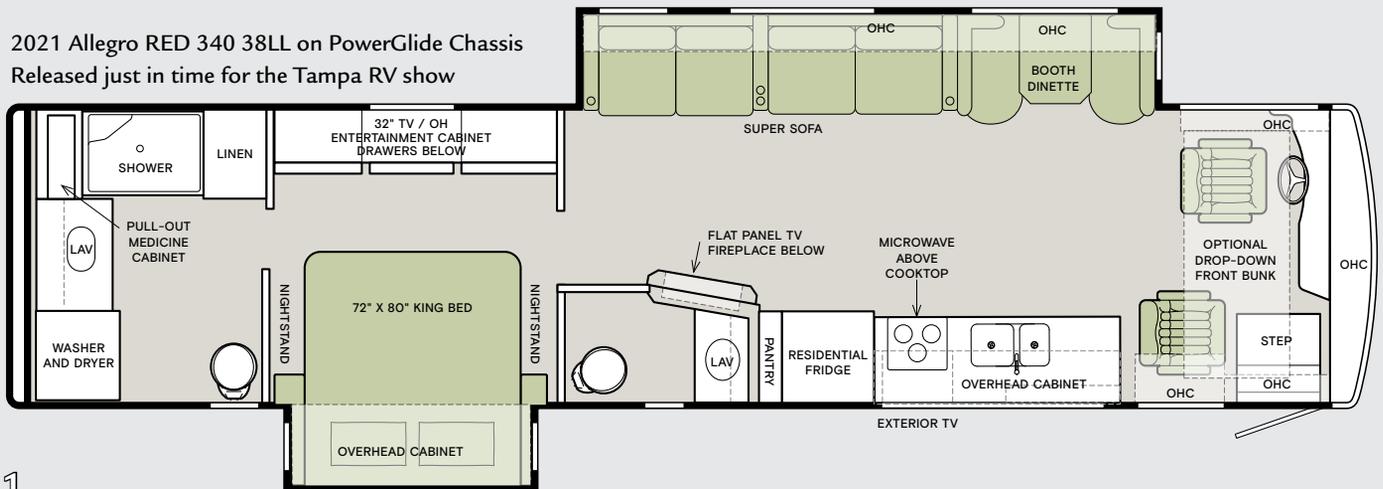
*Cabinets:* Mocha (std), Natural Alder (opt)

*Exterior colors:* Autumn, Barcelona, Glacier Blue, Slate Gray

### New Features (pictured below)

1. 2021 Allegro RED 340 38LL
2. Stacked washer/dryer (opt)
3. Back-lit Spyder control switch at select locations
4. Adjustable brake & gas pedals
5. Double door, full-width basement storage
6. Digital controls for leveling system
7. Embroidered Red 340 logo on driver and passenger chairs

2021 Allegro RED 340 38LL on PowerGlide Chassis  
Released just in time for the Tampa RV show



1



2

from the 38LL



3



4



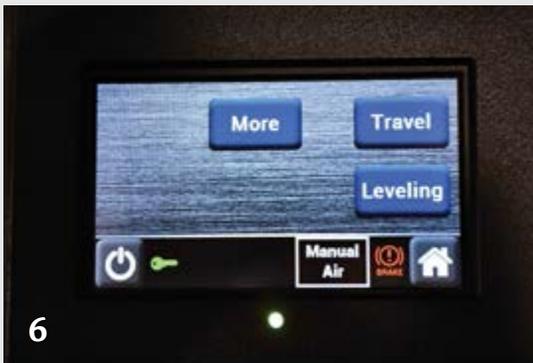
5

from the 38LL

- 8. Truma continuous LP hot water heater (std)
- 9. Entry step tread material
- 10. Double recliner with separate motorized leg and head lifts, with luxury sofa & hide-a-bed

***New Features (not shown)***

- Farm house sink
- Hinged entry door to refrigerator controls (see pg. 46, number 3)
- Updated carpet



6



7



8



9



10

from the 38LL

# New for 2020: Allegro RED

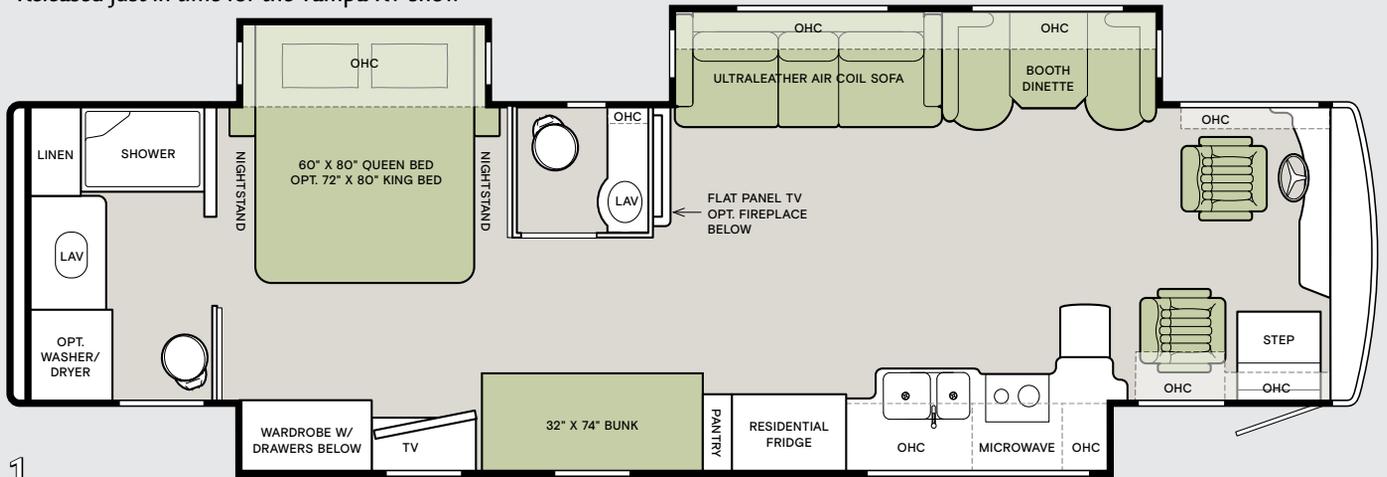
### Interior/Exterior Options

**Décor:** Dhurrie Beige, Taos Taupe, Silver Light  
**Ultraleathers:** Belgian, Cocoon, White Maple  
**Floor tiles:** Barcelona 12" x 24" (std), Pietre Del Norte (opt)  
**Cabinets:** Amber Glazed, English Chestnut, Mocha  
**Exterior colors:** Gold Coral, Nasa, Rustic Canyon, Waterfall, White Mahogany

### New Features (pictured below)

1. New floorplan: 38KA floorplan with bunk beds in single PS slide-out
2. Extend-An-Island per floor plan. All décors feature new backsplash and coordinating surfaces and materials along with new window valances and lambrequins
3. Suspended and adjustable accelerator and brake pedals
4. Freightliner digital glass dash cluster IPO conventional gauges
5. Freightliner column-mounted windshield wiper/spray selector IPO knob in dash
6. Freightliner column-mounted transmission selector IPO pad selector
7. Truma continuous LP hot water heater (std)

2020 Allegro RED 38KA  
 Released just in time for the Tampa RV show



- 8. Furrion stainless steel dishwasher mounted under the cooktop (optional)
- 9. Exterior TV sound bar (std)
- 10. Entry steps tread material
- 11. Residential refrigerator standard on all Allegro RED floorplans

***New Features (not shown)***

- Updated dinette chair design
- Flush-mounted vacuum in basement
- Wall board colors
- The rear cargo boxes sprayed with Elastomeric coating

- Manual galley panoramic window shade
- Solar panel options: Prep for 1 Panel or 3 Panels



## New for 2020: Phaeton

### Interior/Exterior Options

**Décor:** Artist Taupe, Coastal Sand, Trend Beige

**Ultraleathers:** Belgian, Cocoon, White Maple

**Floor tiles:** Navarro (std), Winter Spruce Seasoned Wood (opt)

**Cabinets:** English Chestnut, Mocha, Amber Glazed, Sterling (requires Luster Sheen finish)

**Exterior colors:** Euro Blue, Fire Opal, Frosted Granite, Maroon Coral, Nasa, Sunlit Sand, White Mahogany

### New Features (pictured below)

1. Redesigned slide-out fascia, lambrequin, and valance
2. Flat panel cabinet doors
3. Truma continuous LP hot water heater (std)

4. Reimagined digital dash
5. Reimagined exterior front and rear caps
6. Redesigned sliding 40QKH half-bath door for easier access
7. Updated premium entry steps
8. FRP white walls and grey floors in basement
9. ShowerMiser water saving recirculator



1



2



3



4



5a



5b

**New Features (not shown)**

- High gloss cabinet option
- Generation G9 paint scheme
- Wireless phone charging station in passenger console
- Redesigned headboard
- Countertop profile
- Redesigned dinette chairs
- Egress bedroom door (optional)
- Taller galley panoramic window
- Vacuum connection at dash base on tag axle coaches
- Redesigned windshield
- Redesigned ladder on rear cap
- Exterior lighting
- All Girard awnings
- Manual galley shade
- Updated galley sink
- Redesigned wheel well fenders
- Updated docking lights
- Solar panel options: Prep for 3 panels (std)
- Redesigned outside access door refrigerator controls
- Wood vents in ceiling treatments replace stainless steel vents
- Unitized overhead cabinets



# New for 2020: Allegro Bus

### Interior/Exterior Options

**Décor:** Tempest, Latte. Sand Castle II (Ralph Lauren), Posh II (retained from 2019)

**Ultraleathers:** Silkworm, Grey Owl

**Floor tiles:** Tuscany Sea Salt (std), Winter Spruce Seasoned Wood (opt)

**Cabinets:** Linen, Glazed Canyon Cherry, Glazed Cherry, Glazed Honey Natural Cherry, Sterling (optional, requires Luster Sheen)

**Exterior colors:** Cinderwood, Fire Opal, Frosted Granite, Smokey Teal, Sunlit Sand,

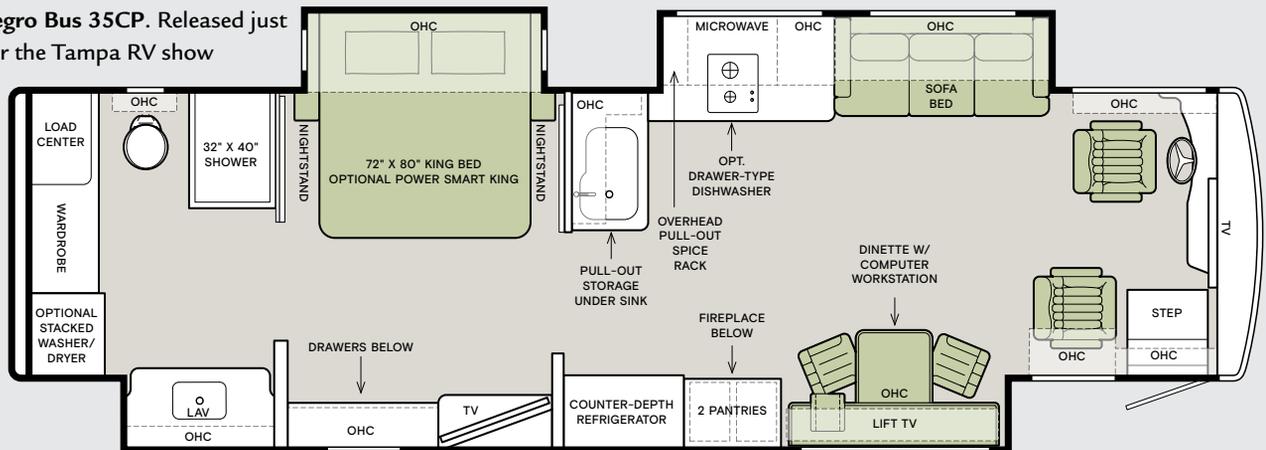
Waterfall, White Mahogany; available in Gen 9 (CF 2019) and Gen 10 patterns

### New Features (pictured below)

1. New floorplan: 35CP
2. Master bath vanity: Redesigned back wall/backsplash with deck-mounted faucets and glass under mounted sinks
3. Soft Touch dash cap color: Charcoal. Base color and side consoles: Medium Brown
4. Entry-step design with accent insert

5. Two luxury dual-powered theatre seats with wide console
6. Two slide-out fascia options: Traditional (new) & Contemporary (refreshed)
7. Two ceiling treatment options: Traditional (new) & Contemporary (refreshed with wood vents)
8. Easy-to-reach concealed "Pop Ups" replace 110-volt/USB ports located behind valances
9. New door and drawer hardware.

