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- **On the Trail of the Oklahoma Oil Oligarchs**



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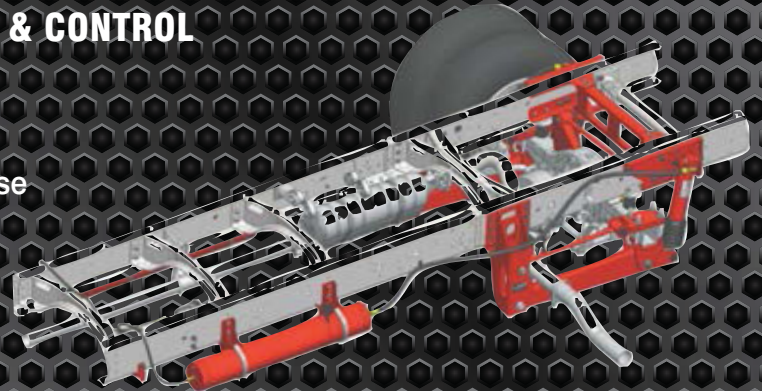
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Roughing it Smoothly®

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Dealer Training For Our New Owners

by Bob Tiffin

Throughout the 49 years that TMH has been manufacturing motorhomes, I have received feedback from owners regarding the amount of training they received by their dealers at the point they acquired their coaches. The feedback has been both positive and negative, with more of the former than the latter. As I visit dealerships, I inquire about customer training, encouraging our dealers to be thorough. Depending on the customer's previous experience, training on a motorhome should take from four to eight hours, and in some cases, even more.

The following column ran in 2007 after I visited King's Campers in Wausau, Wisconsin



and talked with shop foreman Mark Gajewski about his owner training program. Since Mark is no longer with the company, his successor, Adam Viegut graciously agreed to update the text of their training program to correctly reflect today's technology and our new brands and floorplans.

I am favorably impressed with their customer training program. Adam is in charge of employees who train owners in the use of their new Tiffin motorhomes. As you know, I have been driving our rigs ever since we started the company, so I have a few points that I will add later. Following is Adam's approach with King's Campers' customers.

We are very particular about how we train our customers to use their new Tiffin motorhomes because it makes our job easier in the future and assures that we will have satisfied owners.

We have several techs that train customers on Tiffin motorhomes. Each tech must show adequate knowledge to me before he is allowed to train a customer. Once a month we get together and go through all of our Tiffin coaches to make sure we are all on the same page with training procedures. We add to and reinforce each other's knowledge base.

When we train, we make sure that we are training the owners who will be using the coach. Often owners will bring their son or best friend, as if they will learn it and help them in the future. But we make participants out of the owners as we train them. They have to practice as we demonstrate each item in the coach.

We start on the outside and go around the coach. We stress documentation in the manuals, cut through the superfluous material and show where pertinent information is found.

Our trainers stress understanding the warranties. For example, you must run your Onan generator at least an hour a month with a load on it to validate the warranty. We go over the warranties for the HVAC, the jacks, the furnace, and the refrigerator. We try to teach patience in dealing with problems that will invariably arise at some time in the future.

There are just a lot of details that you have to talk about like taking care of the entry door. Then there is the awning and its operation. We emphasize checking the surroundings before putting out the awning. Will it hit a limb or a low-hanging power line? And that goes double for the slides. How many times has

a slide-out been damaged because the post holding the 50-amp box was two inches higher than the slide-out?

In a few coaches, a storage bay contains the control panels for the inverters and converters. After we go past the storage bays on the passenger side, we come to the storage area for the batteries. Batteries are not maintenance free in spite of what some manufacturers advertise. We show owners how to check the water and fill the cylinders.

We then can take the customer up in a manlift to show them the roof. It can be slick and new owners need to be warned to wear rubber sole shoes and move about very carefully.

As we start around the coach, we spend as much time as each customer needs on any area of the coach. We make sure the owner learns how to do the water flush on the black tank and we stress how important it is to run that procedure frequently.

The next major outdoor feature that we spend a good bit of time on is the Onan generator. We show them how to check the oil and change the oil and the filter, and we show them the antifreeze reservoir and how to check it. We point out where the circuit breakers are located and explain how easy it is to overload the generator, especially in the summertime, and kick the breaker. Of course with the new technology that Tiffin is using, in many cases the Energy Management System will not let you overuse power as often as the older coaches did.

The techs go over all of the important breaker locations, especially the ones that serve the slide-outs. If they activate, you won't be able to bring the slide in. Knowing where that breaker is located can save a lot of grief.

When we are training on Tiffin coaches we inform the owner that they have a couple of large fuses that, if blown, can leave you without any 12V-DC for the entire unit. If your engine batteries have lost their charge and you want to use your auxillary start switch, you should first plug in or run the generator and let the battery control module get some charge into the chassis batteries before you try the auxillary.

We then go over the fuses and 12-volt breakers that are accessible from the outside. They are placed in many different locations around the coach and there are quite a few of them, but Tiffin does a great job of labeling. PowerGlide, Freightliner, Spartan, and Ford do a good job of labeling the fuses that they place on the coach, such as the left and right turn signals.

Tire pressures are very important. Most owners seldom think about checking tire pressure on their cars so it is important to emphasize that they do it regularly on their motorhome. We show them how and urge them to check pressures after they have driven their first 250 miles. We point out that you should be able to place your hand on a tire after you have been driving for several hours. If it is too hot to touch, then you need to find out why. We make sure they know how to check the inside tires on duals by using the extenders.

We spend several minutes on how to use keyless entry before we start inside. As the tech walks up the entry steps, he sits down in the step well and explains the Spyder Control panel.

Over the years, controls for just about everything have been moved, sometimes for ease of use and sometimes due to design. Around this time, we will run out the slides and emphasize putting the driver's and passenger's seats forward before extending the slide-outs to prevent them from scraping the seat backs. Most 2017-2022 models place the switches for the forward slides on the top corner of the seat backs. Of course, we stress the checking of the outside clearances on both sides before extending the slide-outs or the awning. At this point, or soon after, we teach the emergency crank-in procedure for the slide-outs. On the hydraulic slide-out, we teach the emergency retract system.

Continuing through the coach, we spend considerable time on the television (going through the programming for stations on antenna, satellite, or cable), the DVD, and the satellite receivers.

We give a thorough explanation of the relationship between the Magnum inverter, Energy Management system, and the batteries. We note what items you can operate, including the televisions and several appliances, when plugged into specified inverter-sourced outlets.

Thermostats, which may vary from model to model, are a key training point. We make sure the owner spends time operating them before we go on to the next feature.

On the Zephyr, Allegro Bus, Phaeton, and RED, training on the Aqua-Hot is very important. The owner must understand the design and how the system works. We make sure they know



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how to check the fluid levels and resets. Next, we go over the use of the major appliances: the refrigerator, furnace, water heater, and the cooktop and microwave. Most of the new Tiffin motor-homes come with residential refrigerators, so we don't have to teach them about those, except for the importance of keeping an eye on the batteries so they will not run down.

If the new coach has a gas-electric refrigerator, the trainer, while discussing the manual for that unit, opens the doors and leaves them open while he continues to talk. He does it nonchalantly so that the two-minute alarm will go off while he is talking. He explains the refrigerator's diagnostics.

From the outside, the trainer makes sure the owner understands the importance of keeping the vents for the furnace, water heater, and the refrigerator clean and free of debris—for example, keeping bugs out of the burner tubes of the water heater, screens to keep dirt doobers out of the vents for the furnace, etc.

Most owners have microwaves at home, so we don't spend a lot of time on them. After demonstrating how simple it is to light the gas burners, we also show how to clean the orifice if it gets clogged with a spill. The Zephyr, Bus, and Phaeton have induction cooktops that require different training with the ferro-magnetic cookware.

During the training session, we have the owner put chemicals in the black tank for the first time (if they are planning to use the coach immediately). We emphasize that they must use toilet paper made specifically for RVs—leave the Charmin at home. We point out that you must keep the black tank valve closed until it is nearly full when you are hooked up in a campground. Many incorrectly assume that when you flush the toilet, waste goes directly into the hooked-up sewer line.

When we reach the cockpit, the first training exercise is the jacks and making sure the owner practices the leveling procedure two or three times. We explain how to check the hydraulic fluid and emphasize adding only clear hydraulic fluid when needed.

Emergency window exits could save a life. The owner learns how to open them, and then close and reattach the windows. We go through this procedure for all emergency exits.

Detectors: LP, CO, and Smoke. We demonstrate what the warning sounds are, how to reset, and how to check the batteries. You get a persistent beep when the battery is low.

The cockpit is a major training place. Participation is definitely a must here. We teach and demonstrate, but the owners must do all procedures and show proficiency. For example, we show the owners how to check the oil in the transmission (i.e., push both arrows to check the oil level, temp, etc.) If they get a "LOC 7" code, then it shows that the transmission has not been engaged long enough to get a reading.

We demo the use of the in-dash computer and then have the owners use it until they understand its use and functionality.

Understanding how to use the parking brake on a diesel pusher is critical since it is totally different from an automobile. We emphasize that after bringing the coach to a stop, you press the Neutral selector, and then pull the big yellow knob up to set

the brake. On gas-burners, you move the gear selector to Park and set the brake with a foot pedal. We demonstrate the correct procedures and then require the new owner to practice.

For those who have owned several coaches, the training period may take only 2–3 hours. For first-time owners, it may take 8 hours. If we cut it short, we know we will have a lot of phone calls, so it is better to take sufficient time during the training session.

When we are through, we always tell the owner: contact us first before you contact Tiffin's service techs. This gives us a chance to see how good a job we did in the training session and another chance to bond with our customer.

Thanks, Adam, for developing and implementing a very good owner training program. I would like to add a few points which may be useful to our new owners at some time in the future. In our magazine, you will find a wallet-size insert card listing all of the service numbers to call. Please make special note that the contacts for our chassis manufacturers are available 24/7.

Tire pressure is different on every coach. Both of our suppliers use a maximum cold pressure as the recommended inflation. However, after you get your coach loaded, you should go to the scales and have it weighed front and rear, and then deflate the tires according to the manufacturer's chart. This will take a little time, but gives you a much better ride. Generally, a tire will lose a little pressure over time; 5 to 10 lbs. of pressure loss will make a big difference in the tire's longevity and the eventual breakdown of the sidewalls. Tire manufacturers recommend that you check the tire pressure every day while you are traveling.

Owners should check oil levels before starting the engine. Next check the coolant level while the engine is cold. On the Freightliner and PowerGlide chassis, you should check the recovery tank. If the chassis manufacturer furnishes a radiator cap, then the coolant level needs to be checked *in* the radiator. If the coolant gets below the vacuum point in the radiator, you could ruin your engine. The coolant must be at the top of the flue. Ford chassis have a radiator cap. Rear engine diesels have recovery reservoirs only. Other fluid levels need to be checked at regular intervals, but engine oil and coolant are the most important.

Be sure to check all marker lights and turn signal lights at regular intervals — at least once a week while you are traveling.

If you tow a vehicle or trailer, you should check the ball regularly to be sure the nut is tight. I recommend that you spot weld it to prevent it from coming loose. Never tow without safety chains attached to the car and the tow hitch. Leave some slack in the chains to make turns, but tighten the chain enough so that the tow bar will not hit the ground if it becomes detached from the ball.

If you are driving a diesel pusher, make certain the front cap housing the generator is securely latched. If it isn't and you hit the brakes hard, then your generator is going to shoot forward and possibly damage its mooring to the rails.

Rear-end diesels *cannot be towed*. You must have a "low boy" haul your coach in order to prevent damage to the front cap. You

can attach cables to the front or rear axles to winch it onto the low boy. If you get stuck, you must know where the attachment points are for pulling it out. The cables must be attached to the axle or the frame. Do not attach cables to the front generator frame. It will jerk the whole generator assembly right out of the coach.

What happens if you lose air pressure? When it gets below 40 psi, your rear air brakes will lock up. Get the coach off the road. You can drive it a few feet without damage. Call road service and they will know how to fix the line or divert the line to build air pressure. As you lose air pressure, the motorhome will start slowing down. If you are in a one-lane construction situation on the interstate, slow down to 5 mph and disregard the blowing horns. The brakes will get warm, but will not flame.

When you take delivery of your coach, the dealer's tech needs to spend at least an hour training you to use the televisions, DVD, and CD player, surround sound, and the IF repeaters.


As Adam pointed out, you need to understand thoroughly how the slide-outs work, and how they can be manually retracted in the event of motor failure. Remember that the leveling jacks should be down before you deploy the slides. Be sure you understand how the jacks function with the ignition switch. If there is a problem and the jacks will not deploy, you can still use the slide-outs if the coach is level.

With the dealer's tech nearby, be sure to practice extending and retracting the awnings. Locate and check all of the fuses and re-

lays. Practice implementing the wind sensor setting with its three levels of sensitivities. Window awnings are all manually deployed.

If you are driving a Zephyr, Allegro Bus, Phaeton, or RED, be sure to have the trainer explain how the Aqua-Hot system works in conjunction with the heat pumps in the roof ACs. Most of the heat pumps will operate down to 40°F at which point the Aqua-Hot comes on automatically. You may choose to activate the Aqua-Hot at a temperature well above 40°.

It is extremely important that you correctly attach the coach's power cord to the campground's receptacle. *Before you connect*, turn off the campground's breaker to the receptacle. Most campgrounds use electric stove receptacles which were not designed to be used repeatedly. The receptacle gets sloppy in its fit and in some cases the neutral is lost going into the motorhome. Most people press the motorhome's plug in at an angle, allowing both 110v lines to touch before the neutral is in place. That delivers 240v right into the motorhome. Since electricity cycles at 60/sec, it only takes two cycles or 1/30 second to burn up your TV, inverters, microwave, etc. By shutting the power off at the breaker and seating the motorhome's plug flush with the face of the receptacle, you will avoid this mishap. When breaking camp, turn off the breaker first. TMH does not recommend surge protectors.

I hope these guidelines for taking delivery of one of our new coaches will be helpful to both owners and dealers. Until next time, keep on *roughing it smoothly* with Tiffin. 



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How to Use the Digital Magazine

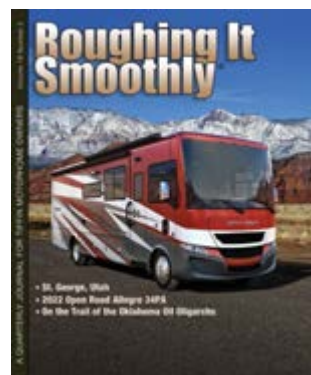
Go to rismag.org and click on CURRENT MAGAZINE. This will take you to a tutorial on using all of the benefits and resources for learning about Tiffin motorhomes, over 120 travel stories, and a wonderful lifestyle.

To quickly move through a magazine, go to the contents page and click on the page number for the story you wish to read. It will jump directly to that double-page spread. To go back to the contents page, put "4" or "6" 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 "Sequoia") 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.

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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 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 magazine 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.

Magazine Continues to Grow

Over 38,500 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. Our dealers are distributing 17,000 copies in their showrooms. Now in its 18th year, *RIS* is the largest magazine published by an RV manufacturer in number of pages and total distribution.

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FROM THE ROAD

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A TRIBUTE TO KEN NEAL

JUNE 10, 1954 — DECEMBER 25, 2020



For 17 years at Tiffin Motorhomes, Ken Neal served the company as a master problem solver. Officially, Ken’s business card said “Customer Relations Manager.” But he gladly applied his talent wherever it could be used.

“Ken was really skilled at negotiation,” Bob Tiffin said recently. “He could calm people down and bring them to an amiable settlement in a very pleasant way.”

Ken grew up in East Florence and studied at Brooks High School in Lauderdale County, Alabama where he graduated in 1972. He enrolled at the University of North Alabama in Florence, graduating in 1976 with a degree in business administration.

Ken’s professional career began that summer with Crawford & Company. With offices throughout the U.S. and globally, Crawford is widely known for reaching successful settlements for insurance claims.

By 1990, Ken was routinely handling the adjustment of insurance claims for Tiffin Motorhomes. “By 2003 Ken was working almost exclusively on insurance matters for us,” Bob said. “I suggested he join us and take a management position with Tiffin Motorhomes. After studying my offer, Ken became Customer Relations Manager. He also did a good job working with the equitable adjustment of warranty issues with our dealers. In the few cases that went to court, the judge often appointed Ken to be the mediator to ascertain the parties reached a fair solution.”

Ken’s social life began to flourish soon after graduation. “I grew up in Central Heights on the northwest side of Florence and graduated from CHHS,” Mitzy began. “I was working for H. T. Lee when Ken and I

met in the summer of 1976. My co-worker and I played on the company softball team which had a banquet at the end of the season. She was dating Ken’s friend and suggested I ask Ken to go to the banquet. I did, he accepted, and we began dating. A year later we married in October 1977 in the same church where we continued to worship.”

Brandi was born in 1980, followed by Betsy in 1982. The Neals built a home in Central Heights, just a half mile from the church where Mitzy had grown up worshiping with her parents and siblings.

Ken took an active role in the church and in time served as a deacon and later as an elder. “The church is an extended family for us,” Mitzy said. “We are always there for each other in times of need. We treated the young families growing up there as if they were our children, and we love their children as if they were our grandchildren.”

As a member of the church, Ken spiritually was their nurturing elder. To friends and family, Ken was a father figure. “His people skills served him so well when he became an elder. He was so happy when he was at church,” Mitzy reflected pensively.

“Daddy escorted both my sister and me down the aisle. We were married in the same church where he and Mama were married,” Brandi said. Brandi married John Foster and they have two children, Harrison, 10, and Jay David, 7. Betsy married Patrick Berry and has a daughter, MiKenlee, 6. “Her name was created from her two grandfathers, Mike and Ken, and my middle name, Lee,” Betsy explained. “MiKenlee is adopted. Daddy worked so effectively to arrange and make the adoption work out smoothly.”

“Daddy was big on family vacations,” Brandi noted. “He loved to go

to Disney World as much as we did. We also enjoyed vacations to Orange Beach and Pigeon Forge in the Smokies.”

“We all went to Hawaii in 2002 to celebrate their 25th wedding anniversary,” Betsy said. “When it was convenient, he would take us with him on business trips. He would work all day while we took in the sights. One of our interesting experiences happened in Los Angeles over the Easter weekend while Daddy was there on business. We were taking a tour that Sunday afternoon when the tour guide suddenly stopped and picked up a man dressed as Jesus who was wearing a crown of thorns. We never knew if it was planned to make our tour on Easter more poignant, or if it was just a spur-of-the-moment incident the tour driver thought was clever and took advantage of it.”

“Ken loved to play golf,” Mitzy said. “However, after his best golfing buddy died in a car accident 10 years ago, he never played golf again.”

Ken thoroughly enjoyed attending Alabama football games and kept his office decorated with the latest Alabama signs and pictures of Denny Stadium on game day. Working in a very “pro-Alabama” office environment was a big perk for Ken. “He never had any difficulty finding avid Alabama fans on a Monday morning to discuss the game played on the previous Saturday,” Mitzy said. “He would often take the girls to a game while I would go shopping. He also enjoyed NASCAR racing.”

The second half of 2020 proved to be a very difficult year for the Neal family. Mitzy lost her father in June to congestive heart failure. He was 86. “Because of the pandemic, we could not visit him in the hospital for the duration of his illness. We hoped at 86 he somehow understood why we were not there. He was on a ventilator for several days,” Mitzy said.

In November, Patrick tested positive. He had Covid-19 and Influenza B at the same time. But Betsy never tested positive. She works with RSVP (Retired Seniors Volunteer Program). “I am the coordinator of the volunteers’ work schedules,” Betsy explained. “When elderly people call who need things done at their house, I call our volunteers who have the skills needed and send them to assist. I track the hours worked by our volunteers annually. At the end of the year, we have a banquet with an awards program.” Patrick works for an aluminum manufacturing company.

Brandi teaches business classes in grades 10 through 12 at Athens High School. She earned her bachelor’s degree at the University of North Alabama and her master’s at the University of Alabama. John is an estimator at an engineering firm. Brandi and her family have so far escaped the virus.

“The latter part of November really hit us. Ken tested positive on the Wednesday before Thanksgiving,” Mitzy said. “And I tested positive the following Saturday. He got better for several days, but then contracted pneumonia. We had to insist that he go to the emergency room on December 3. I got over my bout with Covid-19 in a week. Ken was on a rollercoaster—better then worse. The doctor put him on a ventilator on December 19 and from that point on I could not see him.”

Receiving daily reports from the head nurse, Mitzy learned that Ken’s condition was deteriorating day by day. “On Christmas Eve, they let me see Ken. He passed away early the next morning,” Mitzy related sadly. “On Christmas night as I returned home from the funeral home, I saw the brightest shooting star I had ever seen that went all the way across the sky. It was comforting.”



“On Monday, Bob was one of the first at the visitation. He told me, ‘Mitzy, Ken was one of the best employees we have ever had at Tiffin Motorhomes.’ That really meant a lot to me,” Mitzy said. An attorney from Jackson, Mississippi, whom Ken had worked with several times, drove over three hours to be here for the visitation. “And, of course,

there were so many people from Tiffin who came, including Danny Inman who had the office right next to Ken’s.” Ken’s dedication to helping Tiffin owners was beautifully described in an appreciative letter “written to Ken” post-mortem by David Earnest of Waverly Hill, Georgia, believing that Ken would know what he wanted to tell him.

Ken, I had the pleasure of first meeting you about six years ago. You helped me and Lynn work through a myriad of issues with our coach. We felt a calm and reassuring trust in your voice during that first encounter that never let us down, and we grew to know you better and better over the past few years. I saw the absolute love and affection you had for your family, especially your children and grandchildren. They are God’s gift to a man who always knew how to put family first. They will miss your love and presence tremendously.

The love you had for your church family was immense, and I thoroughly enjoyed your weekly posts over the past year as you encouraged us all to focus our faith on the things that really mattered and support our church family on Sundays.

As a customer advocate for Tiffin Motorhomes, you always sought to find a win-win for both the customer and Tiffin, and you never hesitated to go to the bat for a customer when you felt they had a valid case.

Ken, in my case, you and Karen Timbs were the difference between our keeping the Tiffin coach or ditching it early and running to another manufacturer. You always told me that you would help wherever pos-

sible and you never once let me down. We worked through the issues together one at a time, and to a resolution that benefited all.

You were a true friend and even a mentor. You always had time to talk with customers and help them any way you could

To those of us that knew you and had the pleasure to interact with you, please know that we will miss having you around to ask our questions, seek advice, and just carry on a casual conversation about how Bama is going to do this year or the next.

Having you leave us on one of the two most important days in the year broke our hearts, but we rejoice in knowing that you are now fully healed, my brother in Christ, no more pain, sickness, or hurting.

Thank you again Ken for the person you were, the help you provided us all, and the love you showed your immediate family, your church family, and your Tiffin family.

My friend, you leave behind a rock solid legacy that will be long remembered.

Rest In peace, Ken.

David Earnest

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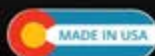
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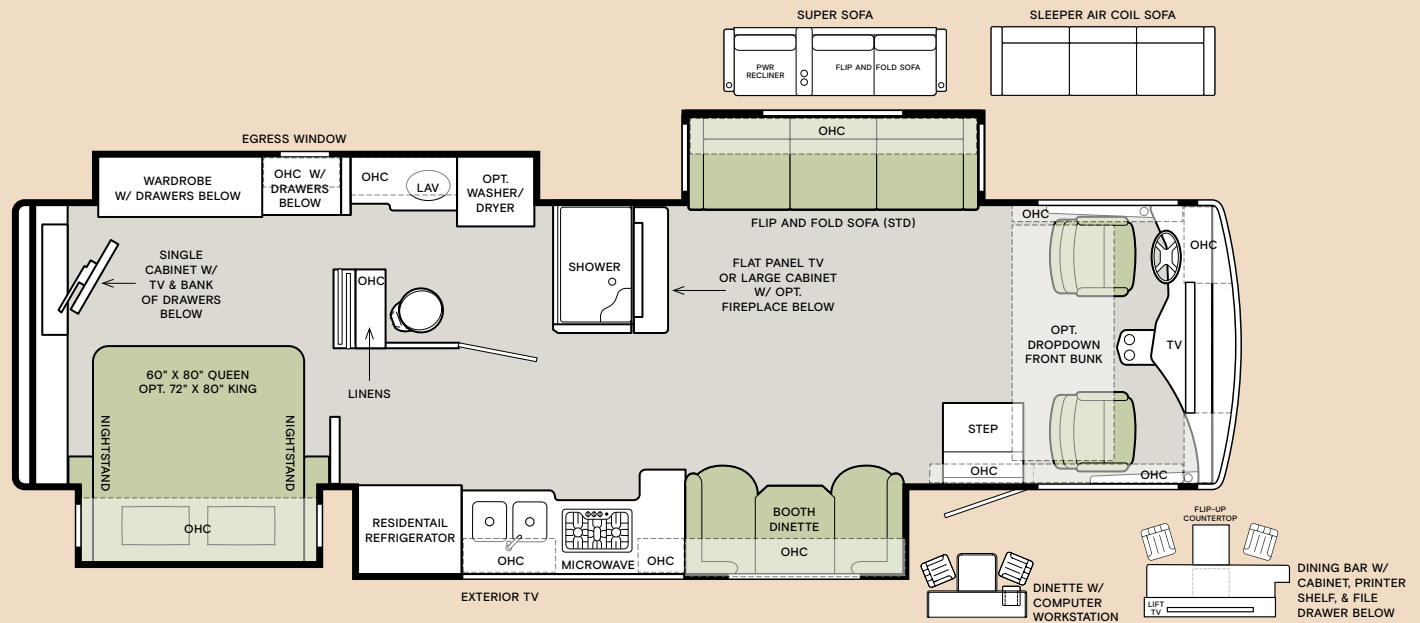


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The 2022 Allegro Open Road 34PA



IMPRESSIVE VERSATILITY IN A SINGLE FLOORPLAN

Text by Fred Thompson

THE SUCCESS OF THE BASIC FLOORPLAN FOR the 34PA began eight years ago when Bob and Judy Tiffin took a prototype of what would soon become the 2014 Allegro Bus 37AP to the 2013 Hershey Show. They received enthusiastic responses from coach owners. In October we ran the 37AP on the cover of *Roughing It Smoothly* and the orders started pouring in. The TMH assembly line could not build them fast enough.

The floor plan was adapted over the next 18 months to run in the Phaeton and the Allegro RED. By the 2016 model year, the popular floorplan was introduced in the Allegro Open Road as the 34PA. It made the front cover of the Fall 2015 RIS. It had proved itself as one of the most livable floorplans ever marketed by Tiffin Motorhomes.

The viability of this floorplan in all four brands has been fueled by décors which are occasionally trendy, always refreshing, and very much aware of the buyers' preferences. Tiffin's engineers and designers stayed ahead of the innovation curve by constantly introducing new products and tech-

nology to improve safety, communication, comfort, automotive handling, economic operation, and the environment. Remaining inside the realm of economic practicality, TMH over the last two decades has offered several floorplans in all of its brands, each with numerous choices of décor, furniture, equipment, appliances, and exterior paint.