2020 Allegro Bus 35CP. Released just in time for the Tampa RV show



**New Features (not shown)**

- Tow brake air outlet for Air Force One Braking System
- XSP chassis modification provides greater height in basements
- Dash drawers redesigned for greater stability
- Reimagined pillows; a smaller quantity of pillows
- Driver and passenger seats feature lumbar support
- Aqua-Hot's diagnostics now integrated with the Spyder control system
- Extend-an-Island cabinet features 3 drawers rather than 4, making each drawer deeper and more useable
- Wood panel doors for residential refrigerator (optional)
- Flip-out drawer on front edge of galley sink
- Taller galley panoramic window
- Galley overhead cabinets have unitized base for a cleaner look
- Power Girard exterior TV door & window awning package (opt)
- Vacuum connection relocated to dash toe kick in tag-axle floorplans
- More basement storage added to forward area of tag-axle floorplans
- Raised panels replace mirror next to galley
- New hinges improve refrigerator's outside access service door
- FRP white walls and grey floors in basement
- Updated wall sconce



# New for 2020: Zephyr

**Interior/Exterior Options**

*Décor:* Shore Club

*Ultraleathers:* Pro Parfait

*Floor tiles:* Noon Ember

*Cabinets:* Linen, Glazed Canyon Cherry, Glazed Cherry, Glazed Honey Natural Cherry, Sterling (optional, requires Luster Sheen)

*Exterior colors:* Gen 8 (2019 pattern):

Cinderwood, Fire Opal, Frosted Granite, Moon Stone, Rustic Canyon, Waterfall;

Gen 9: Coastal Cobalt, Copper Caramel, Iron Slate, Laser Red

**New Features (pictured below)**

1. (a) Galley overhead cabinets with unitized design. (b) Maximum storage in galley cabinets

2. Front overhead cabinets with unitized design (Sterling finish)

3. Whirlpool residential convection/microwave oven

4. Integrated wood panel refrigerator (std) with optional built in Wolf coffee system

5. Whirlpool residential convection/microwave oven



- and optional Wolf beverage storage center with dual zone control
- 5. Redesigned dual vanity with glass sinks
- 6. Aqua-Hot's diagnostics integrated with the Spyder control system
- 7. Reimagined shower
- 8. Gen 9 paint scheme with 4 optional colors

**New Features (not shown)**

- FRP white walls and grey floors in basement
- Central vacuum port at passenger side of dash toe kick
- Tow brake air outlet for Air Force One tow brake system
- Power exterior window awning package (std)
- 360° view camera display in bedroom
- “Pop-up” 110-v/USB
- Solar prep options: 3 panels (std); 6 panels (opt)
- Keurig coffee center in cabinet with K Kupp storage (std). Cabinet with dual pull-out pantries above with additional storage below the coffee center



## June and Joe Foster

IN THEIR LAND YACHT, JUNE AND JOE ARE SAILING ACROSS THE U.S.

by Fred Thompson

June and Joe Foster have owned four motorhomes in the last twenty years. The last two were Tiffins. “I wish the first two had been Tiffins, as well,” Joe said. “The Allegro Open Road fits our lifestyle, and we’ve experienced nothing but good service. The few times we’ve had problems, I called the service department and spoke with a knowledgeable provider who always found a solution.” He went on. “We enjoyed our visit this last year to the Tiffin plant in Red Bay, Alabama. We took all the tours of the factory. I was impressed with the quality of the Tiffin motorhomes—from the basic frame to the clearcoat finish. As a trained RV technician, I quickly observed how much emphasis Tiffin places on good workmanship.”

Joe and June have celebrated forty-seven anniversaries and raised two daughters. For the first number of years, the Fosters lived the military lifestyle while Joe served in the U.S. army. One duty station took them overseas to Europe. June said, “I lived most of my life in western Texas, so to have the opportunity to travel to Germany, England, Austria, and Italy was unbelievable. I taught American children on base, and once traveled over spring break to Athens, Greece, with my fellow teachers. I’ll never forget seeing the Parthenon and the ruins of Corinth.”

After Joe retired from the army, the Fosters moved to El Paso, Texas where Joe managed a vending company, and June taught ESL to Hispanic children. About that time, Joe took up a new hobby—flying. “I’d always wanted to learn to fly, and when the opportunity arose, I went to school and earned my private pilot’s license.” Joe and his friend bought a Cessna 150 together and eventually traded it in for a four-seater Cessna Cardinal.

Joe put his skills as a pilot to work when he and June flew to south Texas to visit her father’s ranch. A county runway, only about fifteen miles from the ranch, was available. “I remember several times when the whole family would wait at the small airport to watch us land,” Joe said.

Joe enjoyed entertaining the grandkids by taking them up over El Paso for an hour or so in the plane. Of course, their moms had to grant permission, which they generally did. Grandpa was a trustworthy pilot.

Joe often took business acquaintances up for a ride if they wanted to go. One time, a friend was waiting for a heart transplant, and Joe was on standby to take him to Albuquerque,



The name of their Allegro Open Road has more than a casual meaning for June and Joe Foster. It opened a whole new lifestyle they are enjoying to the max. June has enjoyed success as an author of inspirational romance novels. Now working on manuscript number 21, the dining table is reserved each day for several hours of writing. ♦ Throughout the year, June and Joe find open-air venues to market the products that evolved from their hobbies. ♦ Joe sells his hand-crafted fishing spinners and also teaches other fishermen how to make their own.

which would get him to the hospital three hours faster. The patient wound up not getting the heart until a year later. Thankfully, the transplant was a success.

In El Paso, after both girls left home, one family member remained—Samson, Sam for short. Sam was a mixed breed canine with mostly lab and shepherd blood. June spoke of their dog,

“Sam was like our son. Joe would spend hours training him to do tricks. Sam performed at my school and entertained the residents at several nursing homes in El Paso. Among many tricks, he could speak, lie down, and roll over as well as close a drawer and balance a dog treat on his nose. He probably understood over one hundred commands. It was really hard when he went to doggie heaven.”

Not only did June teach elementary children to speak English, she taught Hispanic adults at night at El Paso Community College. “Some of my students were professionals from Juarez, Mexico who wanted to improve their English. One lady was a dentist in Juarez. The exciting part about teaching English as a second language is watching the progress students make. Often, they came to me with no knowledge of the English language. Then one day, they’re using words and later complete sentences. The younger children actually pick up the language faster than adults and often speak with no accent.”

Eventually, Joe and June retired—June from teaching and Joe from the vending company and made Washington state their home. “The difference in living in the desert versus the Pacific



northwest was quite a change,” Joe said. “To go from cacti to the mountains, rivers, and rainy weather was a welcomed adjustment.” In Washington, he had plenty of rivers and streams to enjoy one of his favorite outdoor hobbies—fishing. Joe frequented the waters of the Cowlitz and Toutle Rivers when he wasn’t playing golf. “I think that’s when I came up with the idea to start a fishing lure business.”

June just couldn’t stay out of the classroom and was hired in Seattle as an ESL teacher to teach not only Hispanic children, but Vietnamese, Kurdish, Mandarin Chinese, and Ukrainian students. This time, her job was a bit more challenging with the various language groups. “Basically, the principles are the same. I don’t need to know the native languages but the target

language—English. Kids are kids and learn a language the same way despite their ethnic origins. When I got certified as an ESL teacher at the University of Texas El Paso, I studied the Natural Approach to acquiring a second language. The method entails teaching students to speak a new language in the same way they learned their first language as babies. We start with TPR or Total Physical Response where students learn to respond to commands in the target language yet don’t have to produce speech.”

After June finally quit teaching, they rented out their house in Lacey, Washington, and set out in their first motorhome. Through the years, they’ve traveled to every state in the U.S. except a handful in the northeast. “This coming summer, we’re planning to go to Maine to visit Acadia National Park,” Joe said. “Perhaps by the time we finally stop traveling, we will have seen every state.”

A memorable trip was seeing the liberty bell in Philadelphia, visiting Valley Forge, viewing the site where Washington crossed the Delaware River, and exploring the national moments and museums in Washington, DC. “I love visiting historical sites. Seeing places I’ve only learned about in books is thrilling,” June said. “Kill Devil Hills in North Carolina is the location of the



Wright Brothers Museum. It was inspiring to see the marker of the Wright brothers’ first flight and the lighthouse on the Outer Banks.” Another exciting trip was when Joe and June followed the Lewis and Clark Trail. It took them from St. Louis, Missouri to Astoria, Oregon. Along the way, they visited a variety of museums which featured exhibits depicting their journey.

To visit Joe’s favorite spots, one would have to travel west. Joe loves the mountains of Colorado where he can fish and breathe the high-country air. These days, he’s joined at the lakes and streams by his long-time army friend, Jim Blakeley. Joe owns a Bass Tracker fishing boat with Jim, and they launch it at numerous Rocky Mountain locations including DeWeese reservoir close to Westcliffe, Colorado.



Joe and a friend bought a Cessna 150 soon after he learned to fly and eventually traded it for a four-seater Cessna Cardinal. ♦ Putting together a fishing trip for friends and coming home with a catch like this is a highlight for the year.

Joe said one of the most majestic places he visited was when he and June were traveling in South Dakota. They were driving along a winding road and turned a corner. All of a sudden, there it was—a full view of Mt. Rushmore. “I had always seen the site as a picture in a history book. That day the carving in the mountain became real.”

Joe’s love of fishing has taken him to the interior of Mexico, British Columbia, and Alberta and Saskatchewan, Canada. In Saskatchewan, he fished Lake Wollaston where they advertise *it’s not the end of the world, but you can see it from here.*

One highlight of Joe’s RVing experience was when he attended a ten-week RV technician school in Palmetto, Florida. Upon graduation, Joe took the RVIA technician exam and earned his certification. Joe’s found many opportunities to help fellow RVers with diagnosing and repairing their RVs. “I enjoy helping other RV owners when I can. I’ve never charged anyone but got a few free lunches out of the deal,” Joe laughed.

The Fosters love traveling across the U.S. to visit grandkids, brothers and sisters, and friends. “We generally have a rough

idea of where we’re going each year but also love spontaneous adventures. For example, last June, we were driving across Montana to our Washington destination. At the last minute, we found an offer that we couldn’t resist. Within an hour, we booked a seven-day cruise to Alaska which coincided with our month-long stay in Seattle,” Joe said.

Today, June and Joe call Cullman, Alabama home. They have a house there, but once again, leased it after fourteen months of living in the neighborhood. During that time, Joe worked with a twelve-man crew from their local church building ramps and decks at no cost for disabled veterans or anyone else in need. “It’s moving to observe a person who returns from the hospital in a wheelchair and sees their new ramp for the first time.”

June and Joe travel fulltime in their Allegro Open Road. “We plan to stay on the road five years this time—God willing,” Joe said. “I enjoy an occasional work-camping job which involves various duties in the RV park in exchange for our site. It gives me something to do, and I like meeting the campers. A man can only fish and play so much golf.”

Currently they’re staying in Harlingen, Texas, close to Brownsville. “The weather is great in the winter. Our friends up north are having a white winter, but we’re down here in shorts and sandals. Basically, we follow the sun and enjoy summer all year long.”

These days, June and Joe’s hobbies and favorite pastimes go with them on the road—one of the nice things about traveling in an RV. Joe has a small spinner business where he creates fishing lures from scratch. Wholesale Lures keeps him busy when he’s not fishing himself.

June’s hobby, which has become more of a business, follows her on the road, too. June is an author of inspirational romance novels as well as romantic suspense. June began writing in 2010 in their Tiffin Allegro Open Road. “My laptop sits on the kitchen table, and I have plenty of room for my writing supplies in the wide drawers under the seats. There’s space for my printer and paper supplies, also.”

June has noticed an advantage of traveling in the RV as far as marketing goes. “I have plenty of opportunities to meet new people and tell them about my books. On occasion, I sell a few and sometimes give them as gifts. Most people want to download my books on their kindles or other electronic devices. If anyone is interested, they can read about my books at [junefoster.com](http://junefoster.com).”

The Fosters are both Christians and love the challenge of finding a new church where they’re parked. “God always shows up wherever we are,” June laughed. “He has His people stationed all around the U.S.. We enjoy meeting Christians at every place where we stop.”

Today, June stays busy writing novels while Joe works in the office at Dixieland Retirement and RV Park in Harlingen. She also loves interviewing Tiffin owners and writing articles for the *Roughing It Smoothly* magazine. “The Tiffin family of RV owners are a great bunch of interesting and adventuresome people. I’m not sure when my writing journey will end—or our travels, but God knows and that’s all that counts.” 



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## February Is National Dental Awareness Month for Pets

by Dr. John Pilarczyk

One part of taking care of our pets that often gets neglected is dental hygiene. We humans go to the dentist usually two times a year for cleaning our teeth, but very seldom do we even look in our pet's mouth.

Dogs and cats should start to get their teeth cleaned around 3-4 years of age. This could vary by breed and the type of diet that your pet is on. Hard kibble-type dog or cat food can promote an abrasive action on your pet's teeth that will help prevent tartar from forming.

I suggest that you pick up your pet's lips and look at their teeth. Pay attention to the rear of the mouth where premolars and molars are, as tartar will accumulate there faster than on the incisors or canines.