This year Tiffin Motorhomes is offering an unusual number of major options to allow the buyer to design and personalize the living area of the 2022 Allegro Open Road 34PA. In fact, the living room and galley of one 34PA may be very different from another 34PA. The Tiffin design benchmarks remain consistent: large windows to bring the outdoors into your coach; plenty of carefully planned storage; craftsmanship apparent in cabinetry with hand-crafted doors and facings, slide-out fascias, wall coverings, wainscot and chair rails; functionally located LED lighting; UltraLeather combined with well-chosen fabrics reflecting the skill of Tiffin's interior designer, Margaret Mia; and the use of Broadway solid surface countertops (SSCT).



THE LIVING ROOM

Most of the major choices involve the living room where we spend at least half of our time in our coach. Let's take all four sides of the living area and examine the options. The forward E/W wall¹ created by the mid-bath location may have a handsome 46" high by 42" wide cabinet (shelves 7.75" deep) enclosed with solid wood doors. Multiple shelves could house your extensive book or music collections or become the extra pantry for a long trip. Or this same wall could serve as your primary entertainment location for a 42" programmable LG television with a 24" sound bar with backlighting. If you make it your primary television, it will make the walls vibrate with the sound from a movie soundtrack or a sports event. With the 92" sleeper air coil sofa, plus viewers seated in the driver and passenger² chairs, you can comfortably seat five for TV viewing.

A 40" electric fireplace (MSRP \$725) is located below your choice for either the standard 42" TV with sound bar or the large hand-crafted cabinet. It is probably the most cost-effective option in the coach. Along with the heat pump that comes with the optional front 15,000 BTU air conditioner (MSRP \$580), you can warm your coach electrically in most of your winter destinations, with significant savings on propane. If you do not opt for the fireplace, TMH will provide even more cabinet storage in its place.

In the forward DS slide-out, the owner has a choice of three seating arrangements. The UltraLeather Flip & Fold Sofa with seating for three is standard equipment.

Shown at left and priced in the spec sheet on page 28, the 42" TV is standard and the fireplace, Sleeper Air Coil Sofa, and Drop-down Bunk are optional. The Booth Dinette on the following page is standard.

1. Directionally in the text descriptions, the front of the coach is "south," the rear is "north," the driver's side is "east" and the passenger's side is "west." To simplify showing the measurements (in inches) of cabinets and drawers, the first number is depth, the second is width, and the last is height. Remember d/w/h. In a drawer, "depth" is the length of the drawer extending back into the cabinet; "height" refers to how deep the drawer is. Broadway is Tiffin's solid surface countertop (SSCT) comparable to Corian. PS = passenger side. DS = driver side.

2. Be sure to order the optional passenger seat with a footrest.



in October 2019. It's popularity spread quickly to the other brands. This "trickle-down" design feature in the Open Road first came off the assembly line in March 2020. The Dining Bar (20.25" x 72") is designed for two workstations with connections for laptops. If the 34PA is being used as an office or a mobile sales venue, the 42" TV offers a tie-in to laptops or other devices for running training videos, product promotions, or educational material for customers. Charts, graphs, and tables can be moved from your devices to the large screen for closer study. When the Lift-TV is retracted, the credenza (10.75" x 72") above the bar offers extra space for job materials in use.

Obviously, it is the perfect location for screening family pictures and reviewing the images you made during the day while you were touring or capturing a beautiful sunset at the beach. The drop-down 24" x 25" table provides extra workspace as well as a dining area. When not in use, the drop-down hides two slide-out trays for a printer and paper storage.

Since it is a Smart TV, the programming possibilities are virtually endless. The optional In-Motion Satellite (MSRP \$1,450)

should be ordered to provide programming with the Dish "Wally" receiver supplied as standard equipment by Tiffin. You can also choose to have the coach pre-wired for the Trav'ler Satellite (MSRP \$254).

When the Lift-TV is not in use, diners will enjoy Tiffin's largest picture window (not counting the windshield, of course), 58" x 28", framed by a fabric-covered valance. Half of the screened window slides to the right to admit the breezes and sounds of the gurgling stream flowing just 25 feet from the coach (yes, I remember that experience from a campsite in Montana).

There are more choices for where and how you will dine. The standard booth dinette with UltraLeather upholstery and cushions comfortably seats four. The dinette's Broadway SSCT table, measuring 25" x 42", is mounted solidly to the wall in a jig that lowers it to seat level to create a double bed for children. After you move the dinette's back cushions to the table top, the bed measures 42" x 70". Under each dining bench is a drawer measuring 20" x 21" x 7". The compartment above the slide-out's window offers 8.6 cubic feet of storage concealed behind six hand-crafted doors. The dinette is ser-

ved by two USB ports and a 110v outlet supported by the inverter.

The most frequently ordered furniture system for dining has been the Dinette-Computer Workstation. The cabinetry on the south side of the dining table has a slide-out tray for your keyboard, and just below it a second slide-out for a small printer. A storage cabinet at floor level completes the arrangement. Most owners place their laptop on the 72-inch wide credenza. On the north side, two drawers offer storage for office supplies. And, surprisingly, there is a filing drawer with double rails for hanging folders. Underneath the table a two-shelf cabinet conceals a bass woofer for the stereo system and a large area for paper storage. The three cabinets above the workstation offer 8.6 cubic feet of storage, but they reduce the height of the large picture window.

The cockpit area delineating the living room's southern dimension has several features that contribute functionality and comfort. Upon arrival at a campsite, most owners rotate the driver and passenger chairs 180 degrees to include them in the seating area for the living room, as well as provide a viewing area when you choose

the standard 42" television with sound bar above the fireplace. Some owners prefer the 42" TV above the dash (without sound bar) with two small flanking cabinets. The DS cabinet houses the controls for the Magnum inverter and the standard 15-ft. Girard awning with LED lights. The PS cabinet has a connection for your laptop to use the TV as your display screen for computer games. The choice of the TV over the dash includes a cabinet above the driver and passenger seats, each with 2.4 cubic feet of storage. If you prefer not to have a television over the dash, your coach can be ordered with a cabinet that adds approximately 2.6 cubic feet of storage.

If you wish to equip the 34PA with maximum sleeping facilities, you can add the optional Drop Down Bunk (MSRP \$870) which comes with a 32" television over the center of the dash. The design eliminates the cabinets directly over the driver and passenger seats. By selecting the sleeper sofa, the standard dinette, and the drop down bunk, the 34PA could sleep four adults and three children. The sofa can be equipped with three seatbelts and the forward-facing dinette bench has two seatbelts.

It quickly deploys and stores, making it a comfortable place to relax for watching TV, especially if you selected the 42" Lift-TV option located in the opposing PS slide-out, which we will get to in a moment.

The UltraLeather Sleeper Air Coil Sofa (MSRP \$1,885) will comfortably seat four and sleep two (60" x 72"). It is a single-fold mattress with a N/S sleeping direction.

The optional UltraLeather Super Sofa

(MSRP \$1,813) combines a twin-motor recliner with a double Flip & Fold Sofa.

Now, let's take a look at the options in the PS slide-out. Your choice of seating in the DS slide-out may hinge on whether or not you select the optional Dining Bar with a 42" Lift-TV with sound bar (MSRP \$1,523). This television has a 24" sound bar.

The Dining Bar with a 42" Lift-TV was first offered in the 2020 Allegro Bus 35CP

OPTIONAL CHOICES FOR THE 34PA LIVING ROOM AND DINING FURNITURE



Above and below: The Super Sofa has a power recliner and a double flip and fold sofa. The Flip and Fold Sofa (standard, but not shown) has the flip and fold technology for all three seats.



At far left, page 20: The optional Dining Bar with Lift-TV (MSRP \$1,523) is shown with the television extended and both workstations in use. Note the inset screen on the television is connected to one of the laptops. The dining configuration is shown below. *At far left (above and below):* The Computer-Dinette Workstation (MSRP \$943), is shown here from an earlier edition. *At left:* If you choose the 42" TV above the dash (standard equipment, but not shown here), you may wish to order the expansive cabinet above the fireplace. The cabinetry shown here and on facing page is the optional Amber Glazed (MSRP \$725).

If you order a Drop-down Bunk, a 32" TV is standard over the dash, but the side cabinets are eliminated to create enough space for the bunk.



At left: With its 79-inch wide galley with optional Broadway countertop, the 34PA presents a double stainless steel sink with fitted countertop covers, a Sharp microwave/convection oven, and a three-burner grill with a retractable cover. The expansive 68-inch window above the backsplash brings in extra light for the chef's work. The 22 cubic foot LG refrigerator/freezer with ice maker exceeded all expectations.



THE GALLEY

Tiffin Motorhomes always puts its best foot forward in all of its coaches when it designs a galley. In making the 34PA one of its most versatile coaches ever, TMH offers an upgrade to Broadway countertops throughout the coach (MSRP \$1,740). It adds so much class to the coach, and in the future will improve its resale and trade-in value.

The galley is 79 inches wide with an average depth of 25.5 inches. The backsplash covers the wall areas on both sides with each of the three décors offering a different solid surface design. Brightly lit with two overhead LEDs, the double stainless steel sinks are served with a gooseneck faucet with an extendable sprayer and single lever water control. Removable Broadway covers can be stored in racks provided in the cabinet under the sink.

Each of the three burners in the cooktop has a heavy iron grate, easily removable for cleaning. Two of the burner heads are oval and one is oblong to service a small griddle. The cooktop is lighted by two LEDs in the base of the Sharp Carousel microwave/convection oven which has an outside vent. A gas oven is optional (MSRP \$943). A 3-speed exhaust fan in the ceiling near the cooktop is activated by the wall switch behind the chef.

When not in use the cooktop is covered by a double-hinged Broadway countertop that folds to the rear and serves as a backsplash. To the left of the cooktop, a large countertop workspace is lighted by two LEDs and served with a pop-up 110v electrical supply and two USB ports. Three 110v outlets in the base of the overhead cabinets are conveniently located for countertop appliances.

Directly under the cooktop, three huge drawers (top: 19 x 23.5 x 4.5; middle & bottom: 19 x 23.5 x 5.5) provide storage for cooking vessels, auxiliary cooking equipment, and more. You rarely find drawers of this size in a residential kitchen. The adjacent cabinet under the sink has 2.5 cubic feet of storage space. A stack

of three drawers (each, 17 x 9 x 5.5) is located on the opposite end of the galley.

Two cabinets to the left and right of the microwave/convection oven provide 2.5 and six cubic feet of storage. Concealed behind a hand-crafted door opposite the refrigerator/freezer, the slide-out pantry with six shelves (five adjustable) measures 21.5" wide x 46" high. Each shelf is 6.25 inches deep. We discovered the pantry holds several bags of groceries.

Now used in all of Tiffin's seven Class A brands, the large oblong window in the backsplash wall of the galley (in this coach 68" x 16") makes the area a refreshing place to prepare your meals.

A step north will put you in front of the coach's LG 22-cubic foot refrigerator-freezer with icemaker. The unit boasts a Print-Proof stainless finish, SmartCooling™, and SmartDiagnosis™. The bottom location of the drawer freezer conserves the cold, and its size gives you the freedom to stock up on frozen items on sale. The separately cooled double door fridge has five adjustable shelves. The main section has three large shelves, two vegetable/humidified keeping drawers, and a 28-inch slide-out drawer with cover for cheese, sandwich meats, bacon, eggs, etc.

In the baseboard of the wall facing the galley, you will see the connection for the optional central vacuum system (MSRP \$471). From this outlet, the system's flexible hose will reach all points throughout the coach. It's an item you will want.

THE SPYDER CONTROL SYSTEM

As with all segments in the design and manufacturing of its coaches, Tiffin depends on intensive engineering to create heating and cooling systems that evenly distribute and circulate heated and cooled air efficiently and effectively. All of its brands use concealed ductwork enclosed in the ceiling to distribute and return cooled and heated air to the AC units with heat pumps located on the roof. Sensors in each room control the operation to maintain the temperature settings selected at Spyder's Control Panel mounted on the wall opposite the refrigerator.

The settings for controlling the coach's environment are found in six folders labeled Home, Lights, Climate, Mechanical, Slides, and Settings.

The HOME folder is divided into five sections for an overview of the coach's environment and systems: lights, water pump and tank readings, inside temps, water heating (gas or electric), and genset hours with voltages for house and chassis batteries.

LIGHTS: eight switches control all of the lights in the galley and living area; one switch each for the bath and bedroom; plus the light master. The light master switch turns off all of the lights currently on. When you turn it on again, it remembers and restores all of the same lights that were turned off.

CLIMATE: the front and rear sections for heating and cooling are addressed separately with switches for AC, heat pump, furnace, auto, and fan speeds.

MECHANICAL: separate controls for the exhaust fan in the bath and galley; bedroom ceiling fan.

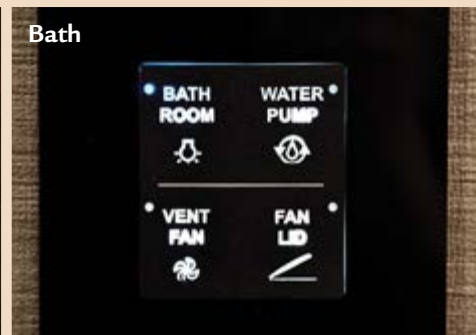
SLIDES: extend/retract controls for DS & PS rear slide-outs and PS front slide-out. The DS front slide-out is controlled by the switch mounted on the driver chair.

SETTINGS: Fahrenheit and Centigrade display choice; screen brightness; settings for power savings, defaults, and the color scheme displayed in the control panel. The description of the control panel may sound complicated initially, but it is very simple and quite a time saver when

you are setting up the overall environment or checking on any item later.

Five additional Spyder control panels

are placed throughout the coach: in the step well at the entrance, and in the galley, DS forward slide-out, and bath.



HEATING & COOLING

The Allegro Open Road coaches are cooled with two 13,500 BTU air conditioners as standard equipment. TMH strongly recommends replacing the front AC with the 15,000 BTU unit with heat pump (MSRP \$580). The extra BTUs will assure more cooling capacity when you get into higher summer temperatures. But just as important, the addition of the heat pump will make a significant difference when the spring and fall temperatures dip into the low 40s or high 30s. You can avoid using your pro-



pane for heating and warm the coach nicely with the heat pump. When you choose the electric fireplace, you will assure a cozy coach even when the temp hits 38. When the temps dip into the low-30s and lower, you will need to use your propane furnace to be sure your wet tanks are warmed enough to prevent freezing.

Based on a residential model, Tiffin's cooling technology distributes cold air through the ceiling vents on the west side of the coach and sends return air through the vents and duct on the east side of the coach. The coach has two propane furnaces to distribute warm air through vents located at floor level throughout the coach.

Water is heated with an electric/gas 10-gallon water heater. The Spyder Control panel gives you the choice of using electric or propane. For endless hot water, many owners are selecting the optional Truma water heater which uses propane (MSRP \$1,088). The Truma brings a new level of comfort to a gas-powered coach.

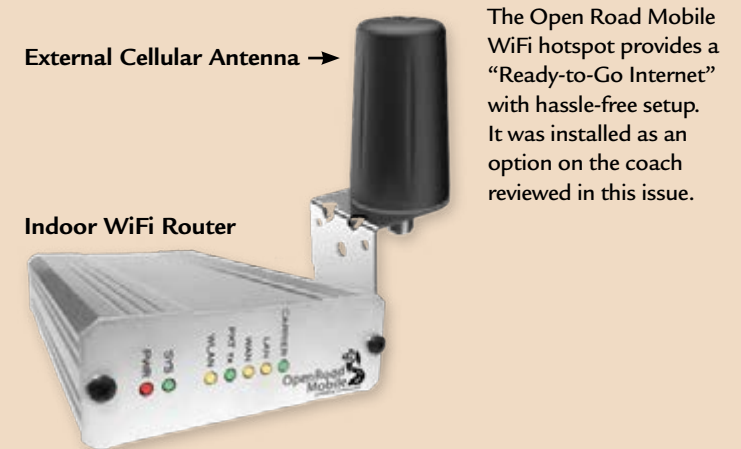
THE ENTERTAINMENT CENTER

The technology for the entertainment center is located in a lowered cabinet just below the bedroom television. The LG Smart+ TV will allow you to select programming from Netflix, Hulu Plus, Amazon, Facebook, YouTube, DirecTV, or Dish, as well as over-the-air reception from your antenna.

Input includes data discs, USB devices, MKV playback, external HDD playback, and Blu-Ray 3D discs. Stereo surround sound output in the living area emanates from two speakers in the ceiling and the two speakers in the television. The LG system is certified by the Digital Living Network Alliance (DLNA). The 42-inch televisions over the fireplace and in the Lift-TV include

24-inch sound bars. The LG entertainment system also permits recording current programming and playing it back at your convenience. The television itself, an LG ULTRA HDTV 4K, displays 8.3 million pixels, making the resolution four times that of full HD.

In addition to the LG technology, Tiffin includes as standard equipment the Dish Wally receiver (subscription required) that is designed to operate with the optional In-Motion satellite receiver (MSRP \$1,450). You can also specify optional pre-wiring



The Open Road Mobile WiFi hotspot provides a "Ready-to-Go Internet" with hassle-free setup. It was installed as an option on the coach reviewed in this issue.

for the Winegard Trav'ler satellite receiver (MSRP \$254).

The Kenwood radio in the dash plays a large role in the coach's entertainment offering. You can listen to your CD/DVD music collection in the CD player located behind the flip-out operations screen. It can also process music collections from an MP3 or a USB flash drive. The radio is programmed for SiriusXM (subscription required).

Since wireless communication is a major factor of our daily living, TMH is focusing on a device to improve the WiFi signal you receive in your motorhome: the Open Road Mobile (MSRP \$863). As you already know, WiFi stands for Wireless Fidelity and is the same thing as WLAN which stands for "Wireless Local Area Network." WiFi works on the same principal as other wireless devices: it uses radio frequencies to send signals between devices. Walkie-talkies, car radios, cell phones, and weather radios all use different radio frequencies. Your car stereo receives frequencies in kilohertz and megahertz range (AM and FM stations), while WiFi transmits and receives data in the gigahertz (Ghz) range. For WiFi, this frequency is 2.4Ghz and 5Ghz. The greater the distance between the point of transmission and receiving device, the weaker the signal becomes. The Open Road Mobile picks up the signal, boosts it, and produces greater clarity in your reception.

The Open Road Mobile provides your own encrypted secure WiFi hotspot. In addition to its internet connection, it provides streaming TV services from Netflix, YouTube, Amazon Prime, Hulu, and Disney+. The unlimited data plan with AT&T 4G LTE can be activated with no contracts for \$129/month. The 8" tall canister-shaped receiver mounts on the roof.

THE ELECTRICAL SYSTEM

The Allegro Open Road brand offers the optional Magnum 2000-watt pure sine inverter (MSRP \$1,740) with automatic starting that delivers power from the house batteries to the entertainment system, the residential refrigerator-freezer, three 110v outlets in the galley, outlets in both of the forward slide-outs, an outlet in the bath, and one at bedside. The system requires four house batteries. All of the above requires an upgrade to the 7.0 Onan generator (MSRP \$1,088).



THE BEDROOM

The 34PA's bedroom cabinets use nearly half of the available dead space between the rear wall of the motorhome's box and the rear cap. This well-designed cabinet encloses:

- three drawers (11 x 28 x 7),
- four cubic feet of space for the coach's entertainment system (cooling fans and electronics),
- a 32-inch retractable LG Smart+ TV.

The DS rear slide-out is effectively used for four drawers (11 x 28 x 7) and a clothes hamper (13 x 18.5 x 18.5). Each his & her wardrobe (22 x 28 x 42) has mirrored double doors. Over the 19" x 25" window you will notice a three-cubic-foot cabinet. The countertop below the window is served by two USB ports and a 110v outlet.

The two slide-outs create a bedroom that measures 11'10" E/W and 8'8" N/S, leaving a generous space between the end of the king or queen bed and the wardrobe. The queen memory foam bed is standard, the king is optional (MSRP \$870). As with all of Tiffin's coaches, there are windows in both sides of the bed slide-out, a great feature to catch the evening breezes, making your ZZZZ pleasant. In addition to the two sconces, Tiffin has added directional LEDs in the base of the overhead cabinets, directly over your pillows for perfect reading light.

The two major storage areas in the bedroom are above the headboard and under the bed: 13+ CF over and 21 CF under. Each side of the bed has an end table with a small storage compartment for nighttime essentials. You will find a 110v outlet in the overhead compartment to service medical appliances such as a sleep apnea machine. Each side of the bed has a 110v outlet and two USB ports. The standard ceiling fan can be operated at the bedside Spyder control panel. After you are tucked in, you can also turn ON/OFF the porch, hall, and ceiling lights. You also have a light master switch to turn off all the lights in the coach with one touch.



THE BATH

Tiffin's revisionist architect, Steven Coon, has taken an existing footprint of 8'3" N/S by 5'3" E/W and included a 24" x 38" shower, a single lavatory and toilet, an amazing amount of cabinet space, and Splendide's optional (MSRP \$2,030) washer and dryer.

Let's begin with the lavatory and vanity. The Broadway countertop (21" x 38") has a ceramic lavatory, a polished chrome single-lever faucet, a hand towel ring, 110v service, two LEDs over a double-door medicine cabinet, each with a 13" x 15" mirror. The medicine cabinet is one of TMH's largest with each shelf measuring 7.25 x 38 x 20. Under the vanity, the cabinetry offers two drawers (ea. 15 x 7.5 x 3.75). The vanity door conceals a 1.2 cubic foot storage area.

The ceramic toilet has a foot-flush lever plus an enclosed compartment directly behind it for toilet brush and other cleaning supplies—a great idea for the next house I build! Over the toilet is a double-door cabinet flush with the bathroom wall (11.25 x 21 x 26, two shelves). The cavity underneath is the compartment for the slide-out pantry that opens into the galley area. I love the ingenuity of space utilization. You will find four bath towel racks, three on the door and one above the toilet.

Adjacent to the single lavatory, and occupying the space where there would have been an extended countertop and second lavatory, the architect cinched in a fully enclosed cabinet for the over-under dryer and washer. At the south end of the bathroom's footprint, the shower measures 24" x 38". This year TMH has added the Showermiser as standard equipment. If you are dry camping, the device recirculates the water into the water tank until it is hot. It also allows the bather to turn off the hot water while maintaining the temperature as he or she soaps or shampoos. When the water is turned back on for the rinse, the same temperature is maintained—no sudden cold water surge. The deluxe hand-held shower head is mounted on a sliding chrome pole to accommodate a bather of any height. The fiberglass shower has a built-in seat and recessed shelf for soap

and toiletries. The Tiffin signature skylight is over the shower, as usual, and has an LED light in the sliding closure should you not care to see the sky or moon.



THE ALLEGRO'S COCKPIT

Probably the most important feature in a cockpit is instrumentation that is easy to read. Redesigned by Ford, you will not have to squint to see numbers that are too small or digital displays that are not clear. The primary display directly in front of the steering column presents two large dials for RPM and MPH. Left to right across the top of the display are temp gauges for the fluids in the transmission, radiator, and engine, plus the fuel gauge. Between the MPH and the RPM dial, a digital display with select arrows on the steering wheel presents the odometer and outside temp, two trip meters, average MPG, # miles to empty, and trip timer. Four tabs for cruise control are also located on the steering wheel.

On the dashboard to the left of the steering column are toggles for generator start, auxiliary start, and the map light; a panel for the parking and headlights; a dial for genset hours; and a brightness control for the instrumentation. The mirror controls and the mirror heat switch are in a side console that also has a large receptacle for maps and papers.

To the right of the steering column, toggles for the driver fan, radio, and the solar and night shades are at your fingertips. Just above the toggle switches, the Kenwood unit combines the dash stereo, radio, CD & DVD player, and the optional Garmin navigation software (MSRP \$1,160) into one very efficient system. Two cell phones can be connected into the speaker system for hands-free operation including voice activated call placements. A QR code is included to provide a full Quick Start guide.

Immediately to the right of the Kenwood system, the 10-inch color monitor displays vehicle activity on both sides and the rear of your coach. The monitor is useful at night for a security check around your coach.

The control panel for the Lippert computerized leveling system is located in the lower center of the dashboard. Just to the right you will see the Ford HVAC controls for automotive heating and cooling.

The dashboard has four USB ports to keep your phones, tablets, and other digital devices charged as you use them while traveling. A 12v port can support other appliances.

The dash slide-out table in front of the passenger seat was designed for your laptop. There's also plenty of space for a small printer on the deck in front of the dash. With 110v service just under the dash, you can use your computer and printer in transit or at rest. The passenger's console has toggle switches for the fan and overhead map light.

DRIVING THE 2022 ALLEGRO OPEN ROAD 34PA


Ford dropped the V10 engine in their RV chassis in 2020, switching to the more popular V8 engine. The V10 is a 6.8-liter engine. It develops 320 hp @ 3900 rpm. Its torque rating is 460 lb-ft at 3000 rpm. Comparatively, the V8 7.3-liter engine develops 350 hp at 3900 rpm. Its torque rating is 468 lb-ft at 3900 rpm. The engine horsepower and torque are very similar.

The V10 was often criticized for its high-pitched noise as it went through its lower gears in hilly country or while it was winding out through the gears. After it relaxes into fifth gear under cruise control on an interstate highway, the cockpit is almost as quiet as one of Tiffin's rear diesels. However, after listening to owner's complaints, Ford offered the V8, a well-tested engine on commercial trucks. Although it pushed the chassis/engine price higher, it has been well-received.

The torque and acceleration of the V-8 compares very favorably to the Allegro RED, Phaeton, and Allegro Bus. Its take-off on an interstate ramp will match the diesel coaches. It definitely has the extra power to move smoothly into passing lanes and get around slower moving traffic.

In our test ride through the Franklin County hill country and the 4-lane SR24 coming into Red Bay, the 34PA towing a 3500 lb. car only lost 8 mph on a ¾-mile five percent grade. The unit I drove did not have the Liquid Spring option (see ad on page 1).

When I test drove a 2019 Allegro 15 months ago, I can say it made a significant difference in the smoothness of the ride produced by the Liquid Spring computerized in-motion adjustments. Its control and stabilization of lateral motion is also significant.

If the 34PA's floor plan conforms to your style of RV living, if its interiors have caught your eye, then I know its new standard and optional features will make this coach a very good buy in its price point. After you take it for a test drive, I feel sure you will be pleased with its handling and performance. 