Gingivitis is one of the first signs that your pet's teeth need to be cleaned. As you look at the gum line, if it appears red or bleeds very easily, you need to have their teeth cleaned and treated with antibiotics pre- and post-cleaning.

Another sign that your pet needs a dental cleaning is that bad breath you Regular brushing can be accomplished by owners. Tartar removal requires an appointment with your veterinarian.

have been complaining about. That odor is being produced by bacteria clinging to their teeth. If you start when your pet is young and brush their teeth with an approved canine or feline toothpaste, you can halt the build-up of tartar.

As you examine your dog's or cat's teeth and discover tartar build-up, you may be tempted to scrape it clean and think you have solved the problem. However, the real problem is under the gum line. Bacteria builds up under your pet's gums just as it does under ours. This accumulation of tartar starts to separate the tooth from its attachment to the gums which can lead to erosion of the tooth from the bone, and, alas, in time the tooth falls out. The bacteria that builds up under the gum line not only produces bad breath and loosens the teeth, but will eventually get in the blood stream and have an effect on the kidneys, liver, and heart.

Some groomers or pet shops may advertise that they clean dog's teeth, but I have yet to run into a dog or cat that would allow me to clean under the gum line without anesthesia. The groomer may remove the tartar showing on the teeth, but the real problem is the ori-

gin of that tartar under the gum line.

Unfortunately, most of us will not floss our pet's teeth. Will your pet allow you to do this flossing? It is especially difficult to brush a cat's teeth, much less floss their teeth. That is why yearly cleaning under light anesthesia is important.

I usually run into the problem of the client having apprehension about their older dog or cat going under anesthesia. There are steps you can take to minimize the dangers of anesthesia. Usually a complete blood profile can help to detect the presence of any ongoing disease that anesthesia could affect. The patient does not have to go under deep anesthesia and can be maintained on a light plane. Plus the gas anesthetics of today are much safer compared to earlier products.

Veterinary dentistry has come a long way with many advances. We now have veterinarians that specialize in dentistry. They are able to do root canals, implants, and corrective orthodontic work.

Many dental problems that pets may develop can be prevented by annual cleaning and, if possible, brushing their teeth daily. I know some of you have pets that won't be cooperative but you should

arrange for a deep cleaning at least once a year under anesthesia.

Another way to control tartar is to give your pet treats that have been designed to act as an abrasive and help remove tartar. Hill makes a product called T/D that I used to give my bulldog to help reduce tartar. Greenies are also good chewies. Don't give your dog bones to keep their teeth clean. They will chew up the bones and the spicules will get in the stomach and create havoc. A pet's digestive system today is not like the wolves or wild dogs of Africa.

When it comes to toothpaste, do not use human toothpaste for cleaning your dog's teeth. Human toothpaste is made to foam. This is a marketing tool, because people feel like the foam cleans their teeth better. Take it from me, dogs and cats hate things that foam in their mouth. There are plenty of toothpastes on the market for your pets, flavored for them to accept the taste.

Remember prevention can ward off a lot of dental problems. Another sign that your pet has a dental problem is a change in their eating habits. If they are eating less or drooling excessively, then a problem exists.

Check with your veterinarian and have those teeth cleaned.

Happy travels,  
John & Kay



### Plant Tours

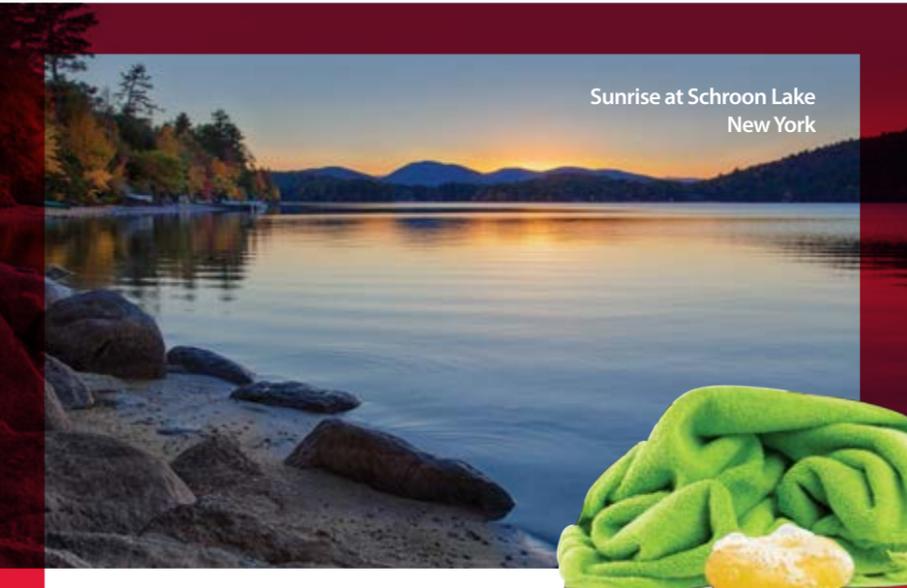
Monday-Friday at 9:30. Meet in the Allegro Welcome Center 15 minutes before departure. Tour headsets and protective glasses provided. You'll be on the production lines seeing it up close and personal. Questions are encouraged.

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## Tiffin Board of Directors Appoints Andy Baer Chief Operating Officer



Text and photography by Fred Thompson

During a recent reorganization of top management at Tiffin Motorhomes, Andy Baer was appointed as the company's chief operations manager. During his six-year tenure at TMH, Baer has served as a regional manufacturer's representative, national sales manager, and general manager. He reports directly to Van Tiffin, vice president of operations for the Class A division, and to Bob Tiffin, president and CEO.

Baer's career in the motorhome industry began in early 1994 as a sales representative for one of Foretravel's dealerships in Florida. The company's senior vice president, Floyd Wilcox, suffered a severe heart attack in December 1994, resulting in Baer being appointed director of sales and moving to Foretravel's home office in Nacogdoches, Texas. After Wilcox's recovery, he became a great teacher and mentor to Baer. Six years later Andy was promoted to director of sales and marketing.

"Two of Foretravel's dealerships were independent entities and also sold Allegros," he recalled. "I met Bob twice during those years and was well aware of Tiffin Motorhome's outstanding reputation."

By the end of 2004 and after 10 years with Foretravel, Andy and his wife, Gail, realized how much they missed frequent association with their families. "I began looking for business opportunities back in Indiana," he said. "Through a mutual acquaintance, I met the owner of K-Z RVs, Daryl Zook, who had started his com-

Andy Baer discovered a new facet of his job when Michael Costanza, video director for TMH, introduced him to creating videos for Tiffin's website and other promotionals. ♦ While Baer runs a tight schedule throughout the day, Tim Massey, assembly plant manager, did an impromptu meeting during the video session. ♦ Baer begins his day with 25 managers and department heads at the "6 O'clock Meeting."

pany in 1972. K-Z was a family-owned company with a culture very much like Foretravel's. Daryl offered me a position in sales that I accepted. We moved to Middlebury, Indiana, and I began the next segment of my career that was to run another decade."

K-Z was in the process of launching a high-end fifth wheel product. Andy's earlier experience at Foretravel quickly drew him into the marketing program for the fifth wheel line and eventually into production planning. Over the next 10 years, he became the manager of the fifth wheel division and later served as the company's vice president for sales and marketing. Zook gave his top managers great latitude to make long-range decisions.

"Marketing at K-Z required an entirely different approach," Baer explained. "We were building 9,000 units a year instead of the 200 units we built annually at Foretravel. K-Z was a really



great place to work, but I had to admit to myself that I still had a passion for motorhomes."

Baer had spoken with Tim Tiffin, the company's general manager, several times regarding the organizational and managerial similarities between TMH and K-Z. The two companies where he had spent the first two decades of his career, Foretravel and K-Z, were both privately owned businesses. There was a synergy they both recognized.

"In August 2013, I accepted Tim's offer to become a regional sales manager serving their Florida accounts," Andy said. "Shortly after accepting, Jerry Williamson, TMH's national sales manager, resigned to accept a position with a Texas company."

Baer's experience in sales and marketing management with Foretravel and K-Z quickly put him in line to become the national sales manager at Tiffin. In 2016 he accepted the company's offer to serve as administrative assistant to the general manager.

"Working on a daily basis with Tim gave me the opportunity to understand the managerial structure and relationships in a privately owned corporation," Baer said. "With plants in several locations, Tiffin Motorhomes is a complex company manufacturing a wide variety of motorhomes and fifth wheels."

As part of the management reorganization, Tim Tiffin was tapped to serve as vice president of operations, Class C division. Van Tiffin serves as vice president of operations, Class A division. Lex Tiffin is now vice president of supply chain operations.

"Bob Tiffin sets the core values and expectations," Baer said. "Bob does not tell a manager *how* to do the job. He offers a broad latitude for officers and managers to make decisions that will stand. You are placed in your job at Tiffin because you have recognized and proven skills. He wants each of us to use our talents and abilities to find the best solutions to solve problems. We all must learn to take risks as managers. Bob does not treat a bad decision with negative repercussions, but instead as a learn-



ing experience that will lead to a better solution.

"To use an old cliché, we must all strive to work smarter, not harder," he continued. "Our office and departmental staffs are relatively small, but efficient and effective. The rubber meets the road in the departments of materials management, purchasing, engineering, customer service, and in manufacturing on our production and assembly lines. At the end of the day, that's what our public expects of us. There is very little 'red tape' in getting a decision at Tiffin Motorhomes."

"We are fleet of foot in satisfying customer requests and finding solutions to their problems," Baer assured. "We will never build a perfect motorhome. But we strive toward perfection as we design, build, and sell our products in a very competitive market. Our departments strategize as if preparing for battle. It is a pleasure to work at Tiffin because we have such resourceful people at all levels who are able to sort through and solve problems," he continued.

You can't talk with Andy Baer very long without being affected by his contagious smile and positive personality. He is quick to identify assets — human and physical. "You cannot automate building a fine motorhome any more than you can automate building a fine house," he noted wryly. "Both are accomplished with step-by-step and piece-by-piece assembly. But you can provide employees with the best possible equipment. We use the latest technology, such as the laser cutters to create parts in the door department."

Jeff LaRue was in the engineering building near the conference room where I was interviewing Baer. Andy asked him to visit with us and explain the workings of the company's new panel saw. "We can take six sheets of 4 x 8 plywood and cut the identical parts that will be used to build several units of the same floor plan," LaRue explained. "To get the most efficient layout of parts on the sheet, we use a nesting program called



SigmaNest that creates a layout with the least amount of waste. It is so efficient and fast that it allows us to stay ahead of the parts demand here in Red Bay and cut out parts for the VanLeigh and Wayfarer plants. With this saw, we can do in 2.5 days on one shift what the older saw took 5 days to do.

“With our new sander-planer, we can convert 1-inch boards to ¾-inch boards with ready-to-use smooth surfaces,” he continued. “With the standard-sized bundles of alder and cherry that we buy, we use two CNC molders, two CNC rip saws, and two CNC routers to create an endless supply of pieces and parts for our furniture, cabinets, fascias, doors, and more. We use a CAD software called SolidWorks in the cabinet engineering department to create elaborate plans to make every item.”

Baer pointed out that the overhead debris collection system in the cabinet shop more than meets OSHA’s standard for air quality. An outside vendor is interested in buying the debris to make compressed pellets for heating fuel.

“The staining and painting of wood parts for the furniture, cabinets, doors, and fascias are handled in a highly controlled environment for spraying and drying,” Baer said.

Baer then posed the question: What is the future for Tiffin Motorhomes which currently employs 2,000 in seven locations?

“We are very committed to the Class A motorhome market,” Baer emphasized. “We do it very well and will continue to improve in the future. Tiffin has listened to the generations of people who buy our products. We have moved from the ‘greatest generation’ to the baby boomers, and on to the gen-Xers and millennials.

“Tiffin has made strong entries into the Class C and fifth wheel markets with Wayfarer and Vanleigh,” he noted. “The Wayfarer crosses over two market segments: baby boomers who are downsizing and the millennials who are just getting into motorized RVing.”

Baer recognized that the work force who helped start the company in 1972 has largely retired. “There are several who are still here and are continuing to make this company what it is today. We profit every day from their knowledge base,” he said. “The future depends on finding the ‘right stuff,’ as the space program puts it, people who want to work and build their careers here. Tiffin Motorhomes is a solid and financially stable company that has the ability for continued growth to command market share in the recreational vehicle industry.”

The company recognizes the role of RVIA and the National Campground Owners Association in the future success of the RV industry and will support their continued growth and influence, he said. “We support the work of RVDA and the support, training, and development of our own dealer network, especially in customer service.

“Our future depends on creative R&D, not only in the design of our products, but also on our ability to take advantage of 5G technology in the development of remote diagnostics, customer education and communication, and driver assistance and safety systems,” Baer said. “We are also interested in and will be carefully studying the use of electric propulsion in certain applica-

tions of entry-level RVs. This is an exciting new area of RVing.”

Andy and Gail currently reside in Muscle Shoals, Alabama, from which he commutes daily to Tiffin’s administrative and plant facilities in Red Bay. They recently moved into a home they designed and built.

Andy grew up in Cincinnati where he spent the first 12 years of his life. He recalls attending RV shows with his family in the mid-seventies where he was fascinated with the early “RVs with engines in them.” His father was a dentist who uncharacteristically decided to sell his practice and make a major career change when he turned 50. His parents moved in 1975 with their two sons, Andy and Matt, to Indiana where the family owned a cabin and had enjoyed summers in Nashville, a popular resort town.

“My parents opened an antique store. At the same time, my future wife’s family moved to Nashville from Chicago,” Baer began. “Gail and I have known each other since the seventh grade. We were just friends at that time and didn’t date each other in high school.

“Ironically, there were five families in the county who all did the same thing that year—moved from the big city suburbs to Brown County,” he continued. “The locals referred to us as the ‘out-of-towners.’”

After graduation from Brown County High School in 1981, Andy enrolled in Northwood University in Midland, Michigan, a college that was endowed by the auto industry in nearby Detroit. He began study on a business degree with a minor focused on automotive dealership administration. After college, he returned to Indiana to work in an automobile agency.

Gail and Andy had stayed in touch after high school and began dating when Andy returned from college. The couple married in 1985. “Gail’s parents were RVers,” Andy noted, “and she had fond memories of the trips they took while she was growing up. We dreamed about one day owning a motorhome to vacation with our dog. In 1992 while Gail was on a trip to Hawaii with her parents and sister, I bought a Jamboree motorhome and had it parked in our driveway waiting for her return. Our first trip was to Disney World in Florida. It was a lot of fun!” Over the next several years, the Baers owned three motorhomes and spent most of their vacations RVing.

By the fall of 1993 Andy had become the general sales manager of the automotive agency. In October a sales person returning from lunch mentioned to him that there was a very large display of motorhomes at the Ceraland Recreation Area, Columbus, Indiana.

“I drove out there on my lunch hour and found several Foretravel motorhomes being shown by the manufacturer,” Andy said. “All of the units were diesel pushers, which at that time was almost unique.

“I met Charlie Myers, the vice president of Foretravel, during my visit,” he continued. “We talked for quite a while, exchanged business cards, and six months later I went to work for Foretravel.”

And now, as Paul Harvey said at the close of every broadcast, you know the rest of the story. 



### Murray & Barb Law

Murray Law, originally from New Zealand, and his British wife, Barb, live in England. For eight years before he sold his business, he came to the U.S. for work. “In the states, I’d spend weekends kicking RV tires at dealerships.” Finally, he and Barb bought a Tiffin Phaeton.

In 2014 they purchased an Allegro Bus 37AP. On Murray’s 63rd birthday, they took delivery and have been road tripping in the USA ever since—generally for three months out of the year.

In 2016 the Laws fulfilled their dreams and took a Route 66 trip. They wanted a photo under the start sign on Adams Street in Chicago which meant they had to drive their bus downtown. A month later they snapped a photo by the Santa Monica Pier to mark the end of Route 66. “Fabulous,” Murray remarked.

In 2017, Murray and Barb talked about how they enjoyed RV life and the people they met along the way. They figured it was time to upgrade their Tiffin to an Allegro Bus 40AP diesel pusher. They even watched it being built in Red Bay.

Murray says, “We are loyal Tiffinites, and have been to Red Bay five times.” In the process they’ve visited all four corners of the lower forty-eight states and are now touring the middle states. Most interesting is how the Law’s begin and end at a variety of different locations. For example, they may start in Los Angeles and end in Seattle. Or they could begin in Dallas and end in Las Vegas. For every trip, they rent a car and haul it behind them in their trailer. Since they don’t have a house in the U.S., they store their coach in different places each time before they return to England.

Since the Laws have owned their Tiffins, their families from Germany and New Zealand have traveled with them. “If you get the impression we are enthusiastic RVers, you will not be mistaken,” Murray assures us.



### Jim & Lisa Telford

The Telfords lived in rural Indiana where Jim owned a bread distribution business. One winter it snowed so hard, the electricity was out for several weeks. They decided they needed to relocate and sat down with a map of the US. Santa Theresa, New Mexico, became their target destination. Little snow and lots of sun. To their surprise, within ten days, both the business and their house sold.

Jim and Lisa traveled for a year before settling in the southwest. Upon arriving in New Mexico, Jim noticed an ad in an RVIA magazine for RV technician school. He attended, and found a job as an RV tech in nearby El Paso. Eventually his entrepreneur spirit kicked in, and he started his own RV mobile tech business. Jim is thorough and dedicated to his work.

Today, Jim and Lisa are busy with Double T RV Repair Service in Sunland Park, New Mexico. Lisa manages the office and orders parts while Jimmy oversees the operations in the shop and the mobile service.

The Telfords love RVing themselves and look forward to retirement days. For now they are satisfied with long week-end trips in their 1990 Allegro front engine diesel which Jim bought from a customer a few years ago. “I spent over a year and a half refurbishing it. It was my weekend therapy during that time. When we stop for gas or pull into an RV park, the coach always draws attention.” Jim said that restoring old coaches could become his retirement hobby.

His advice to first-time RVers is simple. “Buy a used RV to make sure you are going to use it and like it, then move on to new if the shoe fits your lifestyle.”

Jim and Lisa agree. “Tiffin is a well-built coach. They stand behind their work and are eager to assist with any problem.”



### John & Jade Mayleben

John Mayleben and his wife lived in Ann Arbor, Michigan and were avid weekend and vacation RVers. When Mrs. Mayleben retired, she discovered that the cancer she’d endured ten years earlier had returned. Tragically she passed away sixty days after retirement.

John waited a year, then decided to begin their dream of traveling in retirement. Though by himself, he purchased a Tiffin Phaeton. Later, he met his current wife, Jade, on eHarmony. John put his dream on hold long enough for Jade to retire from LSU.

Before they met, Jade swore she wasn’t interested in meeting someone who traveled around the country in an RV. Well, sure enough, she changed her mind.

When Jade retired, they sold her house and hit the road. That was two and one-half years ago. “We’ve loved every minute of this journey and can’t wait to see what’s around the next corner,” John said.

John works with the RV Driving School based in Olathe, Kansas, where he helps people understand how their rigs operate. Last March, John and Jade attended the FMCA rally in Perry, Georgia, where he taught a hundred RVers how to drive and back up their rigs, and also had an opportunity to meet Bob Tiffin.

When John and Jade visited New Orleans, they attended the Mardi Gras ball. John said, “We might have been the only people in the campground in a tux and formal gown.”

John and Jade each made a list of all the places they wanted to visit, compared notes, and merged their lists into one. To date, they’ve scratched sixty places off their list.

The Mayleben’s are happy Tiffin owners and will be traveling full time soon. They write a blog at [whereyatblog.wordpress.com](http://whereyatblog.wordpress.com).



**Editor’s Note:** June Foster is a retired teacher turned author. She and her husband enjoy sailing down the interstates in their Tiffin Allegro Open Road. She speaks of visiting a location before it becomes the setting in her next inspirational romance novel. To date, June has written 20 novels and one devotional and is working on number 21. You can find June on [junefoster.com](http://junefoster.com).

# St. Augustine

## A UNIQUE DESTINATION WITH A 455-YEAR HISTORY

Text and photography by Fred Thompson

**S**T. AUGUSTINE'S DISTINCT historical character, dominated by over 200 years of Spanish control and its architecture, has made it a tourist attraction since the late 1800s. With a resident population of only 14,500, tourists outnumber residents 35-to-1 on a monthly average. Of course, that ratio increases dramatically during the summer months. So, January may be the best month for a visit.

To accurately describe the age of this city that entertains over six million visitors annually, we must establish three parameters. Founded in 1565 by Spanish explorers, it is the oldest continuously inhabited, European-established settlement, within the borders of the continental United States.

How did this town acquire the name St. Augustine? In the spring of 1565, King Philip II of Spain learned a group of French Huguenots, a protestant sect, had been resettled at Fort Caroline near present-day Jacksonville, Florida. From his Catholic perspective, the king regarded the fort as an invasion of heretics in Spanish territory. Philip ordered one of his admirals, Pedro Menéndez de Avilés, to launch three ships with 800 soldiers, sail to Florida, and completely destroy Fort Caroline, sparing only Catholics.

Menéndez sailed in June and first sighted land on August 28, the feast day of St. Augustine. After a brief skirmish with defenders at Fort Caroline, his men put ashore on September 8, at Seloy, a Timucua village. Historians believe the actual landing spot was an open space in front of the present-day Mission Nombre de Dios. Settlers, troops, and supplies from Spain were unloaded as Menéndez named his new village *San Agustín*. Per-

haps he was the first to say an exclamatory phrase that became commonplace on the Space Coast 400 years later: "Mission Accomplished!"



The French wasted no time in launching an attack by sea on September 11. Beset by a terrible storm that wrecked all five ships, the survivors struggled ashore 50 miles south of St. Augustine. As they began a march along the coast northward, Menéndez led a force that destroyed Fort Caroline, killing 130 soldiers and civilians. He then took 70 troops to wipe out the shipwrecked survivors who were marching north along the coast.

The Timucua at Seloy were part of a widespread cultural group of native peoples who settled Northeast Florida. Menéndez's troops dug a moat around the village, posted sentries, and took over the Indian's council house for living quarters for his officers. The Timucuas, who first treated the Spanish quite well,

quickly grew tired of their militancy. They burned the council house in the spring of 1566 and drove the Spanish away. Menéndez claimed Anastasia Island where he built a second encampment and fort. In the 1570s, he moved his headquarters to the present site of St. Augustine. Menéndez became the first governor and the city served as the capital of Spanish Florida for 200 years.

In 1523, Hernán Cortés, who was instrumental in Spain's conquest of Nueva España (Mexico), sent a shipload of treasure destined for the Spanish court. A French corsair intercepted the ship and took the treasure to France. Sir Francis Drake executed four attacks on the village that began in 1586. Another high profile raid of the city by English buccaneer Robert Searle got the crown's attention. The profitable profession of piracy had become a major problem. Spain realized it had to control the coast of east Florida to stop pirates and enemies from using the peninsula's harbors to hide and pounce on Spanish treasure ships using the Gulf Stream to hasten their trip home.

On May 28, 1668, a ship that was supposedly bringing flour from Nueva España anchored in St. Augustine's harbor. Through a well-crafted deception, the citizens were taken by surprise during the night by a hoard of pirates who took everything they wanted and left 60 dead.

Other issues also demanded protection by the government. Hurricanes and

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Admiral Pedro Menéndez de Avilés was drafted by King Philip II to establish a Spanish town in the northwest corner of Florida and to eliminate any heretics and enemies of the crown. ♦ Built primarily with coquina stone mined nearby, the Castillo de San Marcos required 23 years of constant labor to complete.

deadly reefs often destroyed ships, necessitating rescues of crews and treasure. Where the sword of Spain went, the cross also went. Missionaries usually traveled with the military as Spain pushed fingers of civilization into Florida's wilderness. The missions had to be protected from hostile natives and marauding European adventurers looking for supplies.

As Spain's base of operations in Florida, St. Augustine was chosen as a location to provide government protection. In the 100 years prior to the construction of Castillo de San Marcos, nine wooden forts were built, each destroyed in succession by fire, termites, rot, or hurricanes. Since St. Augustine was strategically located to protect the commerce between Mexico and Spain, the crown decided Nueva España had to pay for the protection of the ships with a major fort, the likes of which had not been seen on the North American continent. Since St. Augustine would not exist today without the Castillo, this story will focus first on this massive structure. It happens that 2020 is the 325th year since it was completed.

### The Castillo de San Marcos

The only structure built before 1700 that is still standing today is the Castillo de San Marcos. St. Augustine found strong leadership in 1672 in acting regent Mariana, the mother of three-year-old Prince Carlos II of Spain.

She directed the viceroy of Nueva España to provide a full complement of 300 permanent soldiers to St. Augustine. To succeed the present governor, Mariana selected Sergeant Major Don Manuel de Cendoya, a 22-year veteran of government service in Flanders, Italy and Extremadura. After meeting with the viceroy, he decided to fortify immediately with a main castillo in St. Augustine, a second fort to control the harbor mouth, and a third fort to prevent troop landings.

Cendoya brought in stonemasons and lime burners from Havana, Cuba. Military engineer Ignazio Daza, also from Havana, was recruited to design the fort. Local men were hired as supervisors to develop a workforce for the massive proj-

ect and to find indigenous materials.

Two large kilns were built and a blacksmith built a forge and shop to make axes, shovels, picks, hoes, wedges, spades, and all kinds of nails. Construction began in 1672.

Coquina, a natural shellstone found in this part of Florida, consists of broken sea shells cemented together by their own lime. A stratum of the natural shellstone under great geological pressure for eons of time produces a hard, dense stone. With less pressure, the stone is coarse and crumbles. Quarries of coquina were found



not far from St. Augustine. The Cuban stonemasons had a long learning curve on how to cut and shape coquina stone.