SPECIFICATIONS: Model tested 2022 Allegro Open Road 34PA, Four Slides

Base MSRP* – \$210,304 MSRP as tested with options – \$229,489

STANDARD FEATURES

Structural

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

Automotive

Ford 26K chassis
Ford TorqShift® 6-speed transmission with overdrive and Tow/Haul mode
Ford V8 7.3L engine
Peak HP 350 @ 3,900 RPM
Peak Torque 468 lb-ft @ 3,900 RPM
Cruise control operated from steering wheel
Hydraulic automatic leveling jacks
Electronic Stability Control / Traction Control
Four aluminum wheels
Fog lights
Daytime running lights
Emergency start switch

Exterior

Fiberglass front & rear caps
Form-fitted seamless fiberglass roof
Front cap protective film
Gel-coat fiberglass walls
Full body paint
Tinted one-piece windshield
Double electric step
¼-inch thick single pane windows
Horizontal mounted wipers
Chrome heated power mirrors with integrated turn signal cameras
Girard SlideOut Toppers
Patio side exterior TV
Hydraulic automatic leveling jacks
BASF full-body paint with protective film on front cap
One 12v auxiliary chassis battery
Four 6v house batteries
Lighted basement storage
Side-mounted basement compartment doors with gas shocks
Rigid long-life storage boxes
Single handle lockable storage door latches
Roof-mounted digital TV antenna
Color backup camera mounted in rear cap
Girard Power Patio Awning
LED patio & door lights
Undercoating
Roof ladder

Plumbing and Electrical

50-amp service
5.5 Onan® gas generator
Two 13,500 BTU high profile roof ACs (high efficiency)
Extraordinaire™ AC roof-ducted system
10-gallon gas-electric water heater
Water filtration system
Low-point water drain lines
Lighted utilities compartment
Exterior rinse hose/shower
Water heater bypass system
Black holding tank flush system
Heated water & holding tank compartments
Gravity water fill
110v exterior receptacle
110v-12v converter (integrated with inverter)
Inverter: Operates TVs, surround sound, & standard residential refrigerator
Inverter remote switch
External tripod satellite hook-up
Cable TV ready hookup
Spyder Controls multiplex systems and thermostats

General Interior

High gloss hardwood cabinet doors & drawer fronts

Hand-crafted wood cabinet faces
Sound bar
Soft touch vinyl ceiling
Ball bearing drawer slides
Wall-to-wall (Sand Castle) vinyl tile flooring throughout coach
LED lighting
Treated fabrics
Solar shades & blackout night shades
Two powered roof vents
Spyder Controls monitor system for all tank levels
Smoke detector
Chrome hardware
Home theater with sound bar
Carbon monoxide detector
LPG leak detector

Driver's Compartment

Entry step well light
Step switch and 12v disconnect switch
Color monitor for backup & sideview cameras
UltraLeather power passenger & driver seats
Lighted instrument panel
Single CD player & stereo AM/FM radio
Satellite radio prep (requires subscription)
Two cup holders
Passenger slide-out desk
One 12v dash receptacle
Four USB dash receptacles
Tilt steering wheel with cruise control
Dual dash fans
Power solar & privacy windshield shades
Manual solar & privacy shades for driver & passenger side windows
Fire extinguisher

Living Area / Dinette

UltraLeather PS booth dinette with large pull-out storage drawers
Mid-section TV in entertainment center w/ sound bar (digital system located in bedroom)
UltraLeather DS Flip-and-Fold sofa

Kitchen

Chrome single-level sink faucet w/ extension rinser head
Double bowl stainless steel sink with SSCT fitted covers
Storage rack for fitted covers under galley countertop
Solid surface backsplashes
3-burner recessed cooktop with folding solid surface covers
Microwave with exterior venting
Residential refrigerator w/ 4 batteries & ice maker
Slide-out pantry

Bath

Molded fiberglass one-piece shower
Chrome faucet w/ flex hose and adjustable height shower head
AquaView Showermiser
Skylight in shower w/ insulated sliding cover & LED light
Solid surface countertop & backsplash
Medicine cabinet
Four LED lights in ceiling
Roof vent fan with wall switch
Toilet w/ foot flush lever
Water pump switch

Bedroom

Double wardrobe with automatic lights and mirror doors
Bed comforter & throw pillows
Innerspring queen mattress (60" x 80")
Storage under bed, lift top w/ gas struts

Wall-to-wall luxury vinyl tile flooring (excludes slide-outs)
Solar/privacy shades
Carbon monoxide detector
LPG leak detector
Flat panel TV w/ entertainment center
110v outlets and USB ports in bedside tables (inverter powered)
Dual sconce and LED reading lights on both sides of bed
110v outlet in OH cabinet for sleep apnea machine

OPTIONAL FEATURES ON THIS COACH

OPTIONAL FEATURES AT NO CHARGE

Barcelona full body paint
Generation 9 exterior paint scheme
Belgian UltraLeather
Mid-section 42" TV with sound bar
UltraLeather booth dinette
City Shadow décor

OPTIONAL FEATURES AT ADDITIONAL COST

7.0 Onan generator
15,000 BTU AC w/heat pump
One solar panel
Shadow cabinetry
Solid surface upgrade
In-Motion satellite
Pre-wire for Trav'ler satellite
Open Road WiFi Booster
2,000 watt pure sine inverter
In-Dash navigation software
UltraLeather power DS/PS seats with footrest
Central vacuum
Stacked washer/dryer
Truma water heater
Fireplace
Bedroom ceiling fan
Memory foam bed, king
Drop down bunk
Sleeper air coil sofa

OTHER OPTIONAL FEATURES NOT ON THIS COACH

OPTIONAL FEATURES AT NO CHARGE

Full body paint choices: NASA, White Mahogany, Sunlit Sand
Décor: Portico Linen II, Sandbar III
Cocoon UltraLeather
UltraLeather Flip & Fold sofa
Memory foam bed, queen

OPTIONAL FEATURES, ADDITIONAL COST

Two solar panels
Prep for solar panel
Natural alder cabinetry
Amber glazed cabinetry
Driver's power window
CB antenna
Oven/convection microwave
Dinette computer workstation
Dining bar w/ Lift-TV
UltraLeather Super Sofa

MEASUREMENTS

Wheelbase – 252"
Overall length – 36'1"
Overall height with roof air – 12' 10"
Interior height – 84"
Overall width – 101"
Interior width – 96"

WEIGHTS & CAPACITIES

GVWR – 26,000 lbs.
Front GAWR – 9,000 lbs.
Rear GAWR – 17,500 lbs.

GCWR – 30,000 lbs.
UVW – 22,890 lbs.
CCC – 2,133 lbs.
Trailer hitch capacity – 5,000 lbs.

POWER TRAIN

Engine – Ford V8 7.3L 350-hp @ 3,900 rpm
Torque – 468 lb-ft @ 3,900 rpm
Transmission – TorqShift® 6-speed automatic overdrive with tow/haul mode
Tire size – 255/80 R22.5-GXRV
Alternator – 210 amps

CHASSIS

Frame – Single channel, ladder type
Frame design – 50 psi hi-strength steel with deep C-channel side rails
Steering – 50 degree wheel cut
Anti-locking braking system – Standard 4-wheel anti-lock brakes
Suspension (front and rear) – Tapered multi-leaf springs
Shock absorbers – Bilstein gas pressured
Axles – Heavy-duty Dana 17060S
Leveling jacks – Lippert hydraulic automatic

CONSTRUCTION

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

ACCOMMODATIONS

Sleeps – Six (four adults, two children)
Fuel tank – 80 gallons
Fresh water – 70 gallons
Black water – 50 gallons
Grey water – 66 gallons
LPG tank – 24 gallons (can be filled to 80% capacity)

MSRP*

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

UVW

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

DEALERS

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

PLEASE NOTE

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

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St. George, Utah

A Sunny Gem in a Sandstone Setting



Text and photography by Suzanne Clemenz

ST. GEORGE, UTAH, RUBS ELBOWS WITH RED stone highlands, pine woodlands, snow-dusted mountains, rivers, lakes, and the occasional sand dune. You won't find high-end shopping, famous museums, or ski resorts here, but you'll relish its wide array of diversions. You will find mild spring weather and scenery that's hard to match, with monthly highs averaging 59 to 86 degrees from February through May. From 2000 to 2005, St. George was the fastest-growing metropolitan area in the U.S., and now has 80,000 residents. Retirees, outdoor enthusiasts, travelers, artists, students, and photographers love it. There are unique parks and miles of hiking trails in, around, and above the city. Indulge in

watersports from swimming and fishing to paddleboarding, wakeboarding, jet-skiing, and shark-free scuba diving! Engage in mountain biking (even very difficult trails,) dune buggies, and white-knuckle places to take all manner of off-road vehicles that you can easily rent. Road bikers love the spring and fall Tour de St. George races. There are 13 golf courses, excellent birding, and many cultural opportunities. A surprise to many is nearby Tuacahn, a magnificent amphitheater in a dramatic canyon. Tuacahn has a packed roster of Broadway musicals, top entertainers, and special events. Regardless of your age or interests, St. George is likely to please you.

Like southeastern Arizona in the last *RIS* issue, three major

Sand Hollow Resort's plentiful sand traps are almost tangerine in color. This top-ranked course is open to the public. ♦ *At right:* The westward view from the paved bicycle path along Hwy. 18 northwest of St. George reveals clouds lifting from the Beaver Dam Mountain Range. Three major geological regions overlap here: the Mojave Desert, the Colorado Plateau, and the Great Basin produced a remarkable diversity in geology, plant life, animal life, and human history.



geological regions—the Mojave Desert, the Colorado Plateau, and the Great Basin—overlap here. Crossroads like these create remarkable diversity in geology, plant life, animal life, and human history. Geology buffs can search online for *Our Geological Wonderland: 90 Million Years* for illustrations of visible rock layers and unconformities. Plant life varies from cactus, yuccas, and desert flowers, to pinyon pines and Douglas firs in Pine Valley's mountains.

The Santa Clara and Virgin rivers meander quietly through town, creating cooler riparian corridors in hotter months. Tour historic buildings and explore downtown St. George shops, antique stores, galleries, and lively Town Square. The tall, shining white edifice you'll see from every direction is the St. George Mormon Temple, the original Church of Latter Day Saints (LDS) temple in Utah. There is a smaller Mormon Tabernacle in St. George, as well as many other Christian churches and a Jewish Chabad center.

St. George is 300 miles southwest of Salt Lake City, 35 miles southwest of Cedar City's famous outdoor Shakespeare Festival, an hour from the lofty cliffs flanking the Virgin River in Zion National Park, and less than two hours from the razzle-dazzle of Las Vegas. There are a dozen small communities in the St. George area with attractions not covered here.

A Complex Land With Well-planned Amenities

The first evidence of human beings here is 12,000 years ago. There were permanent settlements from 300 BC to 1200 AD near waterways. The nomadic Shivwitts Paiute Indians arrived about 700 years ago, taking up farming practices to supplement hunting. Today's local Paiutes live in the Santa Clara area on over 24,000 acres of land granted them by the U.S. government, which had moved them often, at the government's convenience, for decades.



St. George's enthralling Town Square features a splash pool and a separate river, picnic pavilions, summer outdoor movies, many events, and carousel rides.



Step back 100 years at Judd's Store by Green Gate Square for malts, shakes, great ice cream, sandwiches, and soups, plus soda and candy galore.



The Town Square carousel is magnetic to all ages. It is closed during hot summer months but otherwise very busy.

Your introduction here to the V-shaped St. George area will start with downtown and also up-town along Red Hills Parkway. Then we'll explore the east side and west side 'wings.' Occupying the high center of the V is the Red Cliffs Desert Preserve, with the Pine Valley-Pine Mountains area north of the Preserve. My exploratory trip to St. George was eight brim-packed days, allowing time only for short hikes. It would be optimum to spend ten or twelve days in St. George in April or May and then move on to the shade of Zion's narrow vertical walls if St. George gets more toasty. St. George, at 2,700 feet elevation, has a *hot* summer similar to 2,000 foot high Las Vegas. St. George's 700 extra feet make the town somewhat cooler, and the surrounding higher elevation trails and parks are cooler yet. McArthur's Temple View RV Resort, a Good Sam campground at 975 South Main Street, is the biggest, best-equipped, most convenient place for your home base. See campground listings on page 46.

The Whats and Wheres of Downtown

Perhaps you, like me, like to research destinations online before visiting them. It helps to know that St. George markets itself as Greater Zion (greaterzion.com/things-to-do-in-greater-zion). The St. George Chamber of Commerce sent me a valuable tool, a 96-page publication called *Greater St. George Area Guide*, which confirmed that St. George is a destination well worth a visit. My first stop upon arriving in St. George was the visitor center at 20 North Main Street, (435) 634-5747. A gracious staff member gave me the 54-page *Official Visitors Guide of Greater Zion*, with information about the broader area. The *Red Cliffs Desert Reserve Trails* map, showing the immense public lands, and trails east, west, and north of St. George, is essential. It joined the bag of maps and activities rack cards from the visitor center.

St. George Boulevard, a primary east-west thoroughfare, is perpetually busy. Its stop lights keep it flowing while side-street traffic has long waits. Drop south two blocks to 100 South and you'll whisk quickly from Bluff Street, along the western bluffs, to the east side's I-15 (via River Road.) Initially, St. George's street numbering system confused me. Then its logic made navigation a snap. St. George Boulevard is the east-west street running through city center that divides the north and south sectors of the city. Streets north or south of St. George Boulevard (that run east-west) are designated 100N, then 200N, or 100S, then 200S, etc. Main Street is the north-south street that divides the east and west sectors of the city. Streets west and east of Main

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This Egghead sculpture by Kimber Fiebiger seems unlikely to fall from its Town Square wall. Installed by Art Around the Corner Foundation.



Four California graffiti artists were commissioned for this mural to celebrate the St. George Art Museum's 30th anniversary.



The Daughters of Utah Pioneers Museum exhibits intriguing relics, photos, and early Washington County life histories.



Once a wine cellar, the St. George Opera House and Social Hall has an active community theater with local talent. It can be rented for special events.

Street (that run north-south) are likewise 100W, and 200W, or 100E and 200E, etc. So, getting to an address of 625 S. 300E, start from the Main Street and St. George Blvd. intersect, drive east on St. George to 300S, then turn south and drive six blocks. When you pass 600S, street number 615 will be in the next block. This will all make more sense when you're in St. George, and can see the grid system in real time.

My first foray in St. George started with using *A Stroll Through History: Historic St. George Downtown Walking Tour* (wchsutah.org/towns/st-george-tour2.pdf)

I walked the map's route in about 90 minutes, reading informative plaques, admiring old homes, businesses, and public buildings, and noting how attractive and tidy it all is. Between Memorial Day and Labor Day there is a guided historic walking tour on Tuesdays and Saturdays to six historic sites. Check this website for Covid-related scheduling changes:

greaterzion.com/events/guided-historic-st-george-walking-tour. Numerous bronze sculptures caught my attention on sidewalks and plazas. Most were installed by the non-profit Art Around the Corner Foundation. Download their 2021 sculpture walk at artaroundthecorner.org.

I popped into the 1911 Judd's Store at 62 W. Tabernacle St., with its colorful shelves of old-style sodas and candy bins, and bought a flavorful, thick huckleberry milkshake. Back outside, calliope music drew me to a popular carousel at the spacious, lively Town Square. Between college students chatting at outdoor cafes, families with kids everywhere, and volunteer retirees staffing museums and other non-profits, the town actively involves its spectrum of age groups.

Downtown's deciduous trees were winter-bare during my early February visit, but landscaping promised colorful yards, planters, and traffic circles soon. The many red stone brick buildings vary in color depending on the layer of sandstone quarried. A block or two north of St. George Boulevard, rust-colored sandstone cliffs rise several hundred feet above the heart of the city. I was surprised to see traffic about 80 feet up the cliffs. It is Red Hills Parkway, a northern quick, eastside-westside connector. St. George is inviting, with many parks, trails, cultural amenities, gardens, and events to give citizens and visitors places and spaces to relax and appreciate life.

Museums, Historic Buildings, and an Award-Winning Symphony

The St. George Art Museum, 47 E. 200N is part of a complex that includes the St. George Musical Theater and the St. George Social Hall & Opera House. The Art Museum has a colorful two-story mural on

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Brigham Young purchased this home in 1872, remodeling it and adding an office. He died in 1877.



The Children's Museum in St. George is housed in the 1911 Dixie Academy building. Popular interactive programs are ongoing.



St. George's restaurants will tantalize your tastebuds. This salmon sandwich lunch special, and even the pomegranate drink, at the Painted Pony in Ancestor Square, were memorable.

Authentique Gallery of Art & Design displays works of 30 nationally-known artists in a lovely historic home.



200N. Over 900 works of art are in its permanent collection. Most periodically rotate into the exhibit hall. The upstairs gallery and a separate smaller space have themed visiting exhibits, and there are ongoing art conversations, kids' interactive programs, and docent tours by appointment. Entry donations average \$15 per person. The Musical Theater on the same campus at 212 N. Main is a community theater-in-the-round with eight shows per season and 170 other performances. Next door at 200 N. Main is the St. George Social Hall & Opera House, rentable for special events. Turning south beyond the Art Museum onto 100E, the Daughters of Utah Pioneer Museum (DUPM) houses a trove of relics of St. George's early pioneers. These range from baskets and bonnets to tools and clothing to many historic photographs. Visiting hours were sporadic due to Covid while I was in St. George. Normal hours are 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Saturday. Admission is free. Next door at the corner of St. George Boulevard and 100E is a sister venue to DUPM, the Pioneer Courthouse. Its history includes use as a jail, county offices, schoolroom, and courtroom. You can tour the building and attend events and entertainment Friday, Saturday, and Monday, 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Brigham Young, who led the city's pioneer Mormons from Illinois to Salt Lake City in 1847, thought that the St. George area could produce cotton. Experimental farms began in 1857. Three hundred and nine families skilled in cotton production were recruited from the South, and nicknamed the area Dixie. Cotton didn't flourish, but the pioneers persevered. Most of the handsome two- and three-story brick buildings in St. George were built in the next 50 years, providing employment. Brigham Young lived in Salt Lake City, but arthritis eventually made it necessary for him to work from St. George's warm climate in winter. His home at 67 W. 200N has scheduled tours, suspended due to Covid.

Bring your kids or grandkids to The Children's Museum at 86 South Main, next to the big Town Square tower and park. The Museum's mission is for children and families to discover, imagine, and create. Kids love the place! To preview the colorful displays and activities that keep youngsters involved, browse sgchildrensmuseum.org/about-us/exhibits. Admission is \$5 per person over two years old. Adults must accompany kids. Non-member hours are Thursday to Saturday, 10 a.m. to 6 p.m., and Sunday, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Kids may also want to scamper next door to the splash pool, grassy parade ground, waterplay river, picnic area, and carousel in the fantastic Town Square park.

St. George's Southwest Symphony performances are held at the Cox Performing Arts Center at Dixie State University at 325 S. 700E. There are other Utah orchestras in Salt Lake City, Provo, and Ogden, but St. George's Southwest Symphony won Best In State in 2019 and 2020. The 2021 season was a Covid victim. It had scheduled three classical music concerts, Christmas and Easter concerts, and a concert of Billy Joel music. Stay tuned for its restart.

On Dixie State University's (DSU) campus, 11,000 students choose degree studies from 71 options. In addition, Dixie Technical College offers career training in many fields. The colleges' presence in St. George has a beneficial effect on athletic, social, and cultural offerings, with plenty of great restaurants, pubs, museums, and art galleries.

A Dining Scene with Many Choices

St. George has food options for every taste and pocketbook—oriental, Italian, brew pubs, bistros, and more. Bear Paw Café, 75 N. Main Street, has a breakfast menu with varieties of pancakes, waffles, French toasts, crepes, quiches, and much more. For a more sophisticated breakfast, lunch, dinner or weekend brunch, enjoy Wood-Ash-Rye Restaurant at 25 W. George Blvd. Their Lamb Korma, comprised of braised lamb, hummus with pine nuts and scallions, naan bread, and a house salad—is luscious. The Painted Pony Restaurant, upstairs in Ancestor Square at 2 W. St. George Blvd. #22 is highly rated, and I concur. I lunched there twice, and find the flavors exceptionally nuanced. Abe was my attentive, personable server both times, explaining that the chef owns the restaurant as a labor of love. It shows.

A Growing Art Scene with a Big Annual Art Festival

The Dixie Watercolor Society's Gallery 35, at 35 N. Main, displays an engaging variety of techniques and subjects. At the same address is the Arts to Zion Gallery, with southern Utah artists creating polished work in several mediums. At 51 N. Main you'll enjoy the dynamic southwestern images of photographer Nathan Wotkyns. The Arrowhead Gallery, 68 E. Tabernacle, and the adjacent Electric Theater Company are city-owned non-profits (designated ETC) anchoring a developing Arts District. The gallery displays fine art juried by professional artists and university art professors. You'll explore paintings, drawings, pottery, ceramics, glasswork, metalwork, sculptures, fine wood creations, gourds, jewelry, and other media. Abstract and impressionistic art not readily found locally will make you linger.

The city renovated the Electric Theater to give organizations a vibrant venue for the arts and performances. A free-spirited assemblage of sculpted string instruments marks the place.

Mission Gallery on Ancestor Square specializes in over 20 nationally lauded plein air artists. It has two adjacent sister galleries.

This is Town Square on February 1st. These kids play as if it's mid-summer. St. George's climate is mild mid-September through mid-May.

A sculpture of a boy with a tiny fish enhances the courtyard between the Opera House and the Art Museum in St. George. The Museum's collection has sculptures in different media.



Adjacent in the same complex is the Electric Theater Center's 300-seat performance arts theater. A modern dance concert and the Red Rock ScreenDance Film Festival are examples of ETC events. The Film Festival will show three short films on June 10 at 6 p.m. Three must-see galleries owned by Jane Bell Meyer will please serious fine art lovers. They are housed in historic homes around the southwest corner of the 200 N. Main roundabout. All three buildings showcase nationally recognized, museum-caliber artists. Mission Gallery, 173 N. Main, features plein air canvases with that subtle verve created by painting outdoors. Authentique Gallery, 199 North Main, and Illume Gallery, 29 W. 200N, feature exciting art in many styles from award-winning

artists, including Charles Dayton and Michael Albrechtsen.

St. George's Art Around the Corner Foundation (AAC) selects 25 to 30 sculptures annually that they install outdoors downtown. The visitor center has a map for the AAC self-guided sculpture walk. The pieces are everything from touching to serene to whimsical. ACC purchases an entry or two, the public and businesses buy some, some are leased by businesses, and some are loaned by the artist. The annual St. George Art Festival at Town Square in March or April attracts 30,000 people. It features live entertainment, food, kids' fun, and a chance to visit with many artists. This issue of *RIS* will be on the press during the April 2-3 festival, so make a note for next year.

North Above the City Lights

Look north of downtown and about 70 feet high, and you'll see Red Hills Parkway traffic. From downtown, 200E and 1000E go right up the cliff to Red Hills Parkway, and you can also access it (if you can understand the intersection) from the Parkway's west end off of Bluff Street (SR 8,) or Exit 10 on the east side off I-15. St. George's Pioneer Park on Red Hills Parkway is fun. People love to scramble up and around the numerous sandstone formations, enjoying area vistas. Picnic at a big circular pavilion and hike the moderately difficult Sugarloaf Loop and oth-

er intersecting trails. St. George Narrows is a thin slot between big adjoining buttes on Sugarloaf Loop. It is one tenth of a mile long and about nine inches wide. Squeezing through is a challenge. For a shorter wait, go early or late. From Pioneer Park's northeast corner, hike into the Red Cliffs Desert Preserve, which is 20 miles wide, 6 miles deep, and laced with trails. Enjoy its spectacular beauty October through early May. Immediately to the east of Pioneer Park on Red Hills Parkway is Red Hills Desert Garden, a lovely, imaginative botanical garden where March through May is the optimum time to see it flowering.



RED HILLS DESERT GARDEN

An inviting, winding, paved path follows a stream through various gardens, a waterfall, a marsh, and a slot canyon, at Red Hills Desert Garden. ♦ Mockingbirds remain in the garden throughout the winter, eating berries like these. ♦ Desert Delight agave is a compact 2 x 2 feet, and may eventually grow

a 10-foot stem and flowering stalk. Red Hills Desert Garden features low-water-use plants. ♦ The man-made slot canyon at Red Hills Desert Garden has water-thrifty plants growing from natural-looking pockets and cracks, a photographer's opportunity to create a montage.

Athletic Competitions Galore

The annual Huntsman World Senior Games, headquartered in St. George, has 11,000 participants in 34 sports. Go to senior-games.net and click on sports for a complete list of the competitions. Athletes from 81 countries have participated since its 1987 inaugural. This year's games are October 4-16. Ceremonies and some events are at Dixie State's Trailblazer Stadium (senior-games.net/event).

St. George also hosts Spring and Fall Tours de St. George with 35, 57, 80, and 100-mile bicycle racing options. The *Fall Tour of St. George* is scheduled for October 16, 2021. Six hundred

riders participate. The scenery is magnificent (ridesouthernutah.com/races/endurance-races/fall-tour-of-st-george-2020-2). The Ironman 70.3 North American Championship in St. George is on May 1, 2021. (ridesouthernutah.com/races/endurance-races/fall-tour-of-st-george-2020-2). The St. George Marathon date for 2021 is October 2. It includes a Mini-Marathon (stgeorgemarathon.com/registration).

Sponsored by Ride Southern Utah, the October 16 Fall Tour of St. George is your opportunity to have a truly amazing experience on your bike while marveling at the beauty that is Southern Utah.

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BY TIFFIN



HIKING, TENNIS, PICKLEBALL AND GOLF

Pick up the St. George Park & Trail map at the visitor center for many miles of hiking and biking trails within the city. Tennis and pickleball enthusiasts can find venues at globaltennisnetwork.com/tennis-courts/courts/city/241-st-george-utah and at globalpickleball.network/pickleball-courts/courts/city/241-st-george-utah.

St. George is golf heaven. With mild weather except for summer, and minimal flat terrain, there are 13 magnificent golf courses. Many are public, and the farthest one is only 20 minutes away from city center (stgeorgeutahgolf.com/list-of-st-george-golf-courses).



Hikers and cyclists on the SR-18 multi-use trail can access trails to Snow Canyon and Red Cliffs Parkways. Gorgeous vistas add to the pleasure. ♦ St. George's Tonaquint Park has extensive trails, eight tennis courts, a playground, sand volleyball, picnic

tables, and BBQs. It is on the south side of town. ♦ Tonaquint Park in southern St. George is a multipurpose park along the Santa Clara River. Visitors love birding, tennis courts, hiking, and a desert botanical garden.

The East Side: Shopping, Lakes, Museums and a Fave Restaurant

The real east side fun starts north off of I-15 at Exit 16 (SR 9). Drive east 2.3 miles to Quail Creek Road, and turn north to Quail Creek State Park. Entrance fees are \$15 (\$10 for seniors) per day, *per state park*. Day use hours are 7 a.m. to 9 p.m. Nine campsites have water and electricity for \$35, or \$25 for those without. A second vehicle is \$20. There are four pull-throughs to accommodate up to 35-ft. RVs. This 600-acre warm-water lake, surrounded by colorful escarpments, creates photo ops as the lighting changes from sunrise to sunset. Birding is excellent. Search *utah birding spots: quail creek*. Picnic, fish for trout and bass, hike, swim, launch your boat or rent wave runners and paddled watercraft right here. There are mountain bike trails at the southeast end of the lake, accessed to the east on SR 9, then north on Road

4275W. You will find Quail Creek Lake is leisurely, lovely, and more relaxed than Sand Hollow with its dune buggies and other all-terrain vehicles (ATVs).

Next, head to the tangerine sands of Sand Hollow State Park. Return south to Highway 9 from Quail Creek State Park. Then drive two miles east to Sand Hollow Road, then south four miles. At that point the Sand Hollow Country Club is on the right and Sand Hollow State Park is at left. Arriving at that intersection at 11 a.m., I chose the Country Club for a late breakfast. Their Crab Benny, an eggs benedict served on crab cakes on top of slightly wilted, faintly salted arugula, will be my favorite food memory of the trip. As I dined on the sunny deck, I got up occasionally to photograph green fairways with their orange sandtraps and

Quail Creek State Park provides a 600-acre lake for water sports, fishing, boating, picnicking, volleyball, birding, and mountain biking.

Campsites at Quail Creek State Park have views of the 600-acre lake and colorfully stratified escarpments.





Sand Hollow Resort’s Crab Benny, described as two poached eggs over crab cakes and arugula, is heaven on a fork!



Sand Hollow Resort’s course has been ranked ‘Best Course You Can Play in Utah’ since 2009. Possibly the most beautiful, too.

knobby sandstone outcroppings as golfers played through.

Afterward, I headed east across the road to Sand Hollow State Park. The big-rig friendly campground is north of the entrance station, and has paved, spacious, mostly drive-through sites, and panoramic views. Enjoy full hookups, modern bathrooms, and ten hot showers. Full hookups are \$38 per night. For reservations, Google *Sand Hollow State Park Westside Campground*. The vistas across the 1,322-acre lake are rimmed with neon-orange sand. Rent a seven-passenger ski boat starting at \$260 for two hours, additional hours at \$50. Jet skis start at \$90 for standard power and \$125 for high power. Rent pontoon boats for cruising, and all types of paddled watercraft September through April. Make your way out to Sand Hollow Island offshore near Westside Campground and enjoy diving from the cliffs into the lake. Fisherfolk love reeling in the plentiful largemouth bass, plus black crappie, bluegill, and rainbow trout. Even scuba divers enjoy the lake. If needed, take scuba classes at St. George’s Aqua Sports, then explore Sand Hollow Lake’s east side scuba course. Thirty-five to 60 feet down, you’ll find a Cessna airplane, a Volks-

wagen bus, a bomb, and other items to explore and photograph.

For the dunes, hire an ATV with or without an experienced guide for two- or four-hour tours at The BASH (Beach At Sand Hollow.) The BASH cooks many breakfast items plus lunch items like quesadillas, salads, burgers, sandwiches, and wraps. It also serves milkshakes and ice cream. Set up a shade tent on the shore and swim, or rent an ATV and join the buzzing buggies roaring around those brilliant dunes upslope from the beach. Several thousand acres are accessible. There are more options than we can list here, including 25- to 30-mile guided Jeep tours that educate, entertain, teach, and provide lunch. In chatting with an ATV guide while visiting Sand Hollow, he noted that people renting ATVs underestimate how much arm strength is required to plow through the sand and over rocks for a couple of hours. That is why ATV renters take optional guides. Vehicles can overturn, and there are hairy-scary places to take them ([youtube.com/watch?v=Y78FZ9crKng](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Y78FZ9crKng))! Guides point out the routes and keep you out of trouble. Ask the ranger about hiking trails not used by ATVs and 4WDs. Once you’ve earned gritty teeth and

Jared Thatcher, a firefighter, unwinds by kicking up some sand in his Polaris RZR Turbo S at Sand Hollow State Park.



The lake at Sand Hollow State Park is 1,322 acres of a 20,000 acre park. The south shore provides ATV access to challenging sand dunes.





This Northrop F-5B Freedom Fighter was capable of 1,077 mph. They were in active use from 1962 to the mid-1970s. ♦ This Dilophosaurus sub-adult dinosaur represents some types of dinosaurs that lived in the St. George area during the Jurassic era. ♦ The Dinosaur Discovery Site's floor opens to the petrified sandstone where paleontologists study fossil dinosaur tracks.

sweaty fingernails from an ATV workout, a nice swim at the long beach or a cool one in the shade of your Tiffin will restore you.

Western Sky Aviation Warbird Museum is at the St. George Regional Airport, 4196 S. Airport Parkway on St. George's southwest side. Take the first left from Airport Parkway after the gas station. The museum has seven warplanes, as well as jet en-

gines and many memorabilia from WWII through the Vietnam War. They are open Wednesday through Saturday from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., or call Jack at (435) 669-0655 for an appointment. The volunteers are enthused about their budding museum and will explain the planes' uses, technology, political ramifications, and the museum exhibits.

When you've absorbed the museum, retrace SR 7 west as far as River Road, then turn north. At East Riverside Drive, turn right to the Dinosaur Discovery Site at Johnson Farm, 2180 E. Riverside Drive. This museum is indoors and was built directly over the site where dinosaur trace fossils were found and are still studied. Although there are smaller dinosaur replicas here, fossilized traces of their movements and environment is a study in its own right. One impression petrified into the sandstone shows that some dinosaurs sat like a dog, with front legs standing and the torso resting between the back haunches. There are perfectly preserved petrified swipe marks made close to shore by swimming dinosaurs' claws. The museum explains the work of paleontologists. A big chunk of the museum's floor is missing, exposing sandstone with fossil footprints. Watch a paleontologist work through a lab window. Want to really learn about dinosaurs? Docents and a movie will help. Many school classes visit here.

I enjoyed two meals at the Rib & Chop House on the east side of the Bluff Street-Riverside Drive interchange off I-15, then south a few seconds to 1676 South Convention Center Drive. This restaurant really finesses Eggplant Creole, Gumbo, Louisiana Jambalaya pasta, and the most tender Babyback ribs. Their menu is quite varied.

Shopping malls, Costco, and a movie complex are conveniently close together on the east side of I-15. Take St. George Boulevard east over I-15. You'll find three shopping malls south and north of the stoplight at River Road: The Shoppes at Zion Mall, the Red Cliffs Mall, and the Megaplex Theatres, which are close to Costco at 3050 E. St. George Blvd. Walmart is located at 2610 Pioneer Road.

West Side Marvels: Snow Canyon, Tuacahn Amphitheater, and Kayenta Art Village

Utah's SR 18 climbs up the west side of the highlands north of St. George. Start this exploration on SR 18 by bypassing the Snow Canyon-Red Hills Parkway exit in favor of visiting Snow Canyon State Park from north to south. The park is less than five miles long, and is a visual, geological, and hiking gobsmacker. On SR 18 after ignoring the Snow Canyon-Red Hills exit, you'll pass a development at right. Then watch for the Snow Canyon Scenic Overlook sign, and turn left (west) for a short drive to Snow Canyon's east rim. It's a unique perspective on what's to come, and there's a short rim trail north. To hike the northernmost trails of the park, continue up SR 18 and stop at the park entrance. Pay the \$15 fee for the tag you'll need along SR 18 to park at trailheads to the north, beyond the entrance. Half a mile north of the park entrance, hike the beautiful mile-

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Access to Whiterocks Mountain's Amphitheater trail is just north of the SR-18 park entrance. Carmel and Navajo sandstone comprise the mountain. ♦ Tuacahn is a famous performing arts center with a 1900-seat amphitheater, a 330-seat indoor venue, and an on-site performing-arts, college prep, charter high school. ♦ Tuacahn presents packed-house Broadway musicals, musical stars and concerts, comedians, dance performances, and seasonal events. Attendees come from every state.

long, easy-rated, Whiterocks Amphitheater trail into the heart of the Whiterocks formation. Another mile north on the right of SR 18 is the Cinder Cone trail. It has loose footings for the 1.7-mile loop that gains 449 feet to the top. Return to the park entrance for your reserved campsite (utahstateparks.reserveamerica.com/unifSearchResults). The park's only campground is small, with 30-amp service in many sites. Some older sites are only 12 feet wide. For the inconveniences, you get to wake up in awe-inspiring Snow Canyon. It's only 20 minutes to Snow Canyon from St. George, if you prefer a day trip. There are 19 trails of various lengths and degrees of difficulty in Snow Canyon. Cyclists love the main road, Whiptail Trail, and several trails in Paradise Canyon at the park's southeast end. The Lava trail, Petrified Dunes, and Johnson Canyon trails can all be done in a single-day visit. Johnson Canyon is an easy two-mile hike into a narrow, shady canyon with trees, lava flows, and a 200-foot arch. The park has 170 technical climbing routes, and horseback riding in designated areas. Photography ops are 360 degrees all day, and views change from every trail. I read that if Zion National Park weren't so close, Snow Canyon would have been a national park. You'll probably agree. Watch weather forecasts before your visit, as the beauty on a sunny day is unforgettable.

Exiting south from the park's Snow Canyon Drive, turn obliquely right onto Tuacahn Drive *before* getting to the roundabout on Snow Canyon Parkway, which is Ivins' main thoroughfare. You are entering Padre Canyon. A long, dramatic wall of abutting sandstone pillars forms the canyon's east side and guides you into Tuacahn Center for the Arts. The scope of this metropolitan-sized performing arts campus in its Old West setting is astonishing. On my arrival, a group of teenagers walked across the campus toward a school-like building carrying musical instrument cases. They were students in the Tuacahn High School for the Arts, a charter, college prep school with a 98 percent graduation rate. For hands-on experiences at the school's doorstep, imagine a 1900-seat performing arts theater with nationally-recruited professional actors that annually attracts 300,000 attendees (tuacahnhs.org/courses).

Tuacahn stages Broadway musicals with actors and dancers auditioned in Salt Lake City, Los Angeles, Las Vegas, Chicago, and New York. In 2010, Disney licensed Tuacahn to produce a stage version of *Tarzan*. It was a raging success. Now three plays a year are staged and performed in this breathtaking "Broadway in the desert." In addition to musicals, Tuacahn presents entertainers such as Willie Nelson, Jay Leno, Amy Grant, Colbie Caillat, and "Elton John's Greatest Hits-Live!" by Brody Dolyniuk. Tuacahn contributes over \$80 million to Washington County revenues annually. Season tickets for six musicals in 2021 start at \$208. Performances run May through mid-December. Sample prices: Tickets for Colbie Caillat's show on March 26 ranged from \$71 to \$293. For a list of all performances at Tuacahn in 2021, search online (tuacahn.org). The Million Dollar Quartet and *A Christmas Story* are at Tuacahn's 300-seat indoor venue.

Tuacahn is a "Build it, and they will come" story that in-

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Every detail and curve of a solidified dune is accented in this northern view from Petrified Dunes trail in Snow Canyon State Park. ♦ Several people atop a Pioneer Park Butte can see the picnic pavillion, Red Hills Drive, part of St. George, and the distant Beaver Dam Mountains.

trigued the Public Broadcasting System. In 2017, they aired an hour-and-a-half special titled *The Miracle in Padre Canyon*, which tells the whole exciting history of Tuacahn, interspersed with documentary segments about choosing, recruiting, financing, early rehearsals, costume and set-making, weather concerns, technical wonders, dress rehearsals and the first performance of *Shrek*. The play required engineering and building a 200-pound dragon operated by actor/puppeteers walking underneath it and moving parts of the dragon, while off-stage Jennifer Leigh Warren, a well-known actor and singer, sang the dragon's part. Nothing less than being at Tuacahn, or watching the PBS special, captures the excitement of Tuacahn's story (pbs.org/video/tuacahn-miracle-in-padre-canyon). Drop by and stroll Tuacahn's campus before heading west to Ivins.

Your phone or car navigation program will provide the shortest route to Kayenta Art Village and the Kayenta Center for the Arts. I bought a small encaustic painting at Juniper Sky Fine Art Gallery, where the work of many of Utah's painters, sculptors, woodworkers, jewelry- and artglass-makers are displayed in a large airy space. Next door is Gallery 873, with garden sculptures

outside, and works in metals, acrylics, watercolors, mixed media, gourd art, pottery, crystal glazes, and other media will make you look closely. Datura Gallery is known for very original jewelry, small sculptures, fused and stained glass creations, paintings, wood arts, and carved gourds. Drop by the Zia Pottery Studio co-op and talk with the potters.

Admire Mystic Canyon Light Gallery's excellent photography, stroll the village's stone labyrinth, learn about Sacred Space Spa's yoga classes, massages, facials, and energy work. Sit in one of the cozy patios at Xetava Gardens Café and be bowled over at the far-from-ordinary, scrumptious foods they serve. My lunch, the wild mushroom burger had oyster, shiitake and button mushrooms, melted dill havarti, and both slaw and cilantro avocado mash between a perfect ciabatta bun. Heavenly. The menu has salads, gluten-free and vegetarian choices, plus meat, fish, and poultry. St. George makes my head spin!

Zion National Park in a Nutshell

Although this article is fairly comprehensive, there is more of everything for visitors to enjoy here—lakes, mountains, trails, even a ghost town. The townsfolk are upbeat, courteous, and helpful. They enjoy their chosen city. Hurricane, population 17,000, is east half an hour on SR 9. It is your jumping off point to Zion National Park. The January 2016 issue has a small article on Zion. I love Zion National Park's stunning landscapes, often reflected in the Virgin River. Photographers can easily spend a week there. Zion's Pa'rus trail is a paved, multi-use 3.5 mile trail, and there are other easy, beautiful trails. Moderate trails range from 150 to 466 feet in elevation change. The rather treacherous Angels Landing trail gains 1,488 feet, and Hidden Canyon gains 850 feet. You can drive Zion Canyon between Thanksgiving and President's Day, except for late December. Other times visitors use the free shuttle. Other than Watchman Campground, which allows no generator use, the closest RV campground is Zion Canyon Campground in Springdale. It has full amenities. (435) 772-3237.

You can easily spend three weeks between enjoying the polished sandstone gem that is St. George and awe-inspiring Zion. Include them on your must-do list!

Commercial RV Parks in the St. George Area

Because St. George is such a popular wintering area, commercial RV parks often rent campsites to owners who leave their park model in St. George year around. Seasonal site availability is addressed in each description of the campgrounds at Quail Lake, Sand Hollow, and Snow Canyon State Parks.

McArthur's Temple View RV Resort, 975 S. Main Street, St. George. 260 level, unshaded spaces. This Good Sam park is big, well-equipped with full hookups, a pool and jacuzzi, billiards, shuffleboard, a fitness center, laundry, and a TV lounge. It is centrally located for easily exploring St. George—and just nine blocks from downtown. Online reviews are Very Good. Reserve

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Tiffin Owners from Florida, Kentucky, and Texas



John and Ronnie Ricks
Hometown: Lakeland, Florida

John and his wife Ronnie are new Tiffin owners, but are not new to the RV lifestyle. They recently bought a new-to-them 2013 Allegro RED. As John said, “you never buy new if you can avoid it.” Before their Tiffin, they had a Winnebago, but it was too small for travel with their grandchildren.

John thanks his aunt for instilling a love of camping in him. When he was a child, he spent a week every year camping with her in a pop-up camper. When he met Ronnie, they tent camped. “Ronnie didn’t want to get an RV,” John averred.

For years, Ronnie said no, until John said to her, “Let’s go to Colorado and rent an RV for one month. If you hate it, I will never ask again.”

“When we got back from our one-month adventure, we bought our first RV,” John smiled.

John and Ronnie have owned four RVs. John loves his Tiffin because “as big of a unit as it is, it’s so easy to drive, the steering and air-ride suspension make it handle really well.” John jokingly said, “Ronnie says I drive it like a sports car.”

Ronnie loves the RED because “it’s easy to keep things simple, and I can clean it in an hour and a half.”

John and Ronnie met on an Indian reservation. John works as a traveling E.R. doctor, and Ronnie is a retired E.R. nurse. John explained he retired for two months, but quickly decided he loved his job too much and returned to work part-time. He can now travel to hospitals in need of a doctor as he has his medical license in sixteen states.

When John is working, Ronnie keeps busy by

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Editor’s Note: Carolyn and Lee Breinich are full-timers in their 2019 Phaeton 40IH. She has a BS in zoology, Ohio State, and an MA in recreational therapy, University of Toledo. See her blogs: harleydogsrving.com and leukemiagirl.com.



Libby Pogue
Hometown: Owensboro, Kentucky

Libby Pogue, a contract nurse, makes Tiffany, a 2015 Allegro 32SA, her full-time home as she travels the U.S. working for Cerner, an international company that creates medical software used in hospitals to improve overall operation. “I usually spend three months on each assignment at a military base training medical personnel in the use of Cerner’s MHS Genesis program,” Libby said. The comprehensive software was designed to create an aggregate medical record of every person serving in all of the military branches which can be accessed by medical personnel at any base.

“No matter where a service member is treated, his or her medical records will be updated for pharmaceuticals, operations, injuries, rehabilitation, and more,” Libby explained. “While it is easy to deliver the computers and install the software, the difficult part comes with training medical personnel to enter all information correctly and completely.”

Libby was born in Owensboro, Kentucky, where she graduated from high school in 1990. After becoming a mom at 19 when Isiah was born, Libby’s goal of earning a nursing degree was put on temporary hold. Not losing her focus, she graduated from Henderson Community College in 1997 with an associate’s degree in nursing. Her daughter, Jaye, was born in 1995. With her degree, Libby went into cardiac catheterization nursing while the children were young.

She reset her goal for a Bachelor of Science in Nursing degree (BSN), graduating from the Chamberlain University College of Nursing in Illinois in 2008. By this time, Isiah was finishing high school and had earned a full scholarship to study at the University of Oklahoma. His plan was sidetracked by the discovery of a brain tumor which miraculously disappeared.

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Jim and Chris Russell
Hometown: Georgetown, Texas

Jim, Chris, and their two dogs Sasha and Pepper have been full-time RVers for five years. They have two daughters. One lives near Austin and the other near Indianapolis, although she has plans to move back to Texas soon. “It’s been nice because we see one daughter when it’s too hot in Texas and the other when it’s too cold in Indiana,” Chris says.

Jim and Chris are unsure how their daughter moving back to Texas will impact their travel. As Jim says, “we will see where God leads us.” They have already started planning for their 50th wedding anniversary family trip to Breckenridge, Colorado, and have hopes to get back to Alaska one day as well.

They started camping when their daughters were young, but stopped for a few decades as they were growing up. Eventually, Jim and Chris got back into camping and bought a travel trailer.

Jim jokingly said, “I learned very quickly I wasn’t very good at backing it up,” so they traded it in for their first Tiffin, an Allegro Open Road.

Years later, when they decided to go full-time after retirement, they realized “our Open Road was just too small” and bought a Monaco. When that one started to have problems, they decided to go back to Tiffin and bought a used 2014 Phaeton.

“We went back to Tiffin because of the quality and excellent customer service they provide in Red Bay and on the phone. We know if we have a problem, they can fix it or tell me how to,” Jim stated.

Their daughter has a fifth wheel and has a goal for her children to see every state park in Texas, so Jim and Chris often join them. As Chris says, “it’s nice to have a home wherever I am,” and Jim adds, “we enjoy spending so much time with our grandkids.” Chris said one of her favorite memories was at Caprock

Continued on page 96

Give us your best shot!



PRO LEVEL AWARDS

First Place

Patricia Hunt

A Snowy Tree Accents Ancient Sandstone

Vermillion Cliffs National Monument, Arizona

Vermillion Cliffs National Monument is 293,689 colorful acres of swooping, daunting, sublime beauty. Its southern boundary somewhat follows the northernmost part of Arizona's Highway 89A between House Rock Road (Forest Road 1065) to the west and the city limits of Page, Arizona, on Lake Powell. Silt and dunes were compressed under oceans and their own weight, then cemented by infiltrating carbonates and red iron oxide. This created an incomparable, other-worldly landscape. Patricia Hunt and three photographer friends hired a knowledgeable driver with a high clearance four-wheel drive vehicle to get them safely to the Monument's White Pocket area in late January. With snow storms approaching, they photographed for two days.

Nikon D850 camera, Nikkor 24-70mm lens at f/11, 1/200 second, ISO 400

In Hunt's photograph, everything draws attention to that stone-defying tree with its thin cloak of snow on each slender branch. Finely-ridged rock creates downward visual movement in the large red sandstone wall behind the tree. The buff-colored area left of that red sandstone curves down to several boulders ending at the tree. Your eyes also take in the rear right buff-colored cliff, softly sunlit, that drops down to patches of gold on red by the tree. The ridges in the long, darker scoop of sandstone at lower right also direct your eye to the center. Nothing distracts from the complex might of the rocks against the delicacy of the tree, and the rich colors. See other photos of the Monument online at White Pocket, Arizona.

The winners for the Spring 2021 Photo Contest



PRO LEVEL AWARDS

Second Place

Richard Kemmett

Dance of the Dock Lights

New York City from a harbor dock

Richard Kemmett's art studies in his college days influenced the decisions he made in composing this handsome black-and-white image of a foggy day in New York City. There is movement in this photo, too, created by the counterpoint of the arching row of lampposts against the varied heights and straight lines of the skyscrapers. The contrast of the lampposts against the foggy buildings creates depth on a day with no shadows. The lampposts are not in a horizontal line across the foreground. Instead, they taper down to the right, and the three

Apple iPhone XS cell phone camera set on Black & White

overlapping lamp- posts, plus the visual weight of the pilings grouped below them, create an interesting off-center focal point. This is another winner that demonstrates that the eye of the photographer, and knowledge of a cell phone's capabilities, are usually more important than an expensive DSLR camera. Although Kemmett is purchasing Photoshop Elements immediately, there's little room for improvement in this striking scene.

Give us your best shot!



VERY GOOD LEVEL AWARDS

First Place

Bob Mitchell

South Dakota Thunderstorm

Rocky Point Recreation Area, South Dakota

Bob Mitchell's moody photo of a huge storm at sunset has a painterly quality. Mitchell took the image at 8,000-acre Belle Fourche Reservoir northeast of Sturis in August 2020. The slender reflection of sunlight along the curving edge of a rain-soaked road perfectly and subtly accents the path to the focal point. The trees at right by the lake are

Samsung Galaxy A50 cell phone camera

storm-bent, and the hint of water beyond them is churning. The wide, sweeping clouds with trailing rain above and below are pure drama. This underscores the fact it is the photographer, not the camera, that makes a photo spectacular or average, as Mitchel took this on his cell phone, possibly in panorama mode. Welcome to the winner's circle!



VERY GOOD LEVEL AWARDS

Second Place

Laura Greene

Horseshoe Bend

Colorado River from west of Page, Arizona

This photo of the Colorado River circling the sandstone butte at Horseshoe Bend is a perfect moment, perfectly captured. Greene recognized the perfect moment--the reflecting water, the interesting clouds, the surrounding cliff shadows full of detail. The perfect capture isn't as easy as you might think, and Greene avoided common problems. The uneven footing around the rim edge is definitely dicey, yet you want to see over the rim to see the entire river shoreline. The cliff shadows in others' photos are often too dark on one rim, too light on the other, or

Canon EOS Rebel T4i. Lens, EF-S 10 – 18mm. Exposure, 1/200 at f/6.3, ISO 100

there are no shadows at all. Many images of Horseshoe Bend include the entire encircling ring of cliff banks, and that extra wide-angle view lessens the impact of the sandstone butte in its rare 'moat.' Greene has added depth to the view by including a small cliff up the lower left side, and enough of the rim edge at the bottom to create a frame. This was taken in February at 2 p.m., when the sun's lower arc worked in her favor. The high summer arc can create a harsh scene. All in all, this is an unusually satisfying photo of much-photographed place.



HONORABLE MENTION
Donna Osborne

Grandeur
The Arlington Hotel, Hot Springs, AR

Spiral staircases are magnets for photographers. The challenge is to have an unexpected element to break up the symmetry. It helps if the staircase is colorful or has charming details. Donna Osborne's has both. The spiral of such staircases automatically creates movement in photographs. The brighter yellow at mid-left and below the upper level also pulls your gaze around the composition. Everything conspires to point you to the little white bench at the bottom. It and the tile floor are the only elements in the image that don't curve or fan out, and the tiles without the bench would go unnoticed. Urban images are just as challenging as natural scenes. Keep looking—you'll find them.

Canon 5D Mark IV. Lens, Canon 24–105mm.
Exposure, f/8 aperture for 1.6 seconds

Commentary on Spring 2021 Entries

We had another bumper crop of contest entries to choose from for this issue. Several more could have been winners. If you haven't yet won, remember to eliminate elements that pull the viewer's eyes away from the focal point of the image. Is there something unrelated in foreground shadows? Is something out of focus that should be in focus? Could color saturation be tweaked, or the horizon straightened? Without changing the way you saw

it in person, a bit of editing can really help. No camera has the spectrum of seeing that our eyes do. And what you see when you open a photograph on your computer is usually not all that it recorded or that you saw. Sometimes all you need to do is crop too much foreground, or too much sky, and a cell phone can usually do that. Look at previous winners in the RIS Photo Contest and see what wins. It could be your photograph next time.

Parameters for Summer 2021 Photo Contest

Photograph Spring Flowers for the Summer Issue

Your spring travels may take you to places where daffodils, poppies, or apple blossoms are creating what is, for many, the most colorful season of all. A tripod may be helpful so you can use a small aperture like $f/22$ and a correspondingly slow shutter speed on a DSLR camera, so everything is sharp from the petals in front of you to the back of the orchard. With a cell phone camera you can put it in Portrait mode, which will make the foreground sharp and the background soft-focus, or leave it in normal mode for most things in focus. This photo challenge isn't about photographing bouquets from the florist, but a farmer's market with a floral section, or a few flowers by an old fence post or weathered brick and siding are fair targets. Show some of the scene or environment the flowers grow in. Flowers can be quite contrasty in bright mid-day light. Their colors can be saturated and their details well-defined on an overcast day. Be sure to minimize white skies in your picture. If you want to open flowers in Photoshop or Lightroom and go a bit wild with them, have at it! So—go out and smell the roses . . . or posies.

Submit no more than two email photos to: fred1902@gmail.

com. Photos must be 300 dpi or a minimum of 2.5 MB, and look sharp on your screen at 8 x 10 inches. Entries must be received by June 1.

Failure to include all of this information disqualifies your entry:

- ◆ Your name, address (for a possible prize check,) and email address.
- ◆ The best phone number to reach you. We often call winners for additional information.
- ◆ The photo's title.
- ◆ The photo's location.
- ◆ Your camera or cell phone's brand, model number, lens model (if relevant,) and the settings used, if you know them.

A sentence or two about the story behind the image is helpful.

Have a happy quest. We like to see new participants. You may submit an existing photo or one you previously submitted, if it meets the parameters.

Prizes: Pro level, \$100 first place, \$75 second place. Very Good level, \$50 first place, \$25 second place. Checks will be mailed in August 2021.