The engineers needed 150 men working full time to keep 15 stone masons working at top speed: 50 in the quarries and hauling stone; 50 for gathering oyster shells and helping at the kiln; 50 for digging the foundation trenches.

Food choices were limited: Flour from Spain, corn grown locally by the Indians, and rationed meat. A paid fisherman kept the workers supplied. Garden vegetables were few: squash, beans, sweet potatoes, citrus, onions, pomegranates, and figs.

Governor Cendoya on October 2, 1672, formally broke ground for the new fort. Slightly over a month later on November 9, he laid the first stone of the

foundation. Less than a year later on July 8, Cendoya died from an unidentified epidemic that was sweeping Florida. Ignazio Daza died a few days later, presumably afflicted by the same epidemic.

The Castillo was finished in 1695. An excellent account of the fort's construction is found in *The History of Castillo de San Marcos*, published by Historic Print & Map Co., St. Augustine. You can find it in the Visitor Information Center.

The immense structure was attacked just nine years after it was completed. The Siege of 1704 was connected to the War of

Spanish Succession (1701-1714), a major European conflict that spilled over into the Americas. In brief, England, Spain, and France were jockeying for power in Europe. William III of England saw the potential joining of France with Spain as a tremendous threat to England's plans for expansion in the New World. Following suit, the governor of colonial Carolina, James Moore, deemed the huge Spanish fortification at St. Augustine a threat to the English colonies. The Carolina Commons authorized an attack on the Castillo and placed Moore in charge. The English cannonades by land and sea were ineffective against the walls of the Castillo. A Spanish relief force from Havana with four Men-of-War arrived on December 26. Moore's forces were overwhelmed,

burned their ships, and then burned the rest of St. Augustine to the ground before starting the long march home.

Similarly, the Siege of 1740 began and ended the same way. Seven British warships dropped anchor on June 13, 1740, and began a long siege led by James Oglethorpe. The British batteries persisted for 27 days. One attacker observed, “The native rock will not splinter, but will give way to a cannon ball as though you would stick a knife into cheese.”

### The Next 100 Years

Control of St. Augustine during the next 100 years was a chess game. Following the 1763 Treaty of Paris, Great Britain gained control of Florida and made St. Augustine the capital of British East Florida. After their defeat in the American Revolution, the British ceded Florida back to Spain in 1783 as a part of the second Treaty of Paris, which recognized the independence of the former British colonies north of Florida.

During the second period of Spanish control (1784–1821) of Florida, Spain had more than it could handle with Napoleon’s armies and the revolutions in its South American colonies. They neglected Florida, leaving the situation ripe for the U.S. to expand its interest in the contiguous peninsula. In the 1819 Adams–Onís Treaty, Spain ceded Florida and St. Augustine (still its capital at the time) to the United States. West Florida was quickly consolidated with East Florida and Tallahassee became the new capital of the territory.

The Florida Territory was admitted into the Union as the State of Florida in 1845. Sixteen years later Florida joined the Confederacy as the Civil War began. The Union gained control of St. Augustine 14 months later. Many residents fled and didn’t return until after the war was over.

St. Augustine as a destination began in 1883 when Henry M. Flagler, the co-founder with John D. Rockefeller of the Standard Oil Company, spent several weeks there to escape Ohio’s cold winter. He found the town delightful but its hotels inadequate. With improved transportation, he believed St. Augustine could become a winter resort for wealthy Americans seeking relief from the cold northern states.

A genius at finessing an opportunity, he bought several short line railroads, hired engineers to connect them, and created the Florida East Coast Railway. After building a railroad bridge over the St. Johns River near Jacksonville in 1888, he opened the Atlantic coast of Florida to tourism and industrial development. Concurrently, Flagler was building two ornate hotels in St. Augustine: the 540-room Ponce de Leon and the 250-room Hotel Alcazar. The architectural firm he selected not only altered the appearance of St. Augustine, but also launched an architectural trend throughout the state that reflected the Moorish Revival style.

An initiative began as part of St. Augustine’s 400th anniversary in 1965 to restore 36 buildings in the historic section of the colonial city. In 2015, St. Augustine observed its 450th anniversary with a four-day festival highlighted with a visit from Felipe VI and Queen Letizia of Spain.

### Planning Your Tour of St. Augustine

The Visitor Information Center should be your first stop prior to touring the city. It faces San Marcos Avenue at the intersection of Castillo Drive. If you enjoy walking a couple of miles, avoid the overpriced Old Town Trolley Tours and the tickets they sell. Their tours begin at the Old Town Main Depot where they operate the Old Jail and Oldest Store Museum Experience, neither of which have historical significance related to the Castillo de San Marcos or the early history of St. Augustine. Spend an hour in the Visitor Information Center at the beginning of your visit, collect literature, and ask an associate to help plan your visit. The Center has a parking garage and is located less than two blocks from the City Gates and St. George Street.

### Touring St. Augustine

With some similarity to the gates to the walled cities of the Old Testament, the Spanish built the gates when they reconstructed the city’s northern wall (the Cubo Line) in 1808. Having regained possession of the city in the Second Treaty of Paris in 1783, the Spanish fortified the town to keep the Americans out. The gate was a critical part of improvements to the city’s fortified defense. As you walk through, look on both sides of the gate to see the restored sections of the wall that once surrounded St. Augustine.

The modern mixes with the old as you pass through the gates and begin to enjoy the ambience of St. George Street’s wide pe-



The City Gates



St. George Street

destrian walk. A quaint inn in the historic district, hand-crafted jewelry, upscale boutiques, and on your right, a red cedar and cypress building from New Smyrna that served Juan Genoply as his homestead in the 1770s. Considered a leader among a group of Minorcans who lived in a settlement near the gates, Genoply wanted the Minorcan children to learn English. Many years later, his daughter Mary Darling became a teacher to the Minorcan children and used the old homestead as her classroom.

A few more steps on St. George leads to a brick-paved, open-air arcade with shops offering the work of artisans and craftsmen—metal, glass, wood, painting, and fabrics—interesting collections to add to your home’s décor.

At the next intersection, we casually entered the Peña-Peck House, a spotlessly white-washed house with its front door opening right into St. George Street. Nearly 300 years old, the house before 1932 was home to perhaps 100 people, including slaves and servants. Since 1932 local volunteers have worked to preserve the house and its history. It once was the household business of the Spanish treasurer and his wife, Maria Antonia. That same door opened to a dusty dirt road with wagons, carts, and carriages passing by. Dusty and cold in the winter and hot in the summer, insects and street odors came through the open windows with the dust. There was no indoor heating—warmth came from smoky fires in indoor braziers.

From 1763 to 1785, there was a transition to British home life when Lt. Gov. John Moultrie moved in with his family. Gov-

ernment business was conducted here when Gov. Patrick Tonyn moved the British seat of government in 1784, conducting British affairs in North America south of Canada from this house in 1785. In the second Spanish period (1784–1821), the Sanchez family lived here and the house was full of children’s laughter and household activity.

In 1821 St. Augustine permanently became part of the U.S. The Peña-Peck House was completely refurbished with new doors, floors, hardware, and in 1837 a second floor was built by Seth Peck. For a short time, the house was a dry goods store. The next owner was the town doctor with his office downstairs and his family’s quarter’s upstairs.

In 1932 the Woman’s Exchange saved the house, restoring it just as it was when the doctor and his family were still living there. The Peña-Peck House is a microcosm of St. Augustine’s history.

It was lunch time when we completed our visit at the Peña-Peck House and we were delighted to find the Columbia Restaurant just a few steps away at 98 St. George Street. In fact, we dined their twice while we were in St. Augustine.

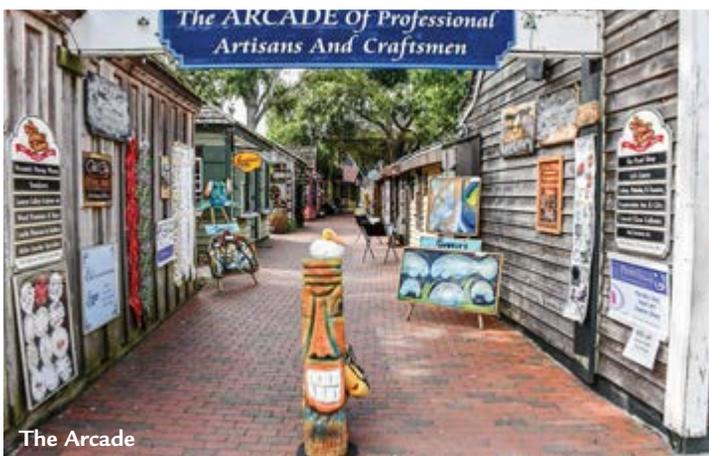
Farther down St. George Street we walked along the west side of the Cathedral of St. Augustine. The parish traces its history to the celebration of a mass on September 8, 1565, by Admiral Pedro Menéndez de Avilés and his men soon after they disembarked. It is the oldest Catholic parish within the present day U.S. Completed in 1797, it became a cathedral in 1870 when



The Old Schoolhouse



The Piña-Peck House



The Arcade



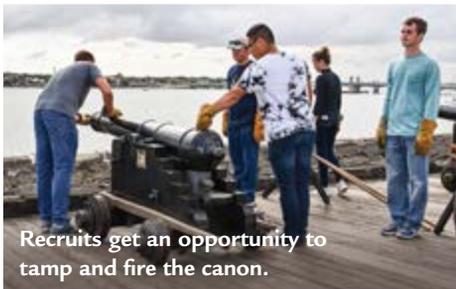
The Piña-Peck Courtyard



The Cathedral of St Augustine



Live Canon Firings Daily



Recruits get an opportunity to tamp and fire the canon.



Courtyard of the Castillo



Canons and Howitzers on display

St. Augustine was elevated to a diocese. In 1887 fire severely damaged the cathedral, but the façade and walls survived which made a full restoration possible in 1888. Known widely for its 3,000 pipe organ, the church offers concerts on the first Friday of every month

Other places in the historic district you may want to visit include the Government House, the Spanish Military Hospital, the Oldest House, the Ximenez Fatio House, and the Flagler Memorial Church.

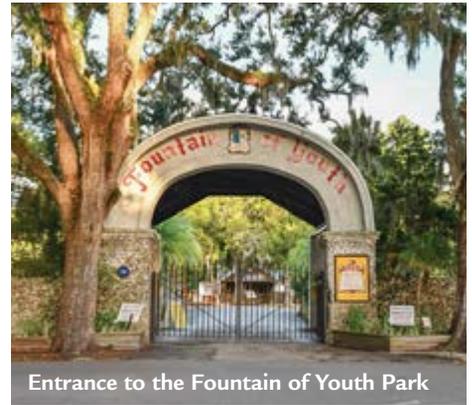
While the massive features of the Castillo de San Marcos were presented in the first part of this article, we returned for some close-ups of the largest fort in our country. Although the Castillo's high walls and moat were a substantial obstacle to anyone trying to capture the fort, the cannon on the gundeck were the fort's real strength. With a range of over a mile, the cannon could strike ships in the harbor as well as soldiers on land. In 1763, the fort had 77 guns positioned on the gundecks to permit firing in every direction.

Touring the fort, you will see three types of artillery: mortars, howitzers, and cannons. Each one had its own strengths and weaknesses. A cannon was best for shooting long distances; a mortar used exploding projectiles, and a howitzer was a mix of the two.

Costumed actors perform daily the regimented routine of firing a cannon. "Recruits" who apply ahead of time get the experience of a lifetime firing one of the Big Berthas. The sentry box enabled a sentry to watch outside the fort to the front and sides, while sheltering him from weather and enemy fire. These turrets were red against the white walls of the fort.

### The Fountain of Youth

Was there really a fountain of youth? The Fountain of Youth Archaeological Park commemorates the 1513 arrival of Juan Ponce de Leon in Florida and the legend of the Fountain of Youth. In 1565 Admiral Pedro Menéndez de Avilés established the first successful European village in North America on the grounds



Entrance to the Fountain of Youth Park



The Arquebus



The Anoti, a Timucuan home



A diorama of Timucuan life





Flagler's Alcazar Hotel, 1890. Now The Lightner Museum.



An Exquisite Cut Glass Collection



An Orchestrion



The View from the St. Augustine Lighthouse

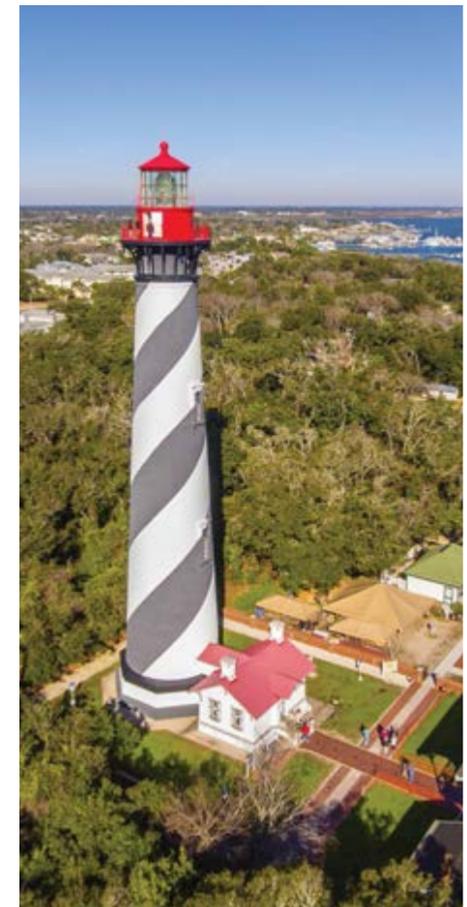
east coast could become the “American Riviera.” Flagler’s success in hotel and railroad developments continued until his death in 1913.

All of Flagler’s hotels struggled during the Depression. During World War II, the Ponce was taken over by the federal government and used as a Coast Guard Training Center. After the war, large crowds returned but the boom did not last. In the 1960s, the hotel was thrust on the national stage by demonstrations connected with the civil rights movement. Continuing problems seemed to drive guests away and in 1967 the hotel was permanently closed.

Chicago publisher Otto C. Lightner purchased the Hotel Alcazar on August 20, 1947, to house several collections, including his own extensive collection of Victorian-era art. Like its older sister across the street, the Alcazar was designed by Carrère and Hastings in the Spanish Renaissance Revival style. The hotel boasted a steam room, sulfur baths, a gymnasium, and the world’s largest indoor swimming pool. After 42 years as an elegant winter resort for the wealthy, the hotel succumbed to the Depression and closed in 1932. Lightner decided against operating the museum himself and turned it over to the city of St. Augustine a year later.

Highlights of the museum’s first floor exhibits include a Victorian village; displays of shells, rocks, minerals, and Native American artifacts; a music room filled with mechanized musical instruments—including player pianos, orchestrions (at left), and others dating from the 1870s through the 1920s.

The second floor contains examples of cut glass (at left), Victorian art glass, and stained glass work from Louis Comfort Tiffany’s studio. The third floor, in the ballroom’s upper balcony, exhibits paintings, sculptures, and furniture, including a *grande escriptorio* created for Louis Bonaparte, Napoleon’s brother, and the King of Holland between 1806 and 1810. On view from the ballroom’s upper balcony is the now drained swimming pool. The pool now hosts the Café Alcazar.



### The St. Augustine Lighthouse

Florida’s soft sand and drifting coastline usually posed serious problems for the construction of lighthouses. Brick lighthouses often proved too heavy for the land to support and collapsed into the sea after one or two years. In contrast, St. Augustine’s coquina and shell rock provided a solid foundation. In 1874 the city’s lighthouse was completed and is today still the city’s first and oldest brick structure.

The lighthouse was designed by Paul J. Pelz, renowned for his design of the Library of Congress. His plans were also used for the lighthouses at Bodie Island (1872) and Currituck Beach (1875) in North Carolina.

The brick and iron tower rises 165 feet above sea level and is topped with its original, first order Fresnel lens. It was illuminated for the first time on October 15, 1874. The tower’s interior is lighted by nine windows and features eight flights of cast iron spiral stairs to reach the rotation room and observation deck. The view at the top is worth the climb and the pictures you will take home.

### Camping at St. Augustine

Anastasia State Park offers a wide selection of campsites in length and hookups. There are six sites that will accommodate 40-ft. coaches and four offer spaces for 30- to 35-ft. units. Sites 56–70 have 50-amp/water and dump station. Sites #66 and #68 can handle a 45-ft. coach. Site #59 is a handicap site with 50-amp elec/water/sewer. It’s a beautiful campground with 3.5 miles of beach. Enjoy swimming, kayaking, paddle boarding, and canoeing. 



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### 3 STEP EASY CARE PLAN

#### STEP 1 // WIPE REGULARLY

Wiping bugs and road grime off your vehicle, with a wet soft cloth, as soon as you get a chance is essential to keeping your film looking great. This will also reduce the risk of staining and discoloration from bug acids, runoff stains, and road grime left on for an extended period. When done apply 303 Aerospace Protectant!

#### STEP 2 // WASH MONTHLY

Washing monthly will give your film the deep clean it deserves and will ensure the film remains crystal clear. We recommend using Advanced RV & Auto Wash and a soft cotton or lambswool mitt to apply. Do not use any abrasive brushes, rags, cloths, or compounds. When you’re done don’t forget to apply 303 Aerospace Protectant!

**DO NOT:** Use Rain-Ex products or Bug & Tar Removers

#### STEP 3 // WAX QUARTERLY

Waxing your film on a quarterly basis, or more, will add that extra layer of protection to your film. Keeping it waxed will prevent damage from bug acids and road grime, and allow the film to effortlessly be wiped clean. We recommend using Advanced RV & Auto Wax, a synthetic polymer cream wax designed specifically for Diamond Shield.

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**Inman's Answers**

As the editor of "Serious Tech Talk," Danny Inman, a 45-year veteran with Tiffin Motorhomes, invites your questions.

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

Danny Inman  
 Roughing It Smoothly  
 PO Box 1150  
 Monroe, GA 30656-1150

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

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

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

Dear Danny . . .

**Suggestion for Dashboard Knob Change**

I own a 2019 Allegro Red 37PA. I am only a part-time traveler as I'm not retired. May I suggest a change on the dashboard: change the design of the knob that operates the windshield wipers, specifically turning them ON, OFF, or selecting the SPEED.

I find the small knob very hard to operate. I am not sure if this is a Freightliner chassis change or something that can be taken care of by Tiffin during manufacture. I wonder if a knob from some other manufacturer would fit the shaft, possibly another person has made a change that would apply. Thank you.

Bob Gagliardi, Myrtle Beach, South Carolina

Dear Bob,

I am not aware of an after-market control that would function with the washer-wiper system we use. This is not the first time I have heard this complaint. Perhaps your vote will help make a change in this case.

**Jacks Up or Down When Storing a 31SA?**

I have an Open Road 31SA. During my customer orientation and training, I was told not to store the unit with the jacks down. My friend just picked up his new motorhome (different manufacturer) and was told to store the unit with the jacks down and unit leveled. Which is correct? Thanks,

Chuck Flack, Whittier, California

See next answer.

**Jacks Up or Down When Storing a 36UA?**

I have a 2018 Open Road 36UA. I use it from May through November. I store it covered in my driveway. With my earlier motorhomes, I stored them with the jacks down to relieve some of the weight on the tires. What do you recommend with this coach?

Krista Musil, Strongsville, Ohio

Dear Krista and Chuck,

There are many opinions on this subject. If you ask the chassis manufacturer, he would say store the coach with the jacks down to take the pressure off their system. The jack manufacturer would ask you to store them in the up position to relieve the tension on the jacks. If you are on an even, solid foundation in a clean environment, I would recommend storing the coach with the jacks down (but not fully extended) to take some of the pressure off the chassis. If the environment is subject to salt water mist, wind blowing dirt, etc., I recommend storing the coach with the jacks up. If you are camping for an extended time, bring the jacks up and down periodically to clean and lubricate them automatically. Significant accumulations should be wiped or washed away.

**Windshield Light Doesn't Work**

I have a 2019 Allegro Bus 40AP. The "Tiffin" windshield light has never worked. While in Red Bay for the fuel gauge recall last fall, the guys in Bay 38 worked through the deep Spyder settings - nothing. The "Wind Accent" function does not work. So apparently the wire behind the front TV was not connected.

How do I have a local tech pull the TV to check the wiring?

David Eberly, Williamsburg, Virginia

Dear David,

The TV will not have to be removed. There are two screws on the bottom of the light's housing. Removing the screws will cause the housing to drop down, exposing the wires. Since the housing is heavy, be careful to secure it as you remove the screws. Then you can do your test for power connectivity.

**Thermostat Defaults to 72 Degrees**

We were in Red Bay in February 2019 for a number of issues, one being the thermostat in our 2014 Allegro keeps defaulting to 72. This causes us to get up during the night to shut off the heat, then again getting up when it gets too cold. We were charged \$28.50 to cut connectors and rewire or straight-wire the thermostat to fix the problem. It was not fixed. We just returned from our fall trip. Every time the heat is on, it continues to default to 72.

Greg Tabor, Downers Grove, Illinois

Dear Greg,

It is defaulting to 72 degrees because of a temporary loss of power, for which the ground side of the system is probably responsible. The main ground lug is on the chassis rail. The ground wire leading from it goes to a ground bar behind the breaker box. The point where the wire connects to the chassis rail is probably corroded or the undercoating was not scraped away to allow a good connection. If you cannot locate the point where the wire is grounded on the rail, run a new wire from the ground bar to the chassis rail and re-ground the circuit

**Thank You for Your Expert Help**

We have left the camping experience. It's been a fine ride. Your journal is "top notch," we have always found it enjoyable to read. And thank you so much for your expert help in *Roughing It Smoothly* and in actual conversation with a "real" person when we really needed it. Thank you again for enhancing our travels.

The Schintos, Liverpool, New York

Dear Schintos,

Thank you for the kind words. This is a very enjoyable job.

**Mirror Vibration While Driving**

We have a 2018 Allegro Red. We like everything about the coach except the mirrors. There is so much vibration when driving that it is very difficult to see what is behind us. Tapping on them you can see the heads vibrate. I have checked the mirrors on Phaetons and Buses and they do not vibrate. Tiffin has replaced the mirrors on the Allegro Red but the new ones also vibrate. Any chance Tiffin is looking for a higher quality mirror? I'm really

tired of my eyes blurring every time I look into the mirrors.

Jim Church, Murrieta, California

Dear Jim,

Sometimes the vibration is caused by the airflow around the mirror's housing and the mirror glass on the inside. Align the outside rims of the mirror with the outside rims of the housing.

Then adjust the housing to the viewing position that accommodates you. The purpose is to reduce the airflow around the inside of the housing.

**Can the Passenger Seat be Lowered for Short People?**

We have a 2016 Allegro Red. I am short (5'0") and my feet don't touch the floor when I'm sitting in the passenger seat. Can it be

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lowered? It is very uncomfortable when traveling long distances.

Deborah Garman  
Tomball, Texas

Dear Deborah,  
The seat stand can be modified by a qualified machine shop. If you are in Red Bay, we can recommend a machinist.

**“Bowing” on Edge of the Front Cap**

I bought my 2015 Allegro in November 2014. I have traveled extensively in the western two-thirds of the United States. Last summer as I was getting ready to leave on my summer trip, I noticed a “bowing” on the front cap edge in front of the driver’s door. It was almost 2 inches wide. I was planning to deal with the problem when I returned from my vacation.

However, “mechanical” health problems have precluded my plans until now. Can this “bowing” be fixed? It is not due to any collision. I am at a loss on how to deal with this. I have not been able to have it looked at as the nearest RV shops are over 40 miles away. I can provide photos if needed.

Harold E. Witsman  
Fort Walton Beach, Florida

Dear Harold,  
The problem is caused when the glue fails that holds the front cap to the sidewall. This is a simple fix. Loosen the trim that covers the seam between the cap and the sidewall. Reglue the cap-sidewall and keep pressure on it until it is dry. Replace the trim and recaulk the seams.

**Jacks and Airbags Malfunction at High Altitudes**

We own a 2015 Allegro Red 33AA. We love our coach and aside from some moderate problems, we’ve been very happy with it. My concern is that when we camp at a high altitude (7,000 ft.), the jacks or airbags seem to deflate or drop causing a loud “bang” which actually shakes the coach and wakes us up. Again, it only seems to happen at a high altitude. We

do love spending time in the mountains. If I retract the jacks, the “bang” doesn’t occur, but I have to resort to using leveling blocks.

I’m wondering if anyone else experiences this and if there is a fix. I’ve had the jacks tested at my local maintenance facility and they don’t seem to be moving. (I am at sea level at home). Thanks for your thoughts and consideration.

Phil & Pam Brust  
Fallbrook, California

Dear Phil & Pam,  
We can probably take the airbags out of the equation because they are dumped when the leveling system is activated. It sounds like one of the leveling jacks is leaking back to the solenoid, causing the jack to come up and make a popping noise when the pressure comes off from that jack. After leveling, mark the shaft of each jack about an inch down from where it goes into the cylinder. Movement of the shaft back into the cylinder will allow you to determine which jack is leaking. If you find the jacks are not leaking, start looking for ghosts in your motorhome. :-)

**Resetting the Sleep Number Bed Remote**

I have a 2010 Phaeton. Recently the remote on the Sleep Number Bed stopped working. I was told this would reset if you unplug the pump and then plug it back in. Can you tell me the best way to cut the power to the pump?

Jerry M. Allen  
Marion, Louisiana

Dear Jerry,  
Simply unplug the motorhome, make sure the generator is off, then turn the inverter off and that will take all 110v power away from it.