**RECALLS
for Winter 2021**

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 and click on “product Safety Recall” for more information.

NHTSA Recall # 19V-228, Tiffin Recall # TIF-111 Energy Management Module overheating

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, that could result in a thermal event. The Energy Management Module needs to be inspected to determine if the alternating current lines are installed correctly.

NHTSA Recall # 20V-433, Tiffin Recall # TIF-113, VIP Wiper Module Power Source Recall

Tiffin Motorhomes has decided that a defect, which relates to motor vehicle safety, exists on the following models of motorhomes: **2018, 2019 & 2020 Zephyrs and 2019 & 2020 Allegro Buses**. Tiffin Motorhomes has become aware that there is the possibility that the windshield wipers may not work on some 2018, 2019 & 2020 Zephyrs and 2019 & 2020 Allegro Buses. Tiffin Motorhomes found that some of these motorhomes have windshield wipers that are not wired to their power source correctly. If the wiring is not corrected, there is the possibility that the windshield wipers will not work when the switch is turned on. If the windshield wipers fail to turn on, that can reduce the driver’s visibility and increase the risk of a crash.

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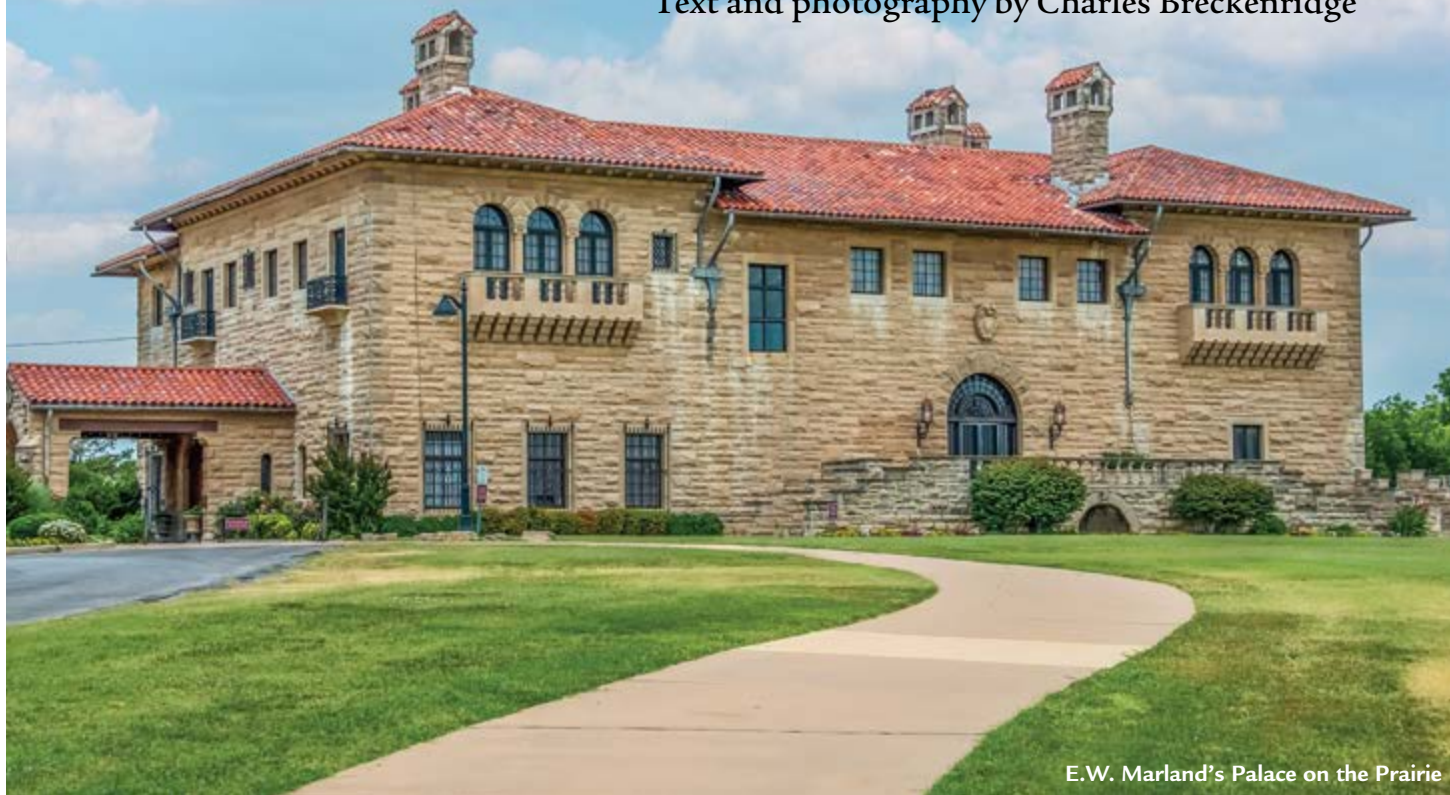
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On the Trail of the **OKLAHOMA OIL OLIGARCHS**

Text and photography by Charles Breckenridge



E.W. Marland's Palace on the Prairie

Oklahoma in the 1920s spawned oilmen

like Detroit spat out automobile manufacturers. The cars venturing down Route 66 ran on gas and oil—Detroit built the cars and the Oklahoma oil titans filled 'em up. And just like the auto brands, oil companies grew, flourished, and then some disappeared. Sinclair, Skelly and Getty were giants in their time, but

we went to Oklahoma on the trail of others, mainly the Phillips brothers and their rival, E.W. Marland. The Phillips and Marland were friendly, but bitter business rivals. Today the Phillips 66 company is a household name, but Marland may be the least-known giant of the oil and gas industry, and his mansion one of the most overlooked gems in the land.

E.W. Marland and the Palace on the Prairie

For most of us, our homes are the repository of our hopes and dreams, the place that helped mold our children, our refuge and comfort. They are special, almost sacred places, even those capable of driving 60 miles an hour down the highway. In contrast, this is the story of a spectacular home in Ponca City, Oklahoma that never delivered on its vast promise, and the shattered dreams and lives the home never fully embraced. E.W. Marland, who built the “Palace on the Prairie,” had an incredibly fascinating career.

The Pennsylvania native married Mary Virginia Collins in 1903 in Philadelphia when he was 29 and she was 27. By 1907

Marland had won and lost two fortunes, first in coal development, then in the nascent oil industry.

The Marlands, who had no children, arrived in Oklahoma in 1908. He was basically broke and armed only with ambition and a limited line of credit with a drilling equipment supplier. With the Midas touch, E.W. bought oil leases, drilled relentlessly, and was soon on his way to establishing a third fortune.

Enjoying their prosperity, Virginia was deeply concerned by the poverty of her sister, Margaret Roberts and her husband, George, who was a street peddler in Flourtown, Pennsylvania. To share their wealth, they adopted the Roberts' children in 1916. George, 19, and Lydie, 16, immediately benefited from the

Marlands' lavish lifestyle and were sent to private schools and colleges back East.

Sixteen years after the Marlands arrived in Ponca City, E.W. controlled over 10 percent of the known petroleum reserves in the world. His pipelines, refineries, a tanker, and hundreds of retail service stations supported the countless wells his various companies owned across the United States and in Mexico, Saudi Arabia, and other countries. His personal fortune was estimated at over \$100 million, the equivalent of about \$1.4 billion today. So he could well afford it when, in 1924, he met and hired John Duncan Forsyth to design their new home in Ponca City.

The architect brilliantly delivered what his client requested. A grand home on this scale requires processing of hundreds of ideas from the owner, balanced by the experience of the architect. The terrain and engineering realities introduced many compromises, as did the requirements for heating, cooling, and utilities. There's an interesting contrast with Tiffin motorhomes here.

The builders of Tiffin motorhomes balance a complicated matrix of luxury, size, and engineering to provide an unequaled range of brands that meet our various needs and budgets. E.W. had an unlimited budget and only had to satisfy one person—himself. And did he ever.

E.W.'s family came from England, and he imagined a home comparable to the majestic baronial estates that dot the English countryside. The mansion's exterior evolved into an Italian villa, using stone quarried on the estate, but the interiors could have

been replications from the English estates that he so admired.

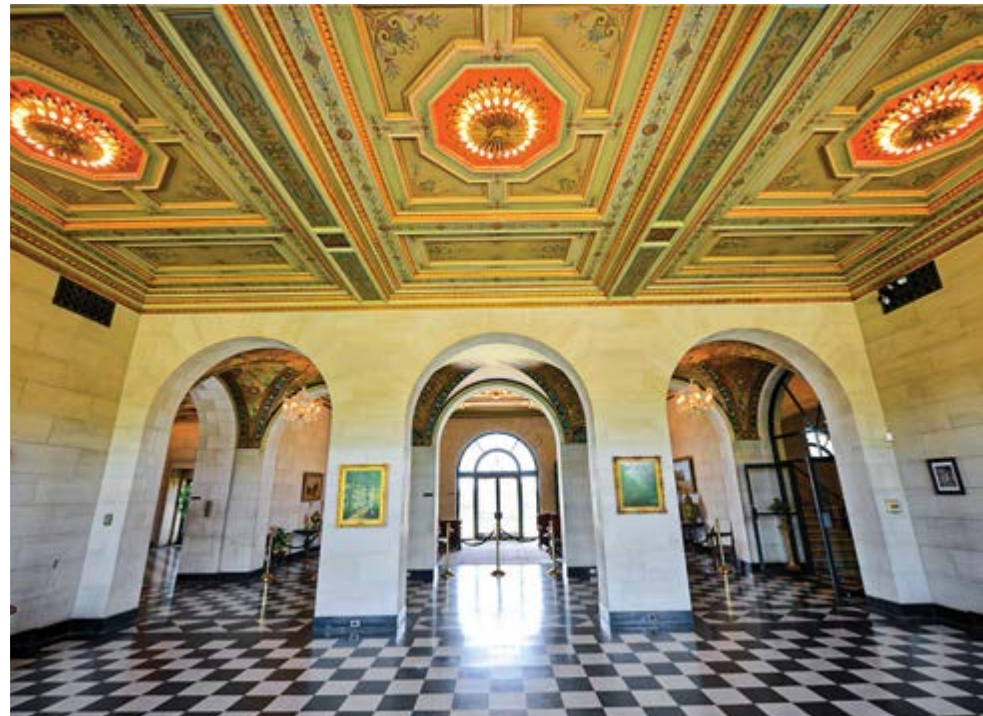
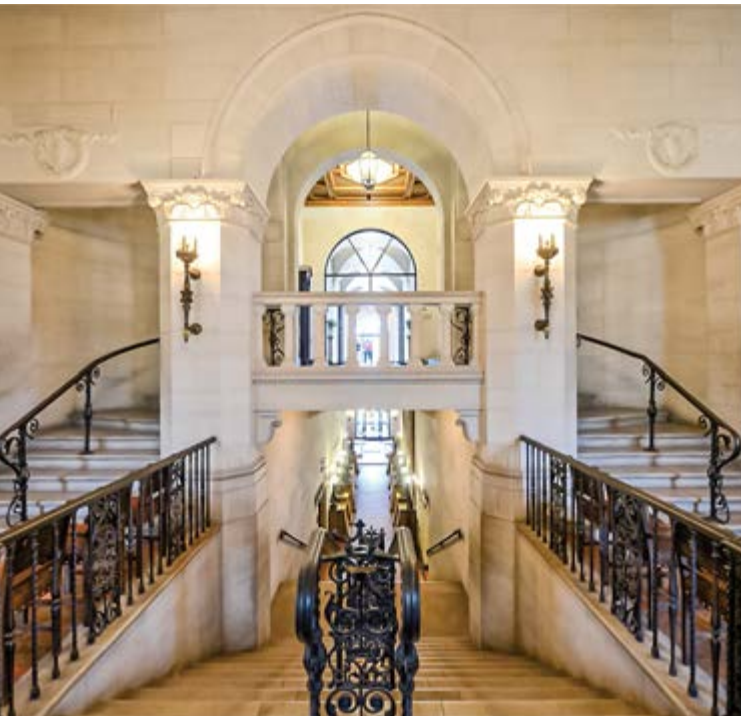
After spending 20 years fighting to become a titan of American industry, E.W. must have felt his career was reaching a pinnacle when J.P. (Jack) Morgan, Jr. arranged to meet him in New York. Did E.W. hear opportunity knocking, or was that the first domino toppling in a runaway chain of events? J.P. Morgan, Sr. had snatched up companies in the exploding U.S. economy like a glutton at a Golden Corral, and apparently his son had now spotted an entrée of his own.

Marland already owned a fabulous home in Ponca City on Grand Avenue with 22 rooms and an indoor swimming pool, but he had found a beautiful piece of property that would make a great get-away on the edge of town where he envisioned a rustic sporting retreat with horses and a small cottage. One thing led to another, as it so often does, and when construction began a year later, the plans had changed to involve lakes, islands, swimming pools, and fountains. The cottage had grown into a mansion with over an acre under roof. As the plan expanded, outbuildings included stables (for the polo ponies, hunters, and draft horses), a carriage house, a chauffeur's cottage, garages, equipment barns, and even an artist's studio for what was intended to be a series of "artists in residence." A leading candidate for the title was Jo Davidson, E.W.'s favorite sculptor.

Mr. Davidson never moved in, but he did create three statues for E.W. that we can see today: one of himself, then his son, George, and finally, his beautiful daughter, Lydie.

The Grand Entry from the porte cochere, copied from a villa that E.W. and Mary Virginia visited in Italy, has two staircases—one for couples ascending to the ballroom, the opposite for guests leaving and descending from the ballroom. The limestone used for the walls is the same as the mansion's exterior, where it has weathered to a light buff

tone. ♦ The stone walls in the Formal Ballroom are pristinely finished. A visitor will be hard-pressed to find the slightest crack or other intrusions of age anywhere in the mansion, even as it approaches its 100th anniversary. Note the vents for the air conditioning, an unusual luxury when the mansion was new and still in use today.





A magnificent entry into the adjoining room is framed by a gold-leafed ceiling by the Italian artist Margliotti. The beams in the room were taken from some of E.W.'s early drilling towers. He never forgot the



source of his wealth. ♦ Decorated for Christmas, the Inner Lounge has tiled floors, exquisite ceilings, and a huge fireplace. The door at left leads to the kitchen.

In 1926, analysts said the discovery of oil in the company's California holdings made Marland Oil the largest independent oil company in the world. But clouds swelled on the Ponca City horizon. A few months after their first meeting, Morgan persuaded E.W. to sell him a block of Marland stock instead of borrowing to finance the aggressive growth of Marland Oil. Morgan then placed his own men on the board. E.W. told friends he sensed Morgan was trying to control his company. He countered with new marketing partnerships and as new oil fields were discovered, he formed additional companies to develop them with his men in control. E.W. escaped this growing pressure by throwing himself into the work of building his estate.

The most defining characteristic of any home is its setting. Lacking mountains or forests, Marland and Forsyth gleefully ordered truckloads of trees, shrubbery, and plants from catalogues. E.W.'s existing home had eight acres of formal gardens, but his new estate had 2500 acres to be landscaped with its share of manicured gardens. Although the majority of the acreage was intended to appear natural, every acre was designed and maintained on a grand landscaping plan.

Platoons of gardeners, eighty-five in all, kept the landscaping immaculate. The three miles of roses that covered fences and walls were a favorite of Virginia Marland. Unfortunately, illness kept her largely confined to the Grand Avenue home, but she wanted the new place to provide fresh cut flowers and vegetables for their table. As her health worsened, she suggested her daughter, Lydie, substitute for her at business and social occasions that otherwise would have required her presence. Virginia finally retreated to her room, helpless to defuse a looming crisis in her home. In June 1926, she finally succumbed to years of illness. Work continued on the estate following her funeral. The mansion was E.W.'s dream, after all, not hers.

The estate today is impressive as we approach its 30 acres, even though we see only about one percent of the original 2500 acres. Photographs show what time has eroded: the pool filled in, lakes

dried up, property sold off. Several outbuildings are privately owned, but still reflect the size and scope of the original estate.

Today, the drive delivers us into a porte cochere, then to massive carved entry doors. Formerly, there was an even grander entrance from the expansive stone terraces, intended for the great parties and celebrations for which the home was designed. The entrance was seldom used, and the drive itself has disappeared. The house has been meticulously restored and maintained, and even if the grounds only hint at their former appearance, there is an unmistakable "sense of arrival" that tells us we have entered a home of great architectural importance.

As we step inside the entry, we instinctively look up to one of E.W.'s particular joys: a groined vaulted ceiling. A large Craftsman-style lamp hangs from the intricately designed vault painted by Vincent Margliotti, at the time a well-known Italian artist who came from Italy directly to Ponca City. Other ceilings are his as well, including one covered in gold leaf.

A fairy-tale castle requires a princess, and E.W. found one right under his own roof. In January 1928, with the mansion nearing completion, he announced his plans to marry Lydie Marland, his adopted daughter.

Lydie was 28, E.W. was 54, and this spectacularly unconventional, not to say inappropriate, romance scandalized the entire country. Even without the benefit of television, internet, or social media, their engagement captured the attention of the nation, and most definitely not in a good way. Headlines and stories from coast to coast were uniformly scathing, and the rejection hit the happy couple like they'd been tased. Jack Morgan suggested that E.W. reconsider. But second-guessing wasn't E.W.'s style. He had plans, big plans that required a beautiful wife, so he forged ahead.

As the mansion was being completed in early summer, E.W. and Lydie boarded his private railcar and traveled to Flourtown, Pennsylvania, where he had the documents for the adoption annulled and dated 12 years earlier. Proceeding on to New York,

the couple celebrated with an engagement party at the Plaza Hotel before returning to Ponca City. The young woman who was first his niece by marriage, and then his adopted daughter, was soon to become his wife, the second Mrs. Marland, and the “first lady” of the new Marland Mansion and Estate.

E.W. had designed the mansion with entertaining in mind on a scale unequalled anywhere in the state. He showed admirable restraint in the dining room—it seats only 20, presumably without folding tables at Thanksgiving. But he let himself go in what is described as the salon, also known as the great room, and the even larger ballroom. These rooms feature spectacular carved ceilings, stone walls and floors, and Waterford chandeliers—everything you’d have wanted when you hosted politicians, business leaders, and on rare occasions, royalty. As we look at these rooms today, it is impossible not to wonder what events E.W. intended for these grand spaces and who he thought would find their way, as we have, to Ponca City.

In June 1928, Jack Morgan forced a new management team on Marland Oil in what was essentially a hostile takeover, though the term was not used in those days. Other items like “backstabbing” and “betrayal of trust” were in vogue and they must have been used frequently in Ponca City. E.W. immediately found many of his plans dismissed by the newcomers. But he told friends that “It will all work out,” and diverted himself with the mansion, which was completed that same month.

The kitchen serving the Inner Lounge is almost casual in style. Note the beautiful tile floor design. Hidden doors lead to a small poker room and a liquor storeroom. ♦ The paneling on the walls and surrounding the fireplace in the Dining Room is made from hand-scraped pollard oak harvested from England’s Royal Forests, thanks to E.W.’s father and his acquaintances in the royal family. ♦ The studio at the mansion contains this bas relief version of the Pioneer Woman, plus a large photograph of E.W. and Lydie inspecting the statue of “Pioneer Woman” before its installation in Ponca City. Designed by Bryant Baker, the bronze sculpture of “Pioneer Woman” was dedicated on April 22, 1930.



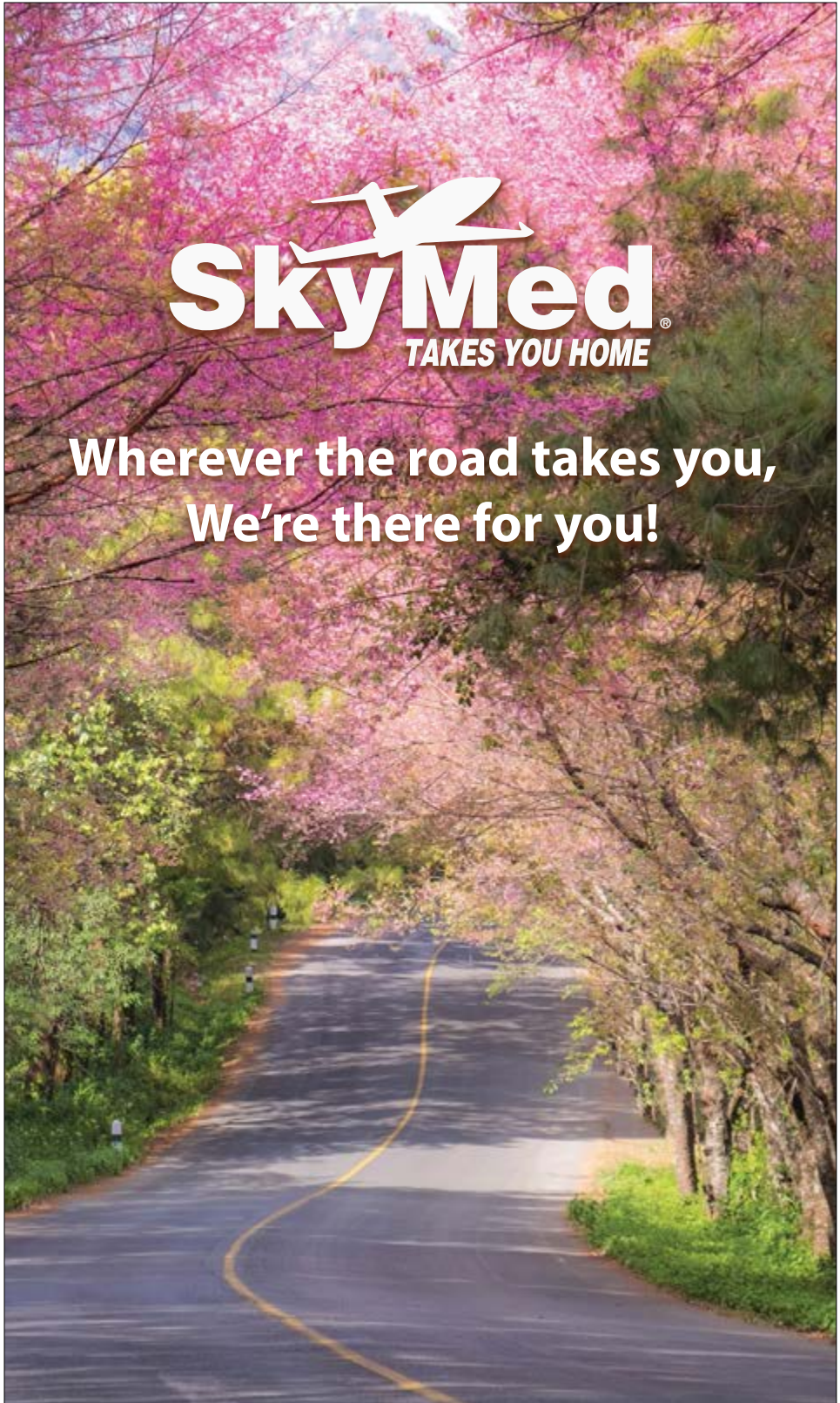


Two grand receptions were held to celebrate. For the first, the public (children included) was welcomed, so basically everyone in town could satisfy their curiosity about the project that had dominated local conversation for years. In the late afternoon, people were gently ushered out and crews swept through, cleaning and prepping for a second, dressier affair for invited guests. Oilmen and their wives, loyal Marland executives, and friends danced late into the evening. For one night, at least, the bands played and the bubbly flowed — Morgan people conspicuous by their absence.

Some of the more interesting rooms in the mansion are the casual spaces. E.W. had his architect create an “Inner Lounge,” planned to be a gathering place for his intimates when they rode to the hounds on the foxhunts he planned for the estate. The lounge came with carved ceiling beams painted to show the history of Ponca City’s Kay County, a kitchen, inglenook, and a massive fireplace. Tile floors could stand up to the hunters’ muddy boots. Like the rest of the house, the lounge is built to a grand scale, but somehow this is a place that invites you to stay. It’s easy to see people mingling here over breakfast and coffee before the hunt.

Unfortunately, dealing with a crescendo of problems, including the appetite of local coyotes for the imported foxes, took precedence over English fox hunts, and there were far too few occasions to gather here. We can see E.W. putting on a brave face, but gradually the riders disappeared,

With 55 rooms in his home where he could have enjoyed his morning coffee, E.W. chose this breakfast nook, sitting here alone with his thoughts. ♦ E.W. and Lydie lived in the four-room chauffeur’s cottage as their dreams disintegrated, just 50 yards from the mansion but separated by an unimaginable emotional gulf. ♦ In 1941, E.W. passed away in this modest bedroom of the chauffeur’s cottage. ♦ A replica of Lydie’s statue stands a few yards from the estate’s last remaining lake. She ordered the original statue destroyed before she left Ponca City, but a faithful friend gathered and buried the pieces. The restored original stands today in the foyer of the mansion.



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E.W. and Lydie four years after they married in July 1928.

the horses and hounds remained in their stables and kennels, and this beautifully crafted room was neglected.

With Jack Morgan poised to swoop down on Marland Oil like the wolf on the sheep fold, E.W. took the only logical course of action and in July 1928 married Lydie in a private ceremony hidden from the press. They took off on a six-week honeymoon across Canada in his luxurious custom railcar. The car had been built for the president of Mexico, Porfirio Díaz, before Pancho Villa dispatched him in the revolution. It had every conceivable luxury for the happy couple. Navigation was hardly a concern in a car on tracks, but it provided far fewer communications options than our Tiffins give us today. This left E.W. almost completely out of touch at this extremely critical juncture. Back home, cash began to evaporate on the Oklahoma prairie. When they returned in September, they moved into their new home, E.W.'s gift to his bride.

Lydie loved swimming in the wonderful pool off the rear terrace and canoeing in the lakes on the grounds. Inside, we see the kitchen, a marvel in that era, and the "serving kitchen," a gigantic butler's pantry where food would be placed

for delivery to the table. Rows of drawers and shelves held the linens and china. The counters and shelves are covered with Monel, a precursor to stainless steel developed for the U.S. Navy.

E.W. loved technology like the Monel and an elevator, and if it had been available, the mansion would have rivaled our Tiffins with USB ports and TVs. He even had air conditioning. AC compressor technology invented by Willis Carrier and the discovery of a safe refrigerant (Freon) in 1928 by Thomas Midgley, Jr. brought circulated air conditioning to market just in time for the architect to use it in the mansion. Interestingly, in the midst of all the splendor, a tiny nook off the kitchen is said to have been E.W.'s favorite space, where he drank coffee in solitude and gazed silently at his imperiled domain.

By late September, cash flow had completely disappeared, and the Marlands decamped from their dream palace and royal lifestyle for the chauffeur's quarters. Just months before, E.W. had owned more oil than almost anyone else in the world; now he could not afford to heat the big house. Some days Lydie drifted by herself through the mansion filled with fine furniture and art treasures, no doubt

stunned by the series of events that to this day are practically incomprehensible.