**Need Replacement Air Valves for Jacks**

I purchased a new 2004 Phaeton 35WHR diesel pusher in 2005. At the right rear of the coach on the inside of the frame are 2 “L” brackets each with an air type valve at-

tached which apparently assist in dumping the air when I retract the jacks. Once I start and run the engine, the air continues to leak. When I shut the engine off, the air in the air tank leaks out within 20 minutes. Both valves leak air. I was able to locate a valve on Ebay. I replaced it and have had no more air leak from that valve, however, the other one is leaking air.

The air valves are about 2 ¼" tall and 1 ½" diameter. The top portion is black and has 2 electrical wires coming out of it. The bottom portion is brass and has an air line attached to it. The leak is between the top portion solenoid and the brass bottom. Stamped on the valve is Av A5983-103, 12 HZ:DC, Watts 9.5, 125 PSI, orif 3/32, and code VN.

There are numerous air type valves on the internet. Where can I get another valve, or one that I can replace the leaking one with? Would you supply me a new valve model and information where I can obtain one? Also, can that solenoid/valve be taken apart and rebuilt?

I contacted Freightliner and was told that it was not their part. I also contacted the Tiffin service center in Red Bay and was told by a service technician that the coach is too old and he did not know what the part was. Wow!

William N. Young  
Lake Havasu City, Arizona

Dear William,  
The air dump solenoid is supplied on the chassis by Freightliner. You should be able to purchase this part from your local Freightliner’s parts department. The part number on the solenoid is not the Freightliner part number. The Freightliner part number is A16-18694-000.

**Kitchen Faucet Water Flow**

This letter is in reference to the kitchen faucet water flow issue addressed in RIS Vol. 16:4. The orifice in the faucet is small. A couple of times after changing the anode rod, my sink orifice on the

hot water side became obstructed with a small piece of calcium. I disconnected the line under the sink and blew it out with compressed air. I am now more careful about recharging the water line after changing the anode rod. And, yes, I do rinse out the hot water tank when I change the rod.

Don Crowe  
Lawrence, Kansas

Dear Don,  
Thanks for the feedback.

**Questions Regarding Installing a Triplite Remote Control Module**

I have a 2016 Open Road 32SA. My question deals with the Triplite inverter/charger installed on my coach. Triplite has a remote control module APSRM4 that I would like to install so I can at a glance look at the status of the inverter and batteries. When I started to install

the remote cable, I discovered that there is already a RJ45 cable plugged into this location. My manuals do not reference this cable and I discovered that it goes to the 12V switch beside my coach entrance door. This switch also puts the inverter into charge mode. So why, you ask, install the remote switch? Well, the switch also shows the status of the inverter along with the batteries charge level. The remote comes with a 12V master control cable that will put the inverter into charge only when 12V is applied, like the ignition key switch. Does the 12V switch beside the door provide 12V to the inverter or does the inverter provide 12V to the switch? If the switch provides 12V, can I use this switch as my master control? What function will I lose if this switch does not get hooked to the inverter? I noticed when the ceiling lights are on and this switch is turned off, those lights go

out so it looks like all is working except it is not controlling the inverter. Thanks for your help.

Matthew Morris  
Statesville, North Carolina

Dear Matthew,  
To plug in your remote system, unplug the existing remote wire and replace it with yours. Keep in mind that the existing wiring was there to turn off the inverter at the disconnect switch by the entry door. Now, when you kill your 12-volt switch, you will have to manually turn off your inverter or it will draw down your batteries when you put the coach in storage.

**Thank You, Tiffin, for Building a Quality Product!!**

We purchased a 32-ft. Allegro in 2000. We still have it and we still love it. We have taken very good care of it and it looks nearly new, including the carpets. We

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have kept it in good stead and we have had many good trips in our Allegro and love it as much today as when we bought it in 2000. It's our second home and we tow a vehicle easily. We plan to motor on until we can't motor on anymore! I know our Allegro will hang in there. We were so smart to purchase our Allegro.

I think it is rare that one buys something and is happy with it for this long. We have replaced batteries and done oil changes routinely. We have had our family with us and the motorhome functioned perfectly. Thank you for building a product built to last even after it's "paid off!"

Georgia Lockhart-Brown  
Salem, Oregon

Dear Georgia,  
You just made Bob Tiffin's day. We are so glad you have enjoyed our product for two decades.

**Problem with Night Shade Retracting**  
I have a 2013 Allegro 34TGA. The night shade will come down but will not go back up. The sun shade works fine. What could be the problem?

Charles Newbold  
Caldwell, Idaho

Dear Charles,  
Each individual shade has its own motor. It will either be the connection at the motor or the motor itself.

**Fuel Tank Not Filling**  
I own a 2019 Allegro Red 37BA. I have an issue that I would like to get your opinion about. I filled the fuel tank for the first time about a month ago when the gauge was showing a little less than half full. Having a 100-gallon tank, I assumed I would need around 50 gallons to top off the tank. During the fueling, the nozzle clicked at about 25 gallons. I restarted the nozzle and again it clicked with some fuel over-flowing. When I started the engine, the gauge showed ¾ full. I assumed I had an issue with the gauge. I brought

the coach to a local Freightliner dealer, they determined it was not the gauge but rather a dip in the line going from the entry point down into the tank. They said the problem was on both the driver and passenger side (I had filled from the driver's side at a truck stop using the larger size nozzle). The dealer suggested shorting the line on both sides to eliminate the dip. I have several questions:

Have you heard of this issue in the past? An individual on the Allegro Red owner's Facebook page mentioned this problem. His suggestion was to open the opposite side while fueling, allowing for some ventilation. Any thoughts? Should I fill using a "smaller nozzle" versus the "big truck" nozzle? Your thoughts on shortening the line?

Looking forward to your ideas regarding this issue.

Ronnie Doucet  
Lafayette, Louisiana

Dear Ronnie,  
Yes, this has been a problem we have had in the past. The best way to correct this problem is to shorten the filler hose to prevent a sag, thus providing a straight shot to the fuel tank. Also, with each filler hose, there is a vent line that should be tied up to prevent fuel from getting trapped in the sag. With these modifications, you will be able alleviate the problem.

**Should We Expect a Black Tank Leak?**  
We have a 2006 Allegro Bus and have recently noticed that it appears the black water tank is internally delaminating. Thin irregular circular pieces of fiberglass are coming out with the waste water. The pieces are approximately 2-3" in diameter and 1/16" thick. Is this an indication that a leak in our black water tank is imminent? It is our understanding that the holding and black water tank were repaired along with the wet bay floor in 2012.

Rodney Watson  
Tampa, Florida

Dear Rodney,  
We do not believe your black tank is delaminated. It is made from polypropylene, not fiberglass. What you have in your tank is build-up from dried out, hardened sewage. You can have this professionally cleaned (which is expensive) or by doing a thorough cleaning of the tank yourself. Start with 15 gallons of water, pour in 20 ounces of Pine Power or Pine Sol, then add about four 10-lb bags of ice and drive for about 20 minutes involving a lot of turn and stop-and-go. Then dump it and see if this solves your problem.

The repair in 2012 involved replacing a deteriorated floor, not the holding tanks.

**Braking Verification Light on Dash not Functioning**

We have a 2014 36-ft. Phaeton and tow a GMC Yukon equipped with Air Force One brakes. Normally, we get a light on the coach dash when we apply the brakes signifying the brakes on the Yukon are functioning. The brakes on the Yukon are still functioning, but we have lost the verifying light in the coach. We have looked at the circuit but have dead-ended at the dash on the coach, the light bulb is good. Danny, how can this be fixed?

Gene & Beth Griffin  
Anderson, South Carolina

Dear Gene & Beth,  
This is an aftermarket application, not something that we do at the Tiffin factory. It could be in a couple of different locations depending on how it was installed. Most of the time, installers use the brake wire that goes from the 7-pin plug on the rear to provide the verification light on the dash.

**Signal Lights Not Working Properly on Tow Vehicle**

I had the same situation occur as the owner who wrote to you indicating that the signal lights on their tow vehicle were not working properly.

To remedy the situation, you need to add a ground wire to the chassis of the

motorhome and another to the chassis of the tow vehicle, then connect them together when you are traveling. The wire has to go to the chassis and not to the tow bar. It's not making a good ground.

Ronald Weimer  
Thibodaux, Louisiana

Dear Ronald,  
This is very good information. Always remember to check your grounds.

**Repairing a Windshield Night Shade**  
I enjoy reading your Serious Tech Talk segments in *Roughing It Smoothly*.

A motorhome is made up of many gadgets and mechanical devices that are just waiting to wear out or fail. If something stops working on your motorhome, it is very likely that another owner of the same model or part number is going through the very same problem.

In the last *RIS* magazine, Vol. 16:4, Kim

Roberson wrote "Night Shade on Windshield Not Extending Properly." Being the proud owner of a 2016 Allegro Open Road 36LA, I was dealing with a similar night shade problem. Because the Tiffin parts people have been of great support to me, I called them to get information about the shade moving only ¼" each time you push the button up or down. They said the drive motor was bad and not repairable. So, I bought a new unit (out of warranty) for \$160.00+ and put it in. This was easy to do and is the best way to make the problem go away.

BUT, if you don't want to spend the money, this problem is repairable. Being a design engineer, I didn't like the comment that the unit was not repairable and trying to understand the reason it failed was too much of a challenge.

The unit is intricate and made up of two sections. On one end is the motor

and gear box. The other end has the switch mechanism, relays, and electronic components. The reason the unit fails is not because of the motor but because the electronics fail to make a holding circuit causing the shade to bounce in short movements. Because the motor is good, it is possible to wire the motor direct and remove the switching components. The stopping action at the end of the travel will no longer work but intermittent failing of the shade midway will also be gone.

The way to do the repair is to remove the unit from the shade. The unit has the power wire coming in the switching end and a drive wheel on the motor end. Do not disturb the motor end. On the switching end you will find two hardened roll pins pushed into blank holes. The pins need to be drilled or ground below the surface of the steel housing. It may be best to grind them because the hard pins



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will destroy your drills. Once you remove this end, you will see the motor wire attached to the electronic components. Cut the motor wire off and test the motor with a 12-volt battery, reverse polarity and the motor should go in reverse. If the motor proves to be okay, then remove all the switching components and wire a new cord to the motor leads with solder and shrink tubing. To reassemble it you will need to drill and tap two 4-40 holes about 1/8" from the original roll pin, one on each side (caution, it can only be about 1/4" deep). Install a 4-40 screw with some sealant and later grind the head off. Once assembled, retest the unit and install back into the shade.

I did this repair to the faulty unit that I replaced and now I have a spare unit in case my other shade fails.

James Nelson

Rancho Cucamonga, California

Dear James,

That's great. I wish we had more owners who could work on their coaches at your level.

### House Batteries Can't be Removed for Replacement

I have a 2014 Allegro Open Road 34GTA. I feel it is time to replace the house batteries, but there is a problem removing the existing batteries. The current batteries measure 7" x 10" at the top, the opening for the battery box is only 9", and there is only 1/4" at the end of the batteries which isn't enough space to allow me to turn them a quarter turn to lift them out of the box. While at a campground last week, I asked another Allegro owner if I could inspect his battery storage area. His batteries were turned so that they could easily be replaced.

How do you suggest that I replace these batteries?

Tom Bulwinkle

Mt. Pleasant, South Carolina

Dear Tom,

On your unit, battery replacement is a

chore, but fortunately you don't have to do it very often. There is a step plate on top of the battery box. It has several screws holding it on. By removing these screws, the plate can be removed and you can lift the batteries out.

### Starting the Engine Is Unpredictable

This letter is in response to Alden Ose's letter on page 59, RIS 16:4.

I had the same problem with my Winnebago Tour that is built on a Freightliner chassis. The transmission computer was not passing the signal through that the transmission was in neutral. The signal would start out at 12 volts and then drop to 1 volt. If you quickly turn to START, it will start. If you wait, it drops to 1 volt and will not get the signal from the transmission's computer. Freightliner replaced the transmission's computer.

Jay Stargel

Marion, Michigan

Dear Jay,

Your diagnosis may be correct, but it will be a very expensive one.

### Finding 6th Gear with a Cummins 340 with an Allison 6-speed Transmission

We have a 2014 Allegro RED 34QFA with an Allison 6-speed transmission. The transmission will not seek 6th gear unless the mode switch has been pushed. Is this normal? The transmission has been serviced and "reset." Previously, we had a 2008 Allegro FRED with a Cummins 340 and the Allison transmission. It had no trouble finding 6th gear.

Dennis Runolfson

Seattle, Washington

Dear Dennis,

With the matchup of the 340-hp engine and the 6-speed Allison transmission 10 years ago, that was very common. It is okay to use the mode switch to change the shift pattern. The 2008 Allegro FRED was an overall lighter unit and the rear-end ratio was different. Your previous experience made this an interesting comparison.