The precise details are impossible to discover, but we can imagine the biggest factors in the disaster. The price of E.W.'s stock was tied to the price of oil, now dropping like an anvil. Presumably, he was forced to pledge more and more of his stock to Morgan, until there was none left. The new companies weren't strong enough to make a difference. Then real estate values collapsed, including properties E.W. owned to protect himself from exactly the type of catastrophe that now overwhelmed him. In the end, all his defenses failed, and Lydie wandered the mansion grounds that had gone back to prairie as the unpaid staff and 85 gardeners had long since departed.

We climb the stairs to massive his and hers bedrooms, both paneled in wood with elaborate carved details, and in the master suite we see a shower with nine heads, and a steam box or sauna, one of the first in the country. E.W. and Lydie occupied their palace for a mere 60 days.

In November, just a few months before the Great Crash, E.W. resigned from Marland Oil and refused a \$100,000 lifetime salary as chairman of the board, correctly identifying the position as a "figurehead." Still, \$100,000 a year for life? In 1928? Now he had no income, but he did have problems with the Commissioner of Internal Revenue. When you've shot yourself in the foot, don't reload, but E.W. now insanely borrowed from Jack Morgan to meet his personal obligations.

The explanation for further entangling himself with one whom we would call his worst enemy probably lies in E.W.'s supreme confidence in his own abilities, as he now made plans for a new company. And why not? Everyone knew he'd made three fortunes, each larger than the last. Of course, he had also lost three fortunes, each larger than the last. Still, his friends rallied around him, but capital was hard to come by and nothing materialized. It had been almost exactly five years since E.W. had first shaken Jack Morgan's hand.

By 1931, surrounded by the Dust Bowl and a collapsed economy, the bank fore-

closed on the mansion. A friend quietly bought the note and gave the place back to Marland. E.W. and Lydie remained in the cottage while he struggled on to form a new company. He may have squandered his fortune, but he still had his dreams and now he pivoted and redirected the blast furnace of his ambition. Finally, failing to organize a new business, E.W. ran for Congress and was elected.

The freshly minted politician had crawled through coal mines and worked side by side with his men to bring in oil wells in Pennsylvania, so he was no stranger to the hard life of the working man. He'd always been extremely generous to his workers and to Ponca City as well. This lifetime of experience and his fiery new anger at bankers and "string pullers" turned E.W. into a populist and a strong supporter of President Franklin D. Roosevelt's social agenda. After E.W.'s short stint in Congress, he ran for governor in 1934. Oklahoma inaugurated him on January 15, 1935.

Lydie finally had a mansion she could really live in—the governor's mansion in Oklahoma City. She never complained about this relatively pallid substitute, but occasionally moved furnishings from Ponca City to upgrade their new home. She enjoyed great popularity as Oklahoma's First Lady, and E.W. was re-elected easily for a second term. Throughout his political career, they entertained in Okla-

homa City and in the unoccupied Ponca City mansion, certainly bittersweet occasions for the proud E.W. Toward the end, guests frequently brought their own food for potluck dinners around the great pool.

The Ponca City palace couldn't remain unoccupied forever, and in 1940, E.W., now out of office, sold his five million dollar home for \$66,000. When he died the next year in the linoleum-floored bedroom of the chauffeur's quarters, E.W.'s estate had virtually evaporated from the equivalent \$1.4 billion to one automobile, some art works, the chauffeur's cottage, and the right to use the artist's studio.

Lydie remained in the studio while the mansion changed hands, being used first as a monastery, then a school, and eventually a nunnery. Life in the shadows of scantily realized dreams must have been a particularly exquisite torture. She lived as a recluse until February 1953 when she took her purse containing \$10,000 cash, loaded her green 1948 Studebaker convertible with six framed oil paintings and other belongings, and simply drove away.

She traveled the country, sometimes living as an indigent on the street, but somehow always sending the money to pay her property taxes on the chauffeur's cottage and the artist's studio. In the summer of 1975, her remaining friends and an attorney tracked her down and coaxed her back to Ponca City where she moved back into the cottage. She was

still recognized as she emerged to walk the streets by herself or sat on the fringes of events held at the mansion. At one point during her travels she wrote a letter lamenting the "terrible waste of time, of strength, of money, of everything" and the "psychological blocks" that kept her from returning to Ponca City.

At 87, Lydie died alone on July 25, 1987. The broken statue was restored and placed in the mansion's foyer. The replica in the garden is shown on page 59.

The mansion survived and was acquired by Ponca City with the help of Conoco Oil, the identity Jack Morgan had stamped on the Marland Oil Company. Additions made by subsequent owners have been removed and the mansion appears today much as it was always intended. If you have visited other historic homes, you probably expect many rooms or even entire floors or wings to be closed to the public as owners wage rearguard actions with time, taxes, and deterioration. In contrast, all of Marland Mansion's 55 rooms are in pristine condition and open to the public. Its immaculate condition places this grand estate in the first rank of great homes we can visit throughout the U.S. because it provides a complete picture of how its owners lived here for two brief months.

When we return to our Tiffin, we look back at the mansion and the grounds for a final time. "Look upon my works and despair," said the poet Shelley. Indeed.

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On the Trail of the Oklahoma Oil Oligarchs



The Frank Phillips Mansion in Bartlesville

Frank Phillips, Phillips 66, and Wooloroc in Bartlesville, Oklahoma

We left Ponca City headed due east through the heart of the Osage Nation. Along the way, we passed through Pawhuska, home of Ree Drummond, the blogger, TV personality, and author. She has labeled herself as “The Pioneer Woman,” just like her bronze neighbor about 70 miles away. A good move, evidently, given the huge success of her riches-to-riches story.

The pleasant drive is quiet and uncrowded now, but blood once stained these rolling hills as native tribes battled for survival with early settlers, then each other and the federal government when dozens of new tribes were forced onto the same golden prairies. Oilmen fought to find their fortunes and protect them, and homesteaders struggled against the rugged weather to raise cattle and crops. The golden autumn grass today is nearly the same color as the wheat fields that often replaced them—the dispassionate land supported both.

Entering Bartlesville, Highway 60 becomes Frank Phillips Boulevard. The Phillips name is hard to escape in this town, and with good reason. Just as E.W. Marland ruled his empire from Ponca City, Frank Phillips did the same in Bartlesville.

Bartlesville is named after its founder, Jacob Bartles. Jacob produced flour from his mill on the Caney River, then added a general store and other businesses. An early entrepreneur/philanthropist, Jacob provided the settlers who followed him to Bartles Town with water and telephone systems and even electricity. Around 1880, this must have been pretty hot stuff, but in 1884, newcomers settled on the opposite side of the river and in 15 years they managed to bring the railroad to their rival town. Though Jacob tried to save the original Bartles Town, the contest went against him and his town disappeared. Oddly, his

name survived in the town on the other side of the river, even as he disappeared from the historical narrative.

Modern interest in the renamed Bartlesville is basically centered on Frank Phillips, founder, owner, president, and driving force behind the Phillips Petroleum corporation from 1905 to 1949. Native Iowans and novice oilmen, Frank and his brother, L.E., hit on their first well in 1905. They missed on the next two, but their fourth came in a gusher, and allowed them to sell stock to finance more drilling. A good idea, because the next 80 wells they drilled all struck oil in quantities sufficient for production.

Like his bitter rival but personal friend, E.W. Marland, Frank realized he needed outside capital to assure his company’s growth. But unlike Marland, when he sold stock, Phillips had the good judgment to maintain absolute control of his board and his company, always emerging victorious from countless corporate skirmishes.

The exploding wealth of the Phillips brothers, including a third, Waite, made Bartlesville a thriving community—it grew 785 percent from 1900 to 1910, then another 133 percent the following decade when Phillips 66 was founded and prospered on the huge increase in the price of oil due to World War I. Phillips’ tight control and prudent management shaped his company into what has become one of the largest in the world today. He also kept it in Bartlesville, even as operating one of the largest energy companies in the world in this fairly remote location gradually became an issue.

For years Phillips 66 kept a fleet of white Lincoln limousines which met every flight into the Tulsa airport that carried a Phillips employee or visitor coming for business with the company.

And even though the company finally bowed to the post-Jurassic monsters that roam Wall Street boardrooms and moved the corporate offices to Houston, Phillips and its affiliated companies still employ over 3000 people in Bartlesville. Ironically, Phillips' merger with Conoco in 2002 combined the descendants of Phillips and Marland Oil into one gigantic corporation.

There is a lot to see in Bartlesville, and most of the attractions relate back to the Phillips family. First on our list was Woolaroc, the one-time ranch and retreat of Frank Phillips. Use your navigation to drive to the Woolaroc Museum & Wildlife Preserve, 12 miles from town on Oklahoma SR 123. You can purchase admission at the gate: Adults, \$14; 65+, \$12; military, \$10; children 12 and under, free.

Woolaroc today spreads over 3700 acres and boasts herds of elk, longhorn cattle, and buffalo, which they say are really bison. As you watch these tranquil ruminants grazing in peace, you can imagine yourself in a quieter time. Then you're reminded that the past wasn't particularly idyllic, especially in this part of the country, when you enter the museum and study one of the best collections of Colt firearms in the world. The excellent collection of Western and Native American art also exhibits many scenes of struggle and the violence once common to the area.

After visiting Frank Phillips' ranch, we took a look at his home in Bartlesville at 1107 Cherokee Ave. It's almost modest in comparison to his brother Waite's home in Tulsa, or E.W. Marland's in Ponca City. Although it is imposing, it somehow manages to fit in with its neighbors, even with 26 rooms and an oversized lot. The home was built in 1909 after the Phillips oil business had taken off, then later remodeled and improved several times. Air conditioning wasn't added until 1938, and you get the impression that for all his wealth, Frank Phillips kept his eye on the ball and spent his time making money, not spending it. The house and its original family furnishings give a real sense of how home life must have been in the first half of the 1900s, at least for your basic, down-to-earth, Midwestern multi-millionaire.

You will see the home on a guided tour, \$7.50 for adults, with discounts for seniors and children; military with ID, free. Call for reservations: (918) 336-2491. Hours: Wed-Sat, 9:30-4:30. Tours: Wed-Fri at 10, 11, 2, 3 & 4. On Sat. at the 1 p.m. tour. But we saved the best in Bartlesville for last—it's a building that is literally one of a kind. Harold Price owned a welding company in Bartlesville and was naturally involved in the energy business with, who else, Phillips. He and his firm developed several significant advances in oil pipeline construction, with the result that in the mid-1950s, the very prosperous Price company needed a larger building for their expanding operations. And what better way to display your success than to have your office designed by the internationally renowned architect, Frank Lloyd Wright? So Wright was engaged and given Price's requirements—a three- or four-story building large enough to consolidate all company operations and leave room for more of the growth they expected to enjoy.

Mr. Wright, known as much for his ego as his talent, came back with his unique interpretation of Price's ideas. He pre-



The grounds surrounding the entrance to Woolaroc are quite impressive. Frank Phillips admired the resourcefulness of Native Americans and honored them with statuary in the park. ♦ The museum has a large display of firearms including several editions of the Colt 45, which are credited with helping to “win the West,” and the Gatlin-style machine gun. ♦ Wildlife at Woolaroc include bison, elk, and Barbary sheep.



Harold Price, whose success in oil pipeline construction prompted the need for a four-story office building, asked Frank Lloyd Wright to design the building. When Wright came back with plans for a 19-story skyscraper, the media publicity had created a public acceptance for the building that Price could not refuse.

sented the Price family with plans for a 19-story skyscraper designed around an all-new, unproven technology and fitted with copper ornamentation and exterior fire stairwells. A shame no iPhones recorded the reaction of the stunned pipeline builder when those drawings were plopped on the Bartlesville conference room table.

Wright had dusted off plans he'd originally drawn in the 1920s for a New York City cluster of buildings that (obviously) were never built. But put it in Bartlesville? Why not? The Prices could rent out the extra space and the whole thing would pay for itself. Say it fast and it almost sounds believable.

You don't have to tell a country boy from Oklahoma what bull manure smells like, but what choices did Price really have? By now everybody from Kansas City to Oklahoma City knew the great Frank Lloyd Wright was designing his building. So today the only Frank Lloyd Wright skyscraper in the entire known world stands proudly in Bartlesville, Oklahoma, population 36,491. And you can see it for free—at a distance.

The result really is impressive, even a hundred years after the plans were originally drawn. The Price Tower at 510 Dewey Av-

enue stands a few blocks from the center of town. A park on one side creates a nicely balanced setting for this very significant structure. Wright built the tower around a center core that supports the floors and supplies all the utilities and elevators, a style of construction now common, but at the time highly innovative. The copper ornamentation has weathered to a striking, rich green that very nicely sets off the Tower's buff concrete elements.

But the devil is in the details, and he makes his presence known here and there in the building. The elevators, for one thing. There are elevators for the business users and separate ones for residents, resulting in too many devices clustered around the center of each floor. And Mr. Wright failed to anticipate our cultural trend towards lavish spa-like bathrooms. When you enter the bathroom in the apartments, the door collides with the toilet, and after you force your way in, you find the single sink has all the elbow room you might find on its counterpart in the space shuttle.

You put up with a certain amount of inconvenience to live in a Frank Lloyd Wright residence, but at least you have the view from your lofty nest. Or would, if the windows had ever been washed. The striking copper fins on the building's exterior effectively block off the sun they were designed to shade, and, as a bonus, make the windows virtually impossible to clean. And the building is shaped like an elongated parallelogram, so every office or apartment copes with sharp, unusable corners and long walls with odd angles. Like in the Kalita Humphries Theater in Dallas, it was a conceit of Wright that no right angles were used in the tower.

Actually, the Price family very much enjoyed the Tower, and Wright designed homes for the family in Arizona and in Bartlesville, which means our little Bartlesville has as many Frank Lloyd Wright buildings and homes as the Dallas-Fort Worth Metroplex, with its population nearing eight million. So there.

Tours of the tower are available and the Inn at Price Tower operates nineteen lofts, so you can actually spend the night in the building and even dine at the 15th floor Copper Restaurant + Bar to complete your experience. At publication date, the gallery and museum were closed for renovations. Days/hour for tours and table reservations are Wed-Sat, 11-9; Sun, 9-3. Visit price-tower.org or call (918) 336-1000 for information and reservations for both. Three tours are offered at \$15, \$20, or \$25.

Price Tower is now a National Historic Landmark, a U.S. Department of the Interior title which recognizes the significance of a structure, but unfortunately has no legal weight to protect it from alteration or demolition. We can only hope that it will long continue to scrape the Oklahoma sky and generations to come can visit this *sui generis* landmark standing tall.

The grassy amphitheater of the next-door Bartlesville Community Center shows the Tower to great advantage. But you'll want to look closer. The Inn can be booked at the same website.

If you have more time, you may enjoy visiting the Phillips Museum at 410 Keeler Avenue which addresses the development of the oil industry (phillips66museum.com), and the Bartlesville History Museum at 410 S. Johnstone Avenue (bartlesvillehistory.com).

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On the Trail of the Oklahoma Oil Oligarchs



Villa Philbrook, Waite and Genevieve Phillips' home in Tulsa

Waite Phillips, Villa Philbrook, and the Philbrook Museum of Art

Waite Phillips, Frank's brother, chafed under Frank's leadership, so he resigned from the family company in 1914 and soon had built both a new oil company and a second family fortune of his own. He worked, and worked his men, six days a week, then kicked back on Sundays to plan meetings where he charted new properties to lease.

Waite had spent years in the oil patch washing dishes, lumberjacking, and working virtually every job, no matter how menial. As a teenager and young man, this schedule became normal, but eventually the charm faded and he accepted an offer to sell his company for \$25 million dollars in 1925.

Now with a personal bankroll of over \$40 million, a vast fortune equal to almost \$600 million today, Waite once again created an empire, this time in banking. Two years later, in 1927 he hired Edward Buehler Delk, who had designed Kansas City's Country Club Plaza, to design a home for the banker/oilman in Tulsa. The result was the Italian Renaissance styled **Villa Philbrook**, built on 25 acres just outside the city. Marland built his Ponca City home of 55 rooms on a 2600-acre estate. Phillips' 72-room palace has spectacular gardens and landscaping modeled after the Villa Lante north of Rome, and he beat Marland to completion by about a year. And don't think they weren't competing.

These guys craved action on a level that may not exist today outside of an Israeli-Iraqi no-holds-barred wrestling match. Owning a sports franchise? The NFL might have interested them, in the way a church bingo gala might. These wildcatters fought each other over real stuff: oil fields, pipelines, customers, and they gave their fights no more thought than a dog wagging its tail. The competition never ended—tens of thousands of dollars and even

oil leases could change hands in their poker games. Elaborate parties, their homes, of course, even office buildings, and fortunately for Oklahoma, philanthropy—all were objects of a universal game of one-upmanship. Brother, friend, or enemy, the opponent really made little difference, the contest was everything.

In 1938, Waite's children were grown and no longer needed 25 acres to play hide and seek, so he and his wife Genevieve built a penthouse suite over his Philcade office building downtown and donated Villa Philbrook to the city to create a world-class art museum. About the same time Waite gave his 127,000-acre New Mexico ranch, Philmont (notice a theme here?), to the Boy Scouts of America, and threw in an office building to support the ranch.



PHOTOGRAPHY BY HRAG VARTANIAN



We visited the **Philbrook Museum of Art** on a sunny afternoon and were lucky enough to get in without reservations, since the museum was limiting attendance to combat Covid exposure. We spent a lot of our time outside in the Villa Philbrook/Lante grounds, highlighted by several gorgeous acres that step down from the rear of the original home to a pool and gazebo. As you will discover, Philbrook is still in a residential district (a really, really nice one) so the neighbors enjoy this view from their own, only slightly less impressive patios.

The museum has strong collections of Italian Renaissance paintings and sculpture; Native American pottery, basketry, and costumes; African and Asian works; and European, Modern, and Contemporary art. A benefit of the attendance restriction is that you can imagine yourself a guest of Waite and Genevieve and

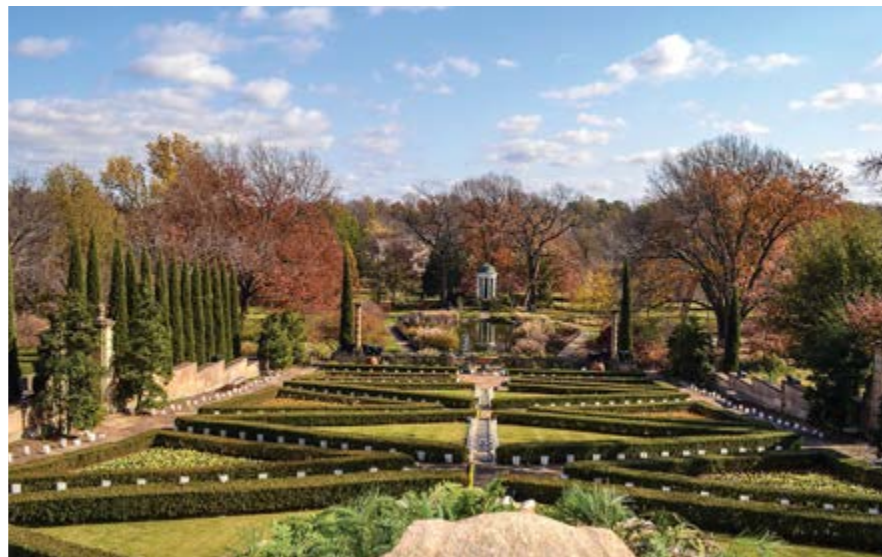
stroll from room to tranquil room practically on your own. It's a wonderful experience. You meander through the original home enjoying its treasures and appreciating the building itself, then return to the entrance under the rotunda. This is a new space, and on the opposite side from the museum it contains an expanded museum shop, a museum school, a restaurant, a small conference center, a gallery for unique exhibitions, and other special event spaces.

It's difficult to add 72,000 square feet to a home, as they did here in 1990, and make the changes unobtrusive. That this massive addition blends in so well is a tribute both to its architect and Delk's graceful design of the original Philbrook. Free parking is provided in front of the addition, walled off from the street, and management advises that buses and RVs can park on the street. Great idea, if you're a professional driver and can parallel park a 40-foot coach. The neighborhood streets are narrow and filled with landscaping crews and SUVs. Your navigation program should display a skull and crossbones if you have even the slightest intention of bringing your RV here. 2727 S. Rockford Road, Tulsa 74114. (918) 748-5300. Hours 9-5 Wed-Sun, 9-9 Fri. Adm: \$12 adults; \$10 veterans and seniors.

Counter clockwise from bottom left: Philbrook offers a fine collection of Native American pottery and basketry. ♦ Two corridors in the home exhibit portrait paintings as well as large landscapes. ♦ The terraced garden at the rear of the home invites visitors to enjoy a walk. The 72,000 sq. ft. addition is at the left of the garden in this picture. ♦ Mecca Coffee was one of our favorite places on the trip for trying new drinks and delicacies. ♦ Lambrusco's deli and desserts are peerless.



PHOTOGRAPHY BY HRAG VARTANIAN



Visitors traveling in motorhomes were not anticipated. Although street parking is free, the narrow avenues are twisting and busy with neighborhood traffic. Leave your Tiffin at your campground and explore the museum and the rest that Tulsa offers in your towed vehicle. Another must destination is **Lambrusco'z**, not for the red Italian wine the name implies, because they don't sell alcohol, but for their wonderful deli and take-out foods. Sandwiches, of course, and lunch plates, but a very nice cheese selection and frozen dishes perfect for travelers equipped with a microwave or convection oven. Lambrusco'z also has lots of gift ideas, snacks, and desserts. Whatever you can imagine to fuel your next few hundred miles, you'll find it here (1344 E. 41st St. M-F, 11-6; Sat., 10-6).


If you arrived in your motorhome, it's possible you may find parking across the street in a large lot adjacent to Whole Foods store. While you are visiting Lambrusco'z deli, don't miss the **Mecca Coffee Shop** a few doors down. Mecca Coffee has bushels of a great variety of coffees and teas for sale in bulk and serves them in their attached coffee shop, too. My significant other reported that her latte was beyond reproach. I had a wonderful iced tea brewed with Mecca's English Breakfast blend. Amazing flavor for my taste buds that have been sadly conditioned to the usual lowest common denominator in fast food iced tea.

Mecca, whose sign claims over a hundred years of slaking Tuslan thirsts, has a large store with cookware and other items adjoining the coffee shop. This store can easily add a half hour to

your journey if you don't exert the strictest discipline on all members of your traveling party. Distracted by my English Breakfast blend, I failed to do so. Living full time in our Phaeton should have eliminated shopping from our list of pastimes. If a new pan comes aboard, by necessity, an existing one has to walk the plank. But my soul mate claims an exemption from this rule for gifts bought for others. So, bags from Lambrusco'z, yummy and good, while those from Mecca came aboard with a wink and a nod.

Now freshly provisioned to continue our journey, we reflected on what we discovered in Oklahoma as we navigated the Interstate. The gentle, but inescapable hand of time has dimmed the triumphs even as it softened the tragedies: Marland's fall from grace, Frank Phillips' giant company, Waite Phillips' beautiful home turned museum, and the extra-terrestrial Price Tower standing where genius and eccentricity intersect.

Marland and Phillips spent a good portion of their lives fighting each other over leases, customers, pipeline routes, and anything else that came to mind. But in some weird, cosmic synchronicity, their companies both left the Oklahoma prairie, found each other in Houston and are married today in a single giant conglomerate. Phillips did not live to see his empire mature. "By time's fell hand defaced," as Shakespeare said; but somewhere, both he and Marland must look on in amusement at this unlikely conclusion to their long rivalry.

So, Oklahoma! From whatever direction, for the attractions we didn't see, or just to drive old Route 66 — we'll be back. 



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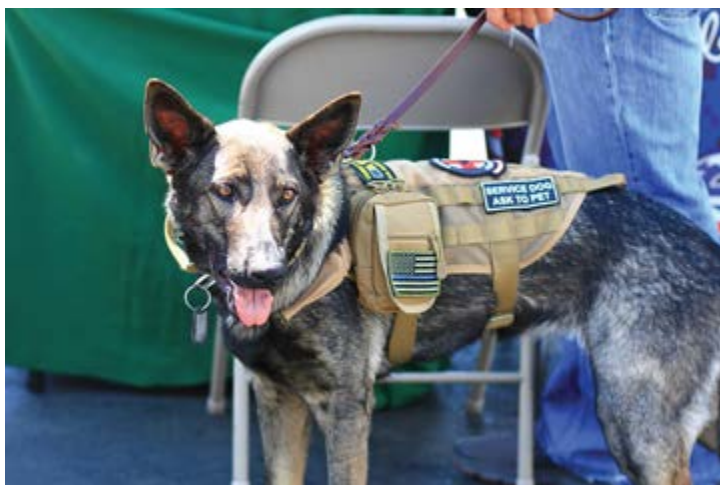
Update on Traveling with Service Animals

by Dr. John Pilarczyk

Now that the vaccine for Covid-19 has become available to us, people are ready to start traveling. Most of us will be making our trips by car or in an RV, which may be safer for now. However, as other countries begin to open up, we may be thinking of trips overseas using the airlines for transportation.

The airlines have adopted new rules governing service animals that travel with passengers. Some of the new rules were influenced by the American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA). The U.S. Department of Transportation announced the final ruling in December 2020 that amends regulations on traveling with service animals under the Air Carrier Access Act.

The amended rules define a service animal as a dog that is trained to do work or perform tasks that benefit a person with a



disability. The regulations no longer consider an emotional support dog as a service animal.

Some of the airlines already banning emotional support animals include American Airlines, Delta Airlines, Jet Blue, Frontier, Spirit, and United Airlines. They allow only trained service dogs to travel in the cabin. Pet owners who want to travel with their pets will need to pay a fee, and the pet will have to travel in the cargo hold or in a kennel under the owner's chair.

Under the new rules, the U.S. airlines are no longer required to accommodate emotional support animals. These animals have very little training if any at all, and often pose a threat to the airline staff and other passengers. The AVMA advised that

emotional support animals are not trained in specific environments and may even pose a threat to owners themselves.

In addition, airlines must now require people with disabilities traveling with a service animal to complete a form that attests to the training and good behavior of their animal, and verify that it is in good health. All service animals traveling in the cabin must be up-to-date on the rabies vaccine.

Other provisions of the revised Air Carrier Access Act include:

- ♦ Airlines may limit the number of service animals traveling with a single passenger with a disability to two service animals.
- ♦ Airlines may require service animals to be harnessed, leashed, or tethered at all times in the airport and on the plane.
- ♦ Airlines are allowed to refuse service animals that exhibit aggressive behavior or pose a threat to the safety of others.
- ♦ The new regulation prohibits airlines from refusing to transport a service animal based on its breed.
- ♦ The airlines are required to treat psychiatric service animals the same as other service animals.

As you can see, there have been several changes in the rules, and more documentation and clarification is provided as to what is indeed a true service animal. I don't think we will miss sitting next to the occasional peacock, pig, or monkey in our cabin.

Traveling during the Covid pandemic has been challenging. We are all ready to start our nomadic wandering, but even as we are vaccinated, we still need to be careful as we venture out. Many have asked if you can catch the Covid virus from your pet. The answer so far is "no." The problem is that humans can pass it on to their pet. I have read several articles that document pets catching the virus from their owner, and other articles reporting that a gorilla, tiger, and various other mammals have caught the virus. I have not come across any indication that it is passed from pets to humans.

If you are testing positive for Covid-19 or have symptoms of the virus, it is recommended that you avoid your pet and do not handle them. It would be best to have another person care for your pet until you are well. This is often not practical, but do avoid touching your pet and wear a mask around them.

Hopefully, this pandemic will get under control and we all can get back to what we love to do and that is travel!!

Happy travels and stay safe,
John & Kay

Making Customer Service a Top Priority

LEACH CAMPER SALES at LINCOLN, NEBRASKA



Text and photography by Fred Thompson

IMAGE COURTESY OF LEACH CAMPER SALES

“If we sell someone an RV who has a problem with it later, then we are in it with them,” Pat Leach, president and CEO of Leach Camper Sales of Lincoln, said as he began to describe his company and his business philosophy. “RV buyers don’t buy from dealers just because they have Taj Mahal buildings. The smart RVer buys from a dealer who has the service center that’s committed to taking care of his coach or towable. There was a time when a good handyman could repair almost anything on his 20-foot camper or his towable. But not any more.

“We tell every customer, ‘You *will* need service. These are complicated machines. Get comfortable with your dealer and trust who you buy from because you will need support,’” Pat empha-

Editor’s Note: We want our readers to get to know Pat Leach, his managers, and talented staff by letting them speak through the interviews I had the pleasure of doing in late March.

sized. “I provide a cell phone to all of our sales people and they leave it on all the time, even through the weekend to be available to our owners who have a problem at night or during a weekend. We don’t want you to get stuck somewhere with a problem with no available assistance. That’s just who we are.”

Pat’s father opened an RV sales and service business in Council Bluffs, Iowa in 1965. His sons, Edward and Patrick, were in their early twenties and immediately joined their dad in the business.

“In 1971 Dad opened a second store here in Lincoln, but his entrepreneurship led him to a new business in manufacturing RVs,” Pat explained. “Ed and I bought the Council Bluffs and Lincoln stores from Dad in 1974 and continued to operate them as a single corporate entity, with me managing the store in Lincoln and Ed running the store in Council Bluffs.”

Pat doubled the size of his sales lot in 1989 to six acres, and then doubled it again in 2001 when he had the chance to buy the

six acres directly behind him. But the second expansion came with a problem—the land was a flood plain.

“I have been a member of a Spader 20 Group for 30 years,” Pat related. “Even though it was not my year to host the annual meeting, I called Duane Spader – Spader Management and asked if I could host the 2001 meeting here at my company in Lincoln. I wanted to make the other 19 members of my group a temporary ‘board of directors’ to advise me on how to develop my newly acquired six-acre flood plain.”

After analyzing the cost of raising the flood plain four feet by hauling dirt, packing, and paving it, the group agreed unanimously that the additional acreage would allow Pat to nearly triple his inventory and likely double his sales within three years. Now with 11.7 acres that make it possible to keep 450 units in inventory, the company’s 12-member sales team, headed by 22-year veteran Tyler Seite, expect to deliver a thousand units in 2021 which breaks down to 80 percent towable and 20 percent motorized.

Pat related an amusing story about the company’s supportive sales team. “One lady told Corey Clark, ‘I could buy this same coach from your competitor for \$2,000 less than you have priced it to me.’ Corey replied, ‘Ma’am, if I’m not worth \$2,000 to you, then you should go ahead and buy it from them.’ She bought the coach from Corey, and now she brings him a box of treats every year at Christmas to say ‘thanks’ for all the help he has been to her through the years.

“We are a fairly small dealership with 50 employees,” Pat continued, “but when you take into account the knowledge base we have, based on the years of service of our management employees, we are a pretty amazing company. When I added up the years of service of our managers in service, sales, parts, warranty, shipping/receiving, comptroller, and F&I, we can collectively boast nearly 200 years of experience. And I am not counting myself

with 56 years of service in this business.

“We are big on promoting from within our own ranks. Mike Love, one of our top salesmen, will be moving to F&I to join Tyson Alegria,” Pat noted. “With our successful year in 2020 and looking forward to increased sales in 2021, we needed the extra office in F&I to take care of our new owners expeditiously.

“When Covid first hit, no one knew what would happen. After the news media last April began talking about how traveling in a motorhome or travel trailer was the safest way to still take a vacation, 2020 became our record year and we almost ran out of inventory by early December,” Pat related. “Right now, 2021 is starting off ahead of 2020.”

Pat Leach has a four-point philosophy about running his business. (1) Never take a lot out of your company. (“I don’t

live high on the hog.”) Leave the profits in the company for future development and a rainy day. (2) Stand behind what you sell. (3) Make it a top priority to hire good people and then provide the training and assistance they need as they grow. (4) When you have the good fortune to have good people working in your company, do everything possible to hold on to them.

“I first became a Tiffin dealer in the mid-seventies,” Pat recalled. “Because too many manufacturers were flooding the market, we reduced our suppliers to three companies that had a broader array of RVs than Tiffin was offering at that time. In 2008 two couples came in that were good customers and asked me to order two Tiffin coaches for them since they wanted to stay with our dealership and the service we provide. I could have ordered them through



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Management Team

From left: Tyler Seite, sales manager; Lisa Barrett Miller, comptroller; Pat Leach, president/owner; Dave Berger, service manager; Rod Essman, parts manager.

an existing Tiffin dealer and resold them here, but I called Bob Tiffin and explained my situation. He said, ‘Pat, I am going to send you the two coaches you need and let you rejoin our family of Tiffin dealers. We need a good dealer in your area.’”

“I counted that situation a stroke of good fortune,” Pat continued. “Within a few days, Jack Elliott arrived driving a 2008 Phaeton. And another one arrived soon after. Tiffin Motorhomes stayed solid during the Great Recession while two of our other manufacturers shut down and closed.”

Ed and Pat were partners until five years ago when they saw the need to do succession planning. Ed now owns the Council Bluffs store and Pat owns the Lincoln store.

Pat earned an A.A. degree in business administration from McCook Commu-

nity College where he played on both the football and basketball teams, and followed with six years of service in the Army and Army Reserves. “I have continued to play in the recreational basketball leagues ever since I went into business. For the last 25 years, I have played in the National Senior Games (nsga.com). Each state has senior recreational leagues (usually ages 50+) for all sports. The interleague competition is arranged in age brackets (76–79 for me). Then every two years the state champions in each sport go to the National Senior Games. The national games over the last few years were played on the LSU and Stanford University campuses, and in major stadiums in Houston, Pittsburg, and Albuquerque (we won the gold in Albuquerque in 2019). Usually we place third to sixth nationally.”

Tyler Seite, sales manager, has been

with Leach Camper Sales for 22 years. “My Dad was the service manager here while I was in high school,” Tyler began. “I have always been larger than most of my peers, so it was not difficult to work in construction during my last two summers in high school. The summer I was 17 turned into the rainy season here in southeastern Nebraska and construction came to a halt. Pat hired me to wash RVs and follow up with detailing.

“I began gathering the literature about the towable and motorized RVs in the showroom and learning as much as possible about every brand,” Tyler continued. “When we did a show over a weekend that fall, we had a lot of pop-up campers in stock. The sales team didn’t want to spend much time on selling them because the commission was so low on units that were selling for \$4,000. Pat told me he would pay me \$100 for every unit I sold that weekend. I sold 12 pop-ups and I was hooked on selling!”

After finishing high school that year, Tyler joined the sales team and for the next 11 years often led the team in total sales. When he was 28 he became the company’s sales manager.

“We have a great sales team with 10 full time sales people, one internet salesman, and myself,” Tyler explained. “Ninety percent of our sales staff have been here for 15+ years. We depend on factory training and emphasize product knowledge. Frank Wzywany, our Tiffin sales representative (see rismag.org, January 2016, p. 58), spends several days here each year to do product training. Each year we schedule several team members for a trip to Red Bay. We have general meetings to share product knowledge. Each sales person focuses on an RVers camping style, frequency of use, and the price point they want.”

Leach Camper Sales during “normal” times maintains an inventory of eight Tiffin coaches. “Like the entire industry, we



are dealing with the stress of low inventories caused by parts suppliers to RV manufacturers trying to catch up following weeks of being closed during the height of the pandemic,” Tyler noted.

He related an interesting buyer preference in the Nebraska market. “Tiffin buyers come in well-educated on the product and they usually know what they are looking for. We sell more diesels than gas. Diesels are a big thing here in our agricultural economy. Farmers put a lot of trust in diesels because of dependability. We frequently sell to owners of large farms and they are believers in buying from local dealers, because better than anyone they understand how important service is when you need it.”

Three of Leach’s sales team specialize in Tiffin coaches and help everyone else with product knowledge and information when they have a customer who is interested in a Tiffin coach.

“When you buy a Tiffin coach from this dealership, it is and should be a long-term, organic relationship that grows each year as we build the owner’s confidence in our company with the service and support we provide,” Tyler said. “A high percentage of our owners have bought three or more coaches from us.”

Leach Camper Sales takes a very proactive approach to building strong relationships with the RVers who buy coaches from them. “Pat provided cell phones to our sales staff when they first became practical 15 years ago,” Tyler said. “Our owners can always reach out to the sales person who sold them their coaches. The person who sells a Tiffin coach will be the person who provides the customer training. Tiffin is our premier product. All of our Tiffin sales specialists have studied the assembling of the coaches on the production line in Red Bay and continually add to their knowledge of the TMH brands. We treat selling a Tiffin motorhome like selling real estate. There are a lot of layers to it, especially when the customer decides to personalize his/her coach and place a custom order.

“We are first a *servicing dealership*,” Tyler emphasized. “No corporate gimmicks,

just honest hometown service. We are hands-on from the time an RVer comes in for the first time. We do our best to treat our customers in such a way that they will want to come back.”

As a company owner who enjoys traveling and camping in a motorhome, Pat Leach also encourages his employees, and especially his sales staff, to check out a pre-owned towable or motorhome in order to walk-the-walk and talk-the-talk

with their customers. JR Dean does just that since he came from an automotive background and had not been a camper before accepting the sales position at Leach. “I spent 29 years in sales at the Lincoln-Mercury dealership before Ford discontinued the Mercury in its lineup. I have been here at Leach for 11 years. Selling towables and motorhomes is a lot more fun than selling cars. Leach Camper Sales is like a big toy store. People come



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Sales & Finance Team

Standing l-to-r: Chris Rubeiz; Tyler Seite, sales manager; Mike Love, finance & insurance; Doug Westerberg; Tyson Alegria, finance & insurance manager; JR Dean.

Kneeling l-to-r: Joe Kuchta; Ron Carlson; Brian Hancock; Brent Collier; Corey Clark; Art Boy, orientation.

Service Admin Team

Standing l-to-r: Dave Berger, service manager; Stephanie Chichinsky; Elizabeth O'Connor; Toby Bowman.

Kneeling l-to-r: Amy Luzum, Joey Thompson.

Service Techs

Standing l-to-r: Mike Joens, Rich Weers, David Hegr, Aaron Williamson, Eric Louderback-Duschene.

Kneeling l-to-r: Russ Fletcher, Chad Kinney, Chuck Berens, James McMillan, Curt Yager.



to this store happy and looking forward to getting a unit that will make camping a really nice experience. I use one of our pre-owned coaches and go camping as often as possible. The experiences have increased my knowledge and it is now a lot easier for me to empathize and talk about camping with my customers.”

Mike Love, a 16-year veteran in sales, can turn up the enthusiasm about Tiffin motorhomes in a few seconds after a conversation begins about the company and its coaches. “The #1 thing that makes it easy to sell Tiffin motorhomes is that owners can talk to Bob Tiffin, the president and CEO of the company,” Mike said. “When sales people visit the Tiffin plant in Red Bay, he makes it a point to meet with them before they leave to assure them how crucial they are in the process of selling and successfully delivering a motorhome to an owner, including orientation and future support. He gave his cell phone number to my group and asked us to call him whenever we have a question or problem that he can help solve. With that example, I give my cell phone number to every new owner to whom I have sold a coach.”

Mike went on to mention the outstanding points in Tiffin coaches that make them so easy to sell: full body paint on all of the brands, porcelain tile floors, multiplex wiring throughout the coach

that makes it so much easier for techs to troubleshoot and work on it, beautiful fit and finish in the cabinetry and trim.

Mike served four years of active duty in the Marines and another five years in the Reserves. After retiring from a 30-year career as a firefighter, he began his career with Leach Camper Sales. "It has been a pleasure to work here, sell Tiffin coaches, and train new owners to drive and use them," Mike said.

"Building new networks of friends to whom I have sold motorhomes has turned out to be an unexpected asset of my career," Mike said. "Kim and Jill Wolfe are two service-minded people who started Platte County Ambulance Company with a used ambulance."

The Wolfes did not go after the 911 business, but provided special ambulance service between hospitals and van service for elderly and disabled patients to keep appointments. Their company became Midwest Medical Transport Company and soon grew to include Midwest Med-

Air, a medical helicopter service. They expanded their services to counties wherever they were asked to come, which eventually transformed into the state's largest ambulance company.

Kim learned about Leach Camper Sales, met Mike on a visit to the company, and eventually purchased an Allegro Bus. When the Bus needs service, Kim flies his personal helicopter to Lincoln from his home in Columbus, picks up Mike, and takes him back to Columbus. Mike drives the Bus to Lincoln, oversees the service, and returns it to Columbus. Kim then flies him back to Lincoln—a fun way to get in a visit and share the latest information with Kim about Leach and Tiffin Motorhomes.

The Wolfes are major Cornhusker fans with a box on the 50-yard line. Their friendship with Mike has led to several invitations to watch the games from the box. On one occasion, Kim entertained three Heisman Trophy winners in the box whom Mike had the pleasure of meet-

ing: Johnny Rodgers (1972), Mike Rozier (1983), and Eric Crouch (2001).

In January of this year, Dave Berger completed 36 years of service at Leach. "I was born and raised here in Lincoln," Dave began. "In December 1984, after completing two years of study at Wesleyan University, I had not been able to declare a major. I decided to take a year off and work. I began washing and detailing RVs in January 1985 and never left. With good mechanical skills, my advancement in the service department moved quickly as I became a certified master technician. I continued to learn new skills in-house and in schools conducted by our manufacturers."

At Leach, there are two service teams for external and internal RVs. The "external team" services customer-owned RVs and the "internal team" handles pre-owned coaches and RVs that are being serviced for resale as well as new inventory arriving that must be thoroughly serviced and checked before placing it on the sales lot.

"Moving into management, I served as



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Administration Team

From left: Jenna Bullin; Lisa Barrett Miller, comptroller; Patty Davies; Brittany Davis.

Parts & Rental Team

Standing l-to-r: Bryce Schneider; Norm Slam; Rod Essman, parts manager. *Kneeling l-to-r:* Kyle Van Norman, Trever Helms, Kari Bowman.

Detail & Lot Team

Standing l-to-r: Doug Hall; Bobby Hale; Bridget Green Lee; Lloyd Coleman, supervisor. *Kneeling l-to-r:* Coleman Wiseman, Patrick Markley, Paul Herrick.



the internal service manager for six years, and then switched to external service management,” Dave explained. “Since 2018, I oversee both teams. Today, we have 12 service technicians, five service writers, and one warranty clerk. Not counting recent hires, our service techs have an average of 10 years of experience. A few members of our team are predominantly PDI specialists. Three techs specialize in electronic systems, Spyder Controls, and inverters.”

Due to Pat’s commitment to encouraging better education in technical service, the company has hosted several schools sponsored by RVIA and the RV Technical Institute (RVTI) for technicians from dealerships within easy driving distance to Lincoln.

“We presently have five certified technicians,” Dave noted, “with more who are studying to attain certification. We also engage in mentor training on a regular basis. We can handle any repairs in and on the box, including all electrical, plumbing, heating and air, leveling, roof, tile, glass, slide-outs, appliances, and furniture. Anderson Ford does a good job for us with engine and chassis repairs. Lincoln Truck Company works on both the Freightliner and PowerGlide chassis. Omaha Mercedes handles our Wayfarer engine and chassis work. We schedule all of this work for the owner and transport the units to wherever they are scheduled. Stephenson Truck Repair handles our body and paint repairs.

“Pat has made excellent service a top priority in this dealership,” Dave emphasized. “If an owner is in a remote location and needs to talk with one of our technicians to solve a problem during business hours, we will gladly let him do so. I answer my phone after hours, even through the weekend. Probably nothing can be more upsetting to an RVer than to have a major problem while on a camping trip with no one to help. We understand and make sure our owners know they can depend on us.”

Leach Camper Sales employs four external service writers and one for internal work. “It takes two years for a service writer to complete the learning curve to master the required knowledge base,” Dave said. “It takes another year to really learn how to be effective in working with RV owners. We run IDS software on a server and interact using three iPads to record pictures of repairs and damage. We gather information for repairs on prepared forms and then enter it through our desk computers. A complete work order is prepared for the owner to review and authorize the service. We send a completed estimate within two to three days after the unit is dropped off here. If we get into a repair and discover more work than was anticipated, we imme-

diately update the work order and advise the owner. The customer's file is updated daily as work is completed to allow the service writers to advise the owners. At a minimum, we contact the owner every three days during the repair process."

Dave reminds owners at the beginning of planned repairs that the schedule requiring the ordering of parts will be delayed if parts are not received in a timely manner.

"I am happy to inform our owners that we have added four technicians within the last 12 months," Dave said. "We had eight techs last year when we sold 900 units and processed an equal number of repairs in our shops. Now we have 12."

A well-stocked parts department is critical for timely repairs as well as the parts and accessories store that RVers shop every day to enhance their camping experience. Rod Essman brings 32 years of experience to his job. "I started in 1989 selling and installing pickup truck bed toppers, five or six a day, plus helping out in the repair parts department," Rod said. "With my background in business, I moved into purchasing for parts and service. Now I am manager for the parts and accessories store. With four employees, we are able to cover both areas."

To keep the accessories store stocked with the items RVers are looking for, Rod attends the Arrow Distribution Show annually in Omaha and the Northern Wholesale Show in Minnesota.

"The market for innovative RV accessories and parts changes constantly and I have to visit two or three shows a year to stock what our owners want. Of course, we always inventory the sta-

ples that change very little from year to year," he said. "We compete really well on price against the big camping stores.

"I evaluate sales every 12 months to determine what is essential and optional," Rod noted. "I am seeing a lot of products that fit in the category of 'Vintage Lifestyle.' We share information with our associate companies in our Spader 20 Group in an annual parts and service meeting. Normally, I maintain a \$275K inventory, but this spring it is up to \$350K. On big items, we stock hitches, extra air conditioners, circuit boards for a number of different systems, and thermostats for all applications. I also do a lot of specifically ordered parts from specialty manufacturers."

Rod complimented Tiffin's parts department for the timely fulfillment of Tiffin-specific parts. "TMH does a good job in filling orders and processing them quickly," he said. "We often include pictures with our parts orders."

Rod said that the most challenging job in running a parts and accessories department is training new employees. "There is no training school or manual to teach new employees about parts inventory management and fulfillment and the retail management of the accessories store," he explained. "It is pretty much on-the-job training. With thorough organization, we have adapted our operation to the limited space we have. Our customers usually find the items they need quickly. Of course, one of us can fill their list in a few minutes if they don't have time to shop and check out our new accessories—which we observe most RVers like to do. This is an RVer's candy store."

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Brittany Davis, recently arrived at Leach, brings fresh talent as the company's digital marketer and social media specialist. Brittany prepares content for Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and YouTube with a unique approach. "I write for each of these marketing venues by first attempting to evaluate what I want our reader to know, but then looking at how the reader will receive the manner and tone of how I am presenting it. My academic background is a degree in psychology from Colorado State which I have found to be very useful

in creating content for our markets."

Brittany creates the content for anything going on in the accessories store, specials in the parts department, and the descriptions of new RVs coming into Leach's inventory. "I am always creating, so photography and videography as an adjunct to my writing came very easy for me," she said. "With one of our sales people creating the monologue, I do the YouTube videos inside and outside of most of our units as they come into inventory and go up on our website. As often as possi-

ble, I like to do a highlights video of new owners receiving their RVs. I have gone from publishing articles to creating content. I enjoy producing images in Photoshop. PicMonkey to create illustrations that enhance our marketing images."

Before coming to Leach in January, Brittany worked for magazines, newspapers, and online publications before extending her career with freelance articles that she sold to publishers in several venues. "I enrolled at Boulder Digital Arts School and took an intensive two-week course with 80 hours of classroom lectures and labs in digital marketing," Brittany related.

When a couple makes their final decision on the RV that is right for them, Tyson Alegria takes over to explain the paperwork for the financing and insurance. For short, most dealerships call it the F&I department. Tyson has been with Leach for 15 years, and prior to that he did basically the same for six years in the automotive industry.

"Terms for financing are really quite good in our present economy," Tyson said. "A buyer with good credit can borrow up to \$50,000 with zero down, although banks do prefer loans with at least five percent down. Over \$50,000 they require 10 percent down. All of our lenders want to see Beacon scores of 650+."

Tyson is using USBank, Bank of America, and First Premier Bank for most of the loans that he negotiates. "I will try to find a bank whose terms fit the financial ability of any approved buyer. I am working for our buyers," he emphasized. "The maximum length of loans on motorhomes is now 20 years and 15 years on camping trailers and fifth wheels priced over \$50,000."

Leach offers extended service policies on both new and used RVs. "We also offer a product called Nanocure which protects the quality and endurance of the paint on any coach," he said. "Gap insurance is a good idea if the new owner is providing the minimum down payment."

Leach Camper Sales is a member of RV Priority Network, a group of dealerships across the U.S. who treat RV owners the same as if they had purchased their coach

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from them as far as getting to their service problem within 24 hours to get them back on the road as quickly as possible.

Closings usually take 30 minutes. "The preparation for a closing takes a lot longer!" Tyson joked.

Coming up last in this story, visitors to Leach Camper Sales should introduce themselves to Lisa Barrett Miller, the company's comptroller. Originally from Nebraska City, a Missouri River town 50 miles east of Lincoln, Lisa first majored in education, but switched to accounting with a minor in marketing.

"I began my career with a small real estate insurance agency and later took a position in the claims department at Mutual of Omaha," Lisa began. "I did not like corporate America and felt I could find my place in small business. My Dad and Pat Leach had known each other for many years. Dad thought I might be a good fit at Leach Camper Sales and Pat agreed to give me the opportunity," she continued.

Lisa's husband, Terry, currently works for the Nebraska Emergency Management Agency as a radiological calibration specialist. "They travel the U.S. to fulfill contracts for shutting down nuclear stations. Since he could live almost anywhere, we moved to Lincoln in June 2000," Lisa said.

"Pat first had me spend time in all of the company's departments: accounting, finance, payroll, and benefits. After completing the introduction to the key areas, I became the comptroller. Now I farm out payroll and have accounts payable and inventory clerks, the social media department, and Brittany reporting directly to me," Lisa explained. "As controller, I head up the accounting functions for the company and generate all of the reports Pat needs to run the company.

"Some of the employees jokingly classify me as the 'zoo keeper,'" she smiled. "As the comptroller who has the financial insight into the company's operations, I try to bring the departments together to do our best job for our customers. Some employees also call me the 'glue.' I try to spread a philosophy that 'It's not about you, it's about the customer,'" Lisa continued.

"As we compared this company with other dealerships in our Spader 20 Group, we discovered that our turnover is very low. We are an anomaly," she said. "Hiring is and should be a thorough, perhaps even difficult, process. Termination is the last alternative. I have terminated only two people in my 20+ years in management. When I meet with our managers, we analyze an issue, implement training as needed, and solve problems. I suggest operational functionality and help make changes that work to everyone's benefit.

Replacing skill and talent is expensive. I make sure our department managers have what they need. We are a stable business with very good management."

It was a pleasure producing this story on Leach Camper Sales. Pat drives 45 minutes each morning on I-80 from his home in southwest Omaha in his Chevy Suburban, very much aware that he has 50 employees who regard his company as a "family" and understand how important it is to work together to take care of *their* customers. **RIS**

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Tiffin Allegro Club Rally
CLASS A COACHES ONLY

PALM CREEK RV RESORT
Casa Grande, Arizona
October 18–22, 2021

Disclaimer: This information supersedes any prior published information regarding the Casa Grande rally in 2021. This Tiffin rally will not be held if prohibited by CDC, WHO or State/Local guidelines.

Join us in beautiful Casa Grande, Arizona October 18–22, 2021 for our southwestern Class A Tiffin Allegro Club rally! Our rally will be held at the fantastic Palm Creek Golf and RV Resort in Casa Grande, Arizona beginning Monday, October 18 and coaches depart on Friday, October 22. If you wish to arrive at Palm Creek RV Resort prior to Monday, October 18, contact the resort on or after August 4 at 520-371-5831 to book your reservation for pre- or post-rally stays. Additional information regarding the resort can be found at palmcreekgolf.com or by telephone at 520-371-5831. LaMesa RV will be on hand with a display of beautiful new Tiffin motorhomes! This rally is for all Tiffin Class A coaches only. There will be a separate rally for Wayfarer units October 25–28, 2021 (See Wayfarer Rally, next page). Due to space limitations, there will not be vendors at either rally.

Your spacious campsite will have 50-amp electrical service, water, cable and sewer. A beautiful pool and many outdoor sports facilities are available for guests. Palm Creek is known for its championship pickleball courts! This is a lovely RV resort located in a scenic area of Arizona between Phoenix and Tucson. Our rally is limited in size due to the maximum seating capacity for seminars and entertainment in the ballroom. If you are a seasonal or annual resident of Palm Creek RV Resort, be sure to select the rally package for Palm Creek residents.

Note: Due to Covid-19 restrictions, unlike past Tiffin rallies, there will be no group meals served at this rally! To offset that, the cost of the rally has decreased. Your rally fee will in-

clude outdoor ice cream socials, live entertainment, four nights' camping in a luxury resort, educational seminars, and other fun activities. It also includes our terrific Tiffin and LaMesa service technicians performing three minor repairs on all coaches. These trained technicians are a wealth of information for you!! You have made a sizeable investment in purchasing a beautiful motor coach. Take this valuable opportunity to learn all you can about it.

The registration form will appear at exactly 11:00 AM Central Daylight Time on July 27. You must have an active membership in the Tiffin Allegro Club to register and attend a Tiffin rally. Because the Tiffin Rallies sell out quickly, we recommend you be at the Tiffin website and familiarize yourself with the layout. Go to the Owners Page; Tiffin Allegro Club; Rallies. To register for the rally, click the link to open the registration form and start typing. You will need the following information:

Select Rally Package:

Rally with one or two people includes campsite, \$369.00

Palm Creek Seasonal/Annual Resident, one or two people—no campsite, \$229.00

Number of additional guests in coach @ \$79 per person

Total # of people in the RV
Tiffin Allegro Club Membership #

Name of Passenger 1

Name of Passenger 2

Address

Primary Cell Phone #

Secondary Phone #

Email Address

Desire to Park with

Model of coach — use drop down box of model names

Year of Coach

Length of Coach: Please state just the length of your coach/not the floorplan—40 or 36 or 34, for example.