### Crimped Ductwork to Heater

We purchased a new 2019 Allegro Open Road 34PA at a local RV show. On one of our outings we needed to use the heater in the bedroom and found that there was limited to no airflow. When we took it in to have the problem addressed, they found that the duct had an extreme bend that restricted the airflow. They removed the drawer and brought the duct straight out from the heater. They replaced the drawer front for cosmetics. Otherwise the duct would be on the rear of the drawer and would get crimped when the drawer was closed. We are now short the lower drawer in the bathroom. Is this a design flaw that has been corrected? Was our heater unit not installed properly, requiring the duct work to have such an extreme bend? Is there a better fix to allow the replacement of the bottom bathroom drawer?

Brian Williamson

Claremont, California

Dear Brian,

It is a flaw that has been corrected. We removed the lower drawer in the 2020 series to make room for the duct.

### Using an RF Remote with an IR Remote Solves Owner's Problem

This is in response to Bill & Cheryl Socha (RIS 16:2, p.69) on their TV remote turning on and off and changing channels on all the TVs. We have a 2012 Phaeton and when we first got it, I was going crazy with the living room remote. We have DirecTV receivers, one in the LR & one in the bedroom. I purchased a Radio Frequency (RF) remote for the LR and kept the Infrared (IR) remote for the BR. It is very easy to set up the new remote through the menu options. Just make sure you have the new remote, with the batteries installed, ready to go, before you start the procedure. You will need to use the old remote to get to the correct menu options, select RF vs. IR, then follow the instructions. After that is done you will use the

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new remote to see if it works. The RF remote is omnidirectional. You don't have to point at the TV. Since our receiver is in a cabinet to the side and behind us, it has made all the difference in the world. Also the signal is entirely different than the IR, so it will not interfere with the bedroom or vice versa. This will also work with DISH systems. However, if you are using the original remotes that came with the TVs and over-the-air signals, then you will need to contact the TV company and see if they have similar RF remotes available. Hope this helps.

I always enjoy reading your column, Danny. I have learned many things over the years.

Joyce Skoien

Port Townsend, Washington

Dear Joyce,

Thank you for your solution. I hope others will find it helps simplify a problem we have heard many times over the years.

**2020 Allegro Open Road 32SA Needs an Extra Cabinet in Bathroom**

We have just purchased a 2020 Open Road 32SA. There is a space in the bathroom to the left of the medicine cabinet that would accommodate a second identical medicine cabinet.

After transitioning from a 2010 34TGA, we found less storage space in the new 32SA. Can I order a second identical medicine cabinet in English Chestnut? I can install it myself.

Thank you for your help.

Robert Sandhagen

Upland, California 91784

Dear Robert,

Call Tiffin Parts and Service and give them the VIN and describe the cabinet in the bathroom that you wish to purchase. They will place an order in the cabinet shop and have one built for you.

**Upgrading to Lithium Batteries**

I have a 2016 Allegro RED 33AA and love it. I would like to upgrade my house

batteries to lithium. I have solar panels, but my batteries seldom last through the night. Do you assist me in specifying the brand, size, and how many? Any tips for making this upgrade will be appreciated.

Jeff Taatjes

Lompoc, California.

Dear Jeff,

We are experimenting with lithium batteries in R&D and engineering, but at this time we do not offer lithium in any of our brands. Therefore, I don't have anything to share with you. Keep in mind, the inverter-charging system in your coach will react differently to lithium.

**Over-the-Air TV Antenna No Longer Works**

I have a 2011 Phaeton 36QSH. The over-the-air TV antenna no longer works. The model on my roof is no longer manufactured. What does Tiffin use today on its new motorhomes? Will it work on my 2011 Phaeton? If so, how do I purchase and install a new one?

Bill Lloyd

Brigham City, Utah

Dear Bill,

Triple H Electronics, a local Red Bay company, builds our over-the-air TV antenna. You can install a Triple H unit with very little modification. Contact Tiffin Parts and Service 256-356-0261 or Triple H directly at 256-668-0256.

**Servicing the Transmission on a Ford V10**

I own a 2016 Allegro Open Road with a Torqshift transmission. I was told to service it every 30,000 miles. I am getting ready to do this as I have 34,000 on it now. All the info I read says to replace the two filters in addition to the fluid. The mechanic we consulted said the flushing out of the transmission will also flush the filters. He said they don't remove the filters, especially the one in the pan, because they have so much trouble with it leaking later. He said that is the current recom-

mended procedure. We would like a second opinion.

Diana McVey

Sioux Falls, South Dakota

Dear Diana,

Servicing the Ford transmission is not offered at Tiffin Motorhomes. A Ford dealer's truck division will furnish your best information.

**Replacing the Rubber Seals Around the Slide-Outs**

I just replaced the rubber seals around both slide-outs on the driver's side. The project went well. I was able to cut the rubber so the corners folded correctly, with the vertical rubber laying over the horizontal rubber. But there is an air gap at the corners and I can see light coming through when I am inside the RV.

I had noticed that the old rubber seal had been glued together at the corners to prevent an air gap. Can you explain how the corners are glued together during manufacturing? I have tried super glue and silicone, but neither worked. What adhesive will glue the rubber together?

I want to do this myself since we live in our RV and it is inconvenient to bring it to the shop. Can you explain in detail the procedure to glue the corners together?

Vince Pepe

San Mateo, California

Dear Vince,

We use an industrial-type superglue with an accelerator. The accelerator facilitates a dissolving that bonds the two rubber corners. A good hobby shop would be a place to find this kind of glue and accelerator.

**Undiscoverable Sources of Smells and Odors**

I own a 2014 Phaeton 42LH. A strong intermittent exhaust smell gets inside the coach occasionally, maybe 10 times since I purchased the coach new. A more serious issue is the black water tank flush system. Every time the toilet is flushed I get a terrible odor inside my bedroom.

I am guessing there is a loose fitting causing the problem, but I cannot find a schematic in my manuals for the flush system to try and resolve this. Thanks for your help.

H. Brooks Bonnell

Roswell, New Mexico

Dear Brooks,

The exhaust smell is produced by the engine's regeneration system. The system puts diesel fuel into the exhaust system to burn out the particulates and residues left in the exhaust canister. The odor, however, is temporary.

Regarding the toilet odor, first check the vent pipe on the roof that is connected to the holding tanks. If the caulking around the vent pipe where it comes through the roof is loose or has spaces around it, the air pressure in the motorhome will suck the emissions from the vent pipe right back into the motorhome. Therefore, a good recaulking job should solve your problem.

**Troubleshooting a Carefree Awning on a 2011 Phaeton**

I have a 2011 Phaeton 42QBH with a Carefree electric awning. It has stopped working and will not extend when I depress the awning switch inside the coach. What are the steps that I need to check to identify and fix the problem? I checked the fuses in the outside compartment below the driver side. That didn't work. Are there other fuses or places to look? If it is the motor, how do I get to it?

Richard Lombardi

Williamsburg, Virginia

Dear Richard,

The problem could be caused by several things. First, you will need a good volt meter to check where you do and do not have power.

Start with your control board. If there are any indicator lights on the board, you have power. If not, remove the control box and check the wiring connections. If you find power at that point, go to the cabinet

above the entrance door and remove the false panel in the back wall that conceals the wiring that connects to the awning. You will need the owner's manual with the wiring schematic to determine which wires go to the motor. Once you locate those wires, have someone press the on-off switch to see if you have power at that point. Be sure you check the grounds. If you have power at this point and the awning does not move, it will be a faulty motor. This will be a pretty complicated process.

**Replacing a Tile DIY-Style**

A floor tile under the guest bathroom door jamb at the entrance of the bedroom has cracked in half. I understand it was purchased from D&D Hardware and the

product name is 18x18 Paladino Classic, which is no longer available per your Tiffin Store. Any suggestions as to where I can purchase a couple of these tiles? Is there a DIY site for tile replacement? Your department in the *RIS* magazine is always a pleasure to read as is the whole magazine, too. Thank you.

Steven and Cathy Webb

Gresham, Oregon

Dear Steven and Cathy,

This a tile we used in 2011 and 2012. It was discontinued in 2014 and we no longer have inventory. Since we put a box of extra tiles in every unit we build, your only hope is to find another owner with the same year and brand who selected the same tile for his coach. Hopefully, that person will sell you a couple of tiles.

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## NEWS YOU CAN USE *Continued from page 11*

difficult for the door to close securely. If the door is not securely closed, the door could open in transit. If the entry door were to open in transit it would be possible for injury to occur to any passengers riding inside the motorhome and it could increase the possibility of a crash.

### **NHTSA Recall # 19V-228, Tiffin Recall # TIF-111 Energy Management Module overheating 2018 & 2019 Phaeton, Allegro Bus & Zephyr**

Tiffin Motorhomes has decided that a defect, which relates to motor vehicle

safety, exists on the following models of motorhomes: **2018 & 2019 Phaeton, Allegro Bus and Zephyr.** Tiffin Motorhomes has become aware that the alternating current lines that go to the Energy Management Module located in the rear load center may not be securely installed in the terminal levers. If these lines are not properly installed in the load center there is the possibility that the alternating current lines could overheat. If these lines were to overheat, the result could be a thermal event. The Energy Management Module needs to be inspected to determine if the alternating current lines are installed correctly.

## TIFFIN ALLEGRO CLUB NEWS *Continued from page 14*

occur. They visited the 316 coaches at the rally to help owners in any way possible. Our hats are off to these talented individuals!

On Wednesday, the entire group was treated to an informative presentation by Andy Baer, Tiffin Motorhomes' chief operating officer, and Cullen Akin, marketing specialist, reviewing "What's Happening in Red Bay." They covered highlights of the improvements and changes both to coaches and the facilities.

Wednesday night was an evening of fun with Stephen Freeman and his Echoes of a Legend tribute to Elvis. Stephen has been named one of the top ten Elvis tribute artists in the world at the Ultimate Elvis Tribute Artist Contests presented by Elvis Presley Enterprises in Memphis. It was a great show and the audience loved his crowd participation!

Thursday was a beautiful day—crisp and cool! There were more seminars by presenters such as PowerGlide Chassis, Allison Transmission, Cummins, and many others. The foliage

changed rapidly during the week of the rally to reach its peak just as the rally was ending and everyone was able to enjoy the rich colors on their drive to their next destination. A popular activity after lunch was the swap meet/craft show by owners. A wide variety of items was available. One man's junk is another man's treasure! More ice cream followed the swap meet!

Thursday night, everyone enjoyed a delicious meal of honey-glazed Virginia ham and all the trimmings. Hat's off to a great catering team, Angela Boyles and Blue Ribbon Catering! More door prizes were awarded including \$100 fuel cards, more Tiffin swag, and 50% discounts on 2020 rallies. The night was capped by a great show by Still Surfin' with a tribute to the Beach Boys. Thanks for a great show and great memories!

A special thanks to Bob and Judy Tiffin for attending the rally along with many others from our Team Tiffin! We appreciate your support of the Tiffin Allegro Club and our rallies! Until next time, keep Roughing It Smoothly!

## FROM THE PLANT *Continued from page 17*

In further reflection about Tiffin Motorhomes, Mark is impressed with the company's reorganized management structure, a change necessary for growth and position in the RV market. "The new engineering building will attract top talent," he said. "TMH is giving young and bright people the tools they must have to facilitate the technical development of their product lines.

"The development of new features in every brand is amazing," Mark continued. "The design and technology advancements over 19 years are like comparing a Model-T with a Tesla."

The company's strength in the Class A diesel market is impressive. "In 2002 Tiffin could only claim 2% of that market. By 2011 they had 22%. Today TMH owns 30.47% of the Class A

diesel market!" Mark said.

"Many times over the years, dealers and owners have asked me, 'What's going to happen when Bob retires and the boys take over,'" Mark smiled. "I tell them, 'The boys took over 15 years ago in order for Bob to do what he likes best: customer service!' I love the expressions I get with my explanation. When I tell them Bob attends the 6 a.m. meeting every day with all of the managers and department heads, they realize he knows his company inside out. He is still the president and CEO."

Mark Lane can move with confidence into his retirement knowing he left with a sterling reputation. He also left Tiffin Motorhomes with a strong South Central territory that Jerry Williamson will take over on January 1, 2020. 

## LET US HEAR FROM YOU

A separate postcard is enclosed for "From the Road," a fun part of the magazine for readers to share their motorhoming experiences. If you choose to email us at: fredthompson1941@hotmail.com, be sure to put "Roughing It Smoothly" in the subject line of your email. If your communication requires an entire letter, mail it to us at: PO Box 1150, Monroe, GA 30656-1150. Tell us about the interesting places you've been, an unusual experience, a great destination, or

just a good place to camp and hang out. We welcome your pictures. Please attach high resolution images if you email. "From the Road" contributors will receive a free tee shirt while supplies last.

There is also a postcard in the magazine for questions you may have for Danny Inman. Keep in mind that his answers are published quarterly. For answers to urgent questions and problems, call the Parts and Service number at 256-356-0261. —Fred Thompson, editor

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