First Tiffin Rally? Yes or No

Handicap section requested? Yes or No

Click SUBMIT and the PayPal page will open for payment. Wait for it! Sign in to your PayPal account or click at the bottom of the page to pay as a GUEST using your credit card.

The registration company (Wufoo, Inc.) counts the rally registrations as they receive them online, not when you click SUBMIT. When the maximum number of registrations are received, the registration link is automatically closed and you will receive a message saying the rally is full. If you see this message, go immediately to the Wait List and add your name. Internet speed greatly affects how fast your registration form is received by Wufoo. We strongly suggest you go to an area with strong, reliable internet. If you try to register on your smart phone or mini-tablet, the form may not be displayed properly.

If you make an error when registering, don't try to go back as the website may lock you out and you miss the opportunity to register. Submit your form and call us at the Tiffin Allegro Club office at 256-356-8522 to correct any errors.

Rally cancellation refund (less a \$50 handling fee) will be allowed until three weeks prior to the beginning of the rally. After that date, no refunds can be made. By that date we are firmly obligated for all the expenses of the rally, hence we will not be able to refund any cancellations for any reason. We regret any inconvenience this may cause and appreciate your understanding.

If you have any questions about the registration process, please call the Tiffin Allegro Club office prior to trying to register. Good luck and we hope to see you in Casa Grande!

Tiffin Allegro Club

902A Gates Street
Red Bay, Alabama 35582
Phone: (256) 356-8522
allegroclub@tiffinmotorhomes.com

For the latest updates on Tiffin allegro club, visit tiffinsideroads.com and enter your email address in the subscribe box. Also find us under the owners tab at tiffinmotorhomes.com.

Tiffin Allegro Club Wayfarer Rally
CLASS C COACHES ONLY

PALM CREEK RV RESORT
Casa Grande, Arizona
October 25–28, 2021

Disclaimer: This information supersedes any prior published information regarding the Casa Grande rally in 2021. This Tiffin rally will not be held if prohibited by CDC, WHO or State/Local guidelines.

We are excited to announce that the Second Tiffin Wayfarer Rally will be held at the beautiful Palm Creek Golf and RV Resort in Casa Grande, Arizona! The rally begins Monday, October 25 with check-out on Thursday, October 28. This rally is open to Wayfarer coaches only as the seminars will be based on Wayfarer components. If you wish to arrive at Palm Creek Golf and RV Resort prior to Monday, October 25, contact the resort on or after August 4 at 520-371-5831 to book your reservation for pre- or post-rally stays. Additional information regarding the resort can be found at palmcreekgolf.com or by telephone at 1-520-371-5831. LaMesa RV will be on hand with a display of beautiful new Wayfarer coaches! Due to space limitations, there will be no vendors at this rally.

Palm Creek Golf and RV Resort is located between Phoenix and Tucson on Interstate 10.

The rally will go on sale Thursday, July 29 at 11:00 AM Central Daylight Time and will be open for Wayfarer coaches only. You must have an active membership in the Tiffin Allegro Club to register and attend a Tiffin rally.

Note: Due to Covid-19 restrictions, unlike past Tiffin rallies, there will be no group meals served at this rally! To offset that, the cost of the rally has decreased. Your registration cost of \$299 for a Wayfarer with one or two persons will include seminars pertaining to the Wayfarer coach, three nights camping, great entertainment and minor service repairs by Wayfarer

technicians from the Winfield plant and LaMesa RV.

New Wayfarer coaches will be on display! Come to the rally and enjoy meeting members of the Tiffin family and other representatives from the Wayfarer plant in Winfield, Alabama. Palm Creek Golf and RV Resort is a full service, luxury resort with full hookups including water, electric, sewer, and cable. It is known for its championship pickleball courts and beautiful pools. If you are a seasonal or annual resident of Palm Creek RV Resort, you will need to select the correct rally package indicating that you will not need a campsite.



The rally registration form will appear at exactly 11:00 AM Central Daylight Time on July 29. Because Tiffin rallies sell out quickly, we recommend you be at the Tiffin website and familiarize yourself with the layout. Go to the Owners Page; Tiffin Allegro Club; Rallies. To register for the rally, click the link to open the registration form and start typing. Auto-Fill is a great feature to use on your device. You will need the following information:

Select Rally Package:

Rally Package for one or two people includes Campsite, \$299

Palm Creek Seasonal/Annual Resident Rally, one or two people—no Campsite \$199

Additional Guests in Coach at \$79 each

Total Number of People in Coach

Tiffin Allegro Club Membership #

Name of Passenger 1

Name of Passenger 2

Address

Primary Cell Phone #

Secondary Phone #

Email Address

Desire to Park with

Model of Coach – Wayfarer

First Tiffin Rally? Yes or No

Handicap section requested? Yes or No

Click SUBMIT and the PayPal page will open for payment. Wait for it! Sign in to your PayPal account or click at the bottom of the page to pay as a GUEST using your credit card.

The registration company (Wufoo, Inc.) counts the rally registrations as they receive them online, not when you click SUBMIT. When the maximum number of registrations are received, the registration link is automatically closed and you will receive a message saying the rally is full. If you see this message, immediately return to the Tiffin website and add your name to the Wait List because we always have cancellations prior to the rally. Internet speed greatly affects how fast your registration form is received by Wufoo. We strongly suggest you go to an area with strong, reliable internet. If you try to register on your smart phone or mini-tablet, the form may not be displayed properly.

If you make an error when registering, don't try to go back as the website may lock you out and you miss the opportunity to register. Submit your form and call us at the Tiffin Allegro Club office at 256-356-8522 to correct any errors.

Rally cancellation refund (less a \$50 handling fee) will be allowed until three weeks prior to the beginning of the rally. After that date, no refunds can be made. By that date we are firmly obligated for all the expenses of the rally, hence we will not be able to refund any cancellations for any reason. We regret any inconvenience this may cause and appreciate your understanding.

If you have any questions about the registration process, please call the Tiffin Allegro Club office prior to trying to register. Good luck and we hope to see you at the Tiffin Wayfarer Rally in Casa Grande!

Tiffin Allegro Club Expands Monogrammed Sportswear Lines



The Torrent rain jacket (1) is available in cobalt blue, red, black or fuchsia (ladies only). This comfortable waterproof jacket comes with a convenient carry pouch for easy storage. \$40, Small to X-Large; \$44, Plus sizes. Available in men's or ladies' sizes.

Everyone's favorite polo shirts (2) are available in a poly/cotton blend, 100% cotton, or Dri-Fit polyester. Men's and ladies' sizes from Small to 4XL. Available in many colors, long or short sleeve. \$20-\$28.

Denim shirts (3) are spot-on for a comfortable light-weight jacket on cool evenings. 100% cotton, pre-washed. \$24-\$28. Available in long or short sleeve, Small to 4XL.

Core soft-shell vests or jackets (4) in black, marshmallow, navy, or grey are comfortable and stylish. Small to 4XL, \$40-\$44 in ladies' or men's sizes.



Jackets ranging from light weight windbreakers to heavy-duty all-season coats are available. Rain jackets

in a variety of beautiful colors are always great to have in the coach! Jackets range in price from \$30 to \$66. The

new puffer style jackets are very popular and are available in jackets or vests, men's and ladies' styles.

Monogrammed Water Bottles, Tumblers, Umbrellas, and More



Top Shelf: Stainless steel water bottles for hot or cold beverages, \$18. Stainless steel tumblers with base that fits most cup holders, 16 oz. \$20. Insulated coolers, \$10.

Middle Shelf: Stainless steel coozie, \$8. Black and white golf umbrella, - 58" arc with vented canopy, automatic open, \$20. Tiffin notebooks, great for travel memories, \$8. Seat belt safety cover with medical alert personal information form inside, \$10.

Bottom shelf: Vehicle tags, metal tag in black with silver design, \$5. Metal license plate frame in silver and black, \$15. Foam can cozies in assorted colors, \$1. Ceramic coffee cups, \$10.

To place an order, call (256) 356-8522.

A Wide Selection of Polo and Denim Shirts

Visit our Tiffin Allegro Club in Red Bay for a great selection of men's and ladies' polo shirts and denim shirts. Shirts are priced from \$20 to \$28. Available in sizes Small to 4XL, short or long sleeve.

Caps and Visors are available in a wide assortment of styles and colors, \$15.





Dan, Carla, Parker, and Charlotte Russell

An All-American Family in Ohio's Fastest Growing County

WE WERE IN RED BAY IN MID-MARCH TO WRITE a feature story on the 2022 Allegro Open Road 34PA and other stories for the Spring 2021 edition of *RIS*. During the day, Carolyn plans and executes the decoration of a coach for a photoshoot of the interior. I like to write in the evening when the phone stops ringing. To get the sense of living in the coach I am featuring, I bring in my laptop and large second monitor and place it on the dinette's table. With a little quiet meditation, the juices start to flow as I conjure up a fresh lead.

Since we were just three days into daylight savings time, it was dusky outside when my legs began to demand a good stretch I had denied them throughout the day. The 34PA was parked at the north end of the Tiffin Service Center in the area where owners take delivery to check out their coaches they left earlier for service. As I walked south in front of the closed service bay doors, I saw a couple with two youngsters walking toward me, obviously on their way back to their coach to get the kids ready for bed.

The little girl was barely knee high to her daddy and the boy

could have put his chin on top of a yardstick. Children that age in the Service Center campground are a welcome sight. TMH is delighted to see young families in the coaches designed just for them. As we reached talking distance, I engaged them in pleasantries and found myself meeting a delightful couple from Ohio who own a 2020 Allegro RED 38KA.

They explained they had one more day to cover some service items and then they were on their way to Apalachicola in the Florida panhandle for several days of beach combing and fishing. "We can take a week off now, but by April 1 my business will be churning," he said. Dan is a founding partner of HER Realtors and has achieved an elite level in the real estate business of over \$100 million sold in residential properties. "HER Realtors has 25 offices in Ohio," he said. "My office located in Dublin on the northwest side of Columbus has 100 sales and support people where we focus on Franklin and Delaware counties. Delaware County has on occasion been designated as the fastest growing county in the U.S."

Dan and Carla Russell agreed to an interview the next evening for an Owner Profile story on their family. I was so glad I yielded to my legs' urging and took that 15-minute stretcher.

With our appointment at 7:30, Carolyn and I knocked and were greeted by Parker, 5, and Charlotte, 3, and their parents. The conversation began with how pleased they were with the 38KA floorplan. "It has a rear bath and laundry for us, plenty of drawers, wardrobe, and storage cabinets surrounding the king bed, and a half bath near mid-coach directly across from the children's bunks," Carla said. "We shopped a lot of motorhomes, but when we saw this one we knew it was the best floorplan for us."

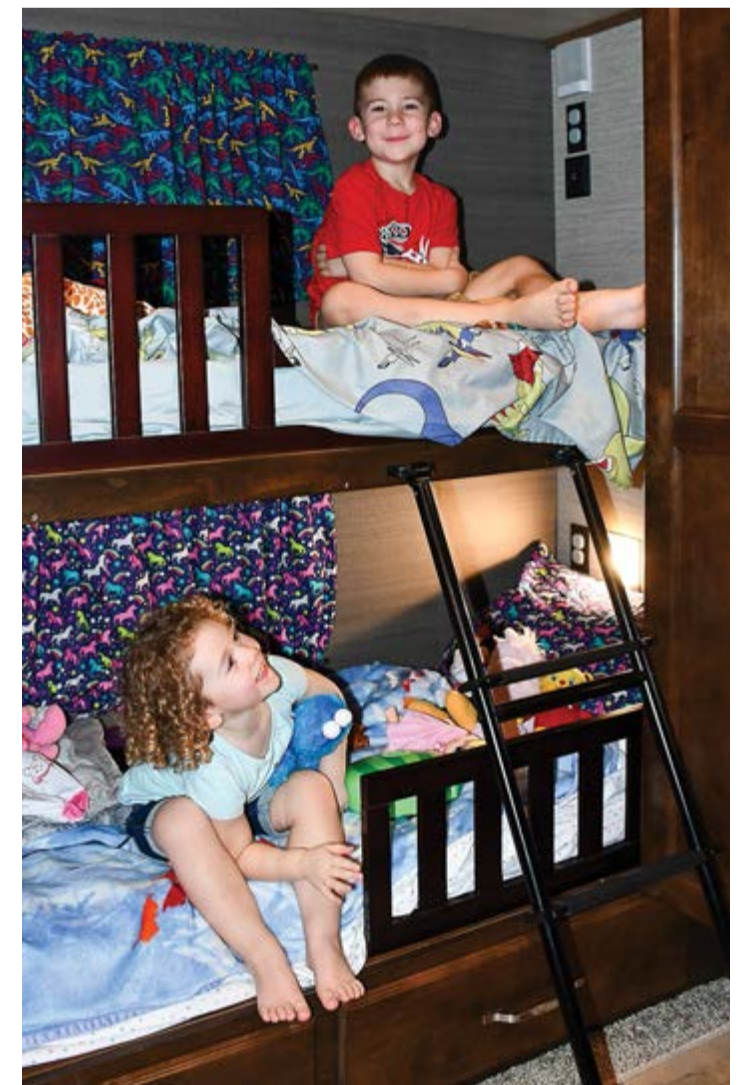
Parker and Charlotte showed us their bunks. He scampered up the ladder to the upper bunk while Charlotte snuggled into her cozy nest in the lower bunk. They each have claimed one of the big drawers under the dinette's padded benches—perfect toy boxes.

Dan grew up in Dayton, Ohio, about an hour west of where the Russells live now in the Columbus area, and Carla grew up in Lancaster, about 30 minutes to the southeast.

"When I finished high school in 1996, I decided a southern university might be a good change of pace to escape Ohio's winters," Dan said. "I was surprised to find the tuition at the University of Tennessee was about the same as the in-state tuition at Ohio State. I was accepted to UT's business school and finished there with a B.S. degree in 2000."

From a sports perspective, it was a great time to be there, Dan noted, with Peyton Manning leading Tennessee to a national championship in 1998. The Lady Vols basketball teams were national champions in 1996, 1997, and 1998 under Coach Pat Summitt.

When Dan finished his degree at Tennessee, the job market





It's no wonder Charlotte and Parker look forward to visiting the Florida beaches. Parker has become an experienced fisherman at an early age and Charlotte is learning fast. Renting a high-speed boat to enjoy the inland waterway and find the best fishing spots was a highlight of this trip.



seemed to be stronger in Ohio where he found a position with a Columbus bank. “In 2003 I decided that buying a house was a lot smarter than continuing to pay rent,” Dan laughed. When he completed the deal to buy his first house, he was very disappointed with the service, finesse, and ability of his real estate person. “I decided almost immediately I was going into real estate sales because I knew I could do a far better job than the agent who tried to help me.”

Carla moved to Columbus in 1996 and accepted a teller's position with Bank One. Five years later she took a position with a title company. “I began processing title work for Dan's real estate office on a regular basis,” Carla said.

“We do an awards dinner each year for the title company to show our appreciation for their efficient processing of our work,” Dan explained. “The dinner in 2013 was the first time I met Carla.” Dan kiddingly challenged Carla's boss to a game of poker, setting the stakes as a significant raise for Carla if Dan won. Dan lost and Carla didn't get the raise!

Dan and Carla dated for two years and married in 2015. “I decided to quit my job and stay home, retire early,” she laughed. “I kind of got my raise after all.” Dan chimed in, “I wanted to stay home, too, but I had to pay for an Allegro RED!”

The couple lived in Dublin after they married where they enjoyed a four bedroom house. To get more space for their growing family, Dan found a development with three-to-five acre sites—and one with a suitable house and a barn big enough for the Allegro RED.

Soon after they married, their love for camping and the outdoors began with a travel trailer. “When we traveled during the summer months, the air inside the trailer would often reach 110 degrees by the time we reached our campground,” Dan said. “Even though it had a roof AC, it would still be hot inside when it was time for bed.”

“We are really enjoying the 38KA,” Carla said. “The kids love their special places. We can bring so much more from home that makes our vacations really nice, things we would not have had the space for in a travel trailer.”

The Russells tow a 2019 GMC Sierra Denali with crew cab. The truck provides a level of safety that Dan wants for his family. “It weighs in around 7,000 lbs. but the 360-hp in the RED does a good job of towing it,” Dan noted. “We will certainly lose some speed on a long grade, but that's okay. When we level out, I hardly know it's back there.”

The whole family loves salt water fishing. “Parker's favorite fishing beaches are in the Florida pan-



handle,” Dan said. “Put him on a long pier and he will be pulling in pan size redfish as long as they are biting. I have enjoyed watching older people stop to just watch Parker pulling them in. It amazes me that a five-year-old has such skill. When we do surf fishing from the South Carolina beaches, he will set up two or three 50-lb. test lines and put the poles in PVC pipes we drive into the sand.”

Dan related their success at catching drum, bluefish, and Atlantic sharpnose sharks. “We cook our catch occasionally, but it’s usually catch and release,” he continued. “We try to learn about what we are catching. You can turn a sharpnose on its back and it becomes catatonic.”

“We are looking forward to taking more time to travel this fall,” Carla said. “A trip out west in 2022 is in the planning stages to visit as many national parks as possible, especially the parks in Arizona and Colorado, and the Dinosaur National Park.”

“Parker is a dinosaur savant and can already name all of them in the books we have,” Dan said. “When he gets to know you, he will tell you himself that he is going to be a paleontologist.”

During the height of the Covid pandemic last year, the Russells toured 18 states including all of New England. They regarded their 38KA as their home in which they quarantined themselves. “We took the recommended precautions—social distancing and wearing masks whenever we were in public or stopping for fuel or groceries. One of our best stops was in Scarborough, Maine,” Carla said. “The beach combing was great. We would not have dared making the trip in a car with daily stops in restaurants and hotels.”

The Russells are hoping to make more time for trips this summer to Niagara Falls, Tennessee, Florida for more coastal fishing, and the Ark in Kentucky. “We are aiming for South Carolina in September, Texas in November, and Florida in December. From now to the end of the year, we will probably put 8,000 miles on the RED,” he concluded. “With our desire to see our country with our children over the next 15 years while they are home, the Allegro RED is probably the best investment we could have made.” **RIS**

At the Ho-Hum Campground in Appalachicola, a few choice campsites are right on the beach. ♦ Even though the water was a bit chilly in March, the kids still enjoyed rushing the incoming waves. ♦ Carla got in on the fishing from the pier by helping Parker weigh the flounder he had just caught.



Danny Inman and the Tiffin Tech Team

As editor of "Tiffin Tech Talk," Danny invites your questions. He will seek the help of a platoon of experts and specialists in the Tiffin Service Center who field owners' questions 10 hours a day Monday through Friday.

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:

Tiffin Tech Talk Team
 Roughing It Smoothly
 PO Box 1373
 Monroe, GA 30655-1373

Danny and Bob Tiffin 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 and Bob . . .

Loose Cruise Control Stem, Manuals, and "Mr. Clean" to the Rescue!

We have a 2011 40-ft Phaeton. I have two requests for assistance and one suggestion to offer.

Our turn signal/cruise control stem is so loose that when us-

ing the cruise control and we hit a bump in the road, it knocks us off cruise. How do we tighten the stem?

We purchased our Tiffin as second owners. Is there a manual that explains all of the controls, such as the dash lights, symbols for warning lights, windshield controls, etc.?

In the last issue of *Roughing It Smoothly*, there were a number of comments about marks on the floor from the slide-outs. We used "Mr. Clean" sponges to remove them. Works great!

Bill Waldo, Cape Coral, Florida

Dear Bill,

The stem cannot be tightened. It has a groove on the end of its shaft that locks into a snap ring on the column's blinker switch. You will likely need a new stem, switch, or both.

To secure a new 2011 Phaeton manual, go to tiffinmotorhomes.com and scroll to the bottom of the landing site. Click on **Resources** and then click on **View Manuals**. Hit the Phaeton tab and go to 2011. You can now download the manual.

Thank you very much for the information about using "Mr. Clean" sponges to remove black marks left by the slide-out rollers.

Problem with Updating my GPS

I have a 2017 Allegro 32SA. I want to update my GPS maps. I followed the online directions and downloaded the update on a memory stick. The problem is the GPS doesn't recognize the USB port on the dash. The dash directions say to install a new chip, but I don't know where to get one or where it gets installed.

Denny Bement, Coatesville, Pennsylvania

Dear Denny,

For all of our readers who may wish to update the navigation software in their Kenwood/Garmin systems: go to Kenwood.com. Select North America, then USA. Select Car Entertainment and then Navigation/Multimedia. Select RV/Truck Navigation and then this model radio: DNX775RVS. Scroll to the bottom of this site and select SUPPORT in the upper right corner. A screen with three tabs will appear: select Software & Firmware and then click on the third line:

Navigation / Multimedia receiver and firmware updates (24 Apr 2019). Select and download the file. As you can see, Garmin has not updated the GPS software for RVs/Trucks for two years.

Purchase a micro SD card with a minimum of 8 gigabytes storage (32 is better). You will also need to purchase a Micro SD Card Reader for your computer. Copy the downloaded file from the computer to the SD card and insert it into the front left corner of the Kenwood radio.

Love our RV, Want to Upgrade the Upholstered Furniture

We have a 2011 Allegro 34QBA. We absolutely love our RV. We want to upgrade our Captain chair, couch, and dinette seats. The leather of all these items is peeling off. Flexsteel, the man-

ufacturer, is no longer in business. We have placed sheets over the furniture temporarily until we can determine our next step. Can you tell us where or what company to contact to have the chairs and other items replaced? *Roughing It Smoothly* has had no information about replacing seats, etc. What are our options and other considerations in this matter?

Thanking you for your response,

R. P. Savoy, Opelousas, Louisiana

Dear R.P.,

Bunkhouse RV is now doing all aftermarket furniture replacements here in Red Bay. Please call them at 256-356-8634.

Awning Controls are Difficult to Access

We just took delivery of a 2021 Allegro 36LA and love all the new features. However, the switches for the awning and awning lights are in the cabinet above the driver's seat. Being 5'3" tall, I have to stand on the seat to get to these switches. Why were they moved from the panel beside the door? Can they be relocated?

Cindi Fisher, Bonita Springs, Florida

Dear Cindi,

Moving the switch was an engineering decision. It is hard-wired but we will find a solution to place it in a more convenient location for you. Since Bonita Springs is a short drive to North Trail RV in Ft. Myers, we will send the parts to their service manager to facilitate the moving of the Girard awning control.

Problems with the 2019 Wayfarer 25QW

While listening to the radio, it beeps every 15 seconds; and the volume will go to zero randomly without it being touched. The steering wheel has controls for both the radio and the dash display. Vogt RV says this is a Mercedes-Benz issue, Mercedes-Benz says it is not them.

The awning sporadically will not extend, and the leveling system is not functioning.

Jules Moise, Colleyville, Texas

Dear Jules,

There is an interface module behind the radio that we have found to be faulty in most instances of audio problems. Most likely it needs to be replaced. It connects to the Mercedes circuitry and allows the steering wheel controls to work with the aftermarket radio. It is an aftermarket part.

We are unsure what part/function the owner is talking about on the Tiffin side. This may be in reference to a Mercedes function. We need more information before making recommendations.

The awning will only work if the park brake is fully engaged and the engine is turned off. The leveling system probably needs to have air purged from the lines. Most of the time this will correct this issue. It is possible that the pump is malfunctioning and

needs to be replaced. The leveling system needs to be inspected by a technician for an accurate diagnosis.

Rear 12" LED Running Light Is Not Functioning

We have a 2016 Allegro 35QBA. The 12-inch LED running light on the rear of the coach does not light up when the parking lights are on. The LED is just above the Allegro logo. I removed the LED panel and disconnected the wires. I measured no voltage at the LED and black leads that connect to the LED. How do I troubleshoot further?

Tom Pilat, Marshfield, Massachusetts

Dear Tom,

The light you are inquiring about was placed in that location strictly as a brake light. It is not a running light. It is there to get maximum attention when the brakes are applied.

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Thank you Tiffin Motorhomes for choosing Auto-Motion Shade as your original equipment supplier of Motorized Dual Windshield Roller Shades.

ISO 9001:2015
www.automotionshade.com

Our Chocolate Melted!!

We have a 2017 Allegro 32SA. Chocolate that was stored in the cabinet above the passenger seat melted. We were using the motorhome at the time (it was not in storage). How can we keep the cabinets cooler? Why aren't these cabinets insulated? Or do they need to be insulated better? Thank you,

Sally and Al Weigand
Punta Gorda, Florida

Dear Sally and Al,

The heat from the outside is going to transfer into the cabinet. I suggest you try foil-backed insulation at least one-half inch thick. Place the foil side of the insulation against the outside wall. This should help anywhere food is stored or where you want to reduce the summer temps in the cabinets.

Question Regarding Rear Camera

We are very happy with our 2018 Wayfarer 24FW. It is our second Tiffin motorhome. One question we have is: Is there a way to have the rear camera turn on so we can check on our tow car? It is a mini, so we can't see it in the mirrors. This camera turns on when in reverse, but we would like a way to turn it on while in motion to just "check" on the car we can't see.

Jeff Guibord
Milford, Michigan

Dear Jeff,

The Mercedes unit will not allow viewing behind the motorhome while traveling forward when the unit gets up to speed. They consider this a safety feature on the Sprinter chassis over which we have no control. However, using a dash-mounted monitor, an aftermarket wireless camera can be installed that would allow viewing behind the unit while traveling.

Toilet Bowl Leak; Need Advice on Vent Covers

On my 2017 Phaeton 40IH, the TECMA by Thetford toilet will not hold water in the bowl. Please advise regarding how this

can be fixed. Secondly, I am looking for vent covers for the three vents on top of my RV. The lids on the vents seem to go up too high for most standard covers like MaxAir. Please advise regarding choice of a name brand/model/etc. Thank you.

Russell Moore
Ocala, Florida

Dear Russell,

It is difficult to get a cell phone camera behind the toilet for a picture. However, this is the way the hoses should look in the back of the toilet when they are correctly strapped together. If they are not



correctly positioned in the cavity behind the bowl, it will not hold water. To correct the problem, the toilet must be removed from its base and then reinstalled after the repair. You may want to have a plumbing specialist at a Tiffin dealership make the repair.

We do not install the Max Air vent cover because the powered cover on the Fan-Tastic Exhaust Fan that we install strikes the MaxAir cover when it opens. We do not recommend any vent covers.

Conflicting Information on House Batteries and Inverter

I have a 2019 Allegro 32SA. I am very confused due to conflicting information

on house batteries and the inverter. My question is, "Is it safe to leave shore power hooked up with the house battery switch on without doing damage to house batteries over long periods of time between trips?" I have read that the batteries could be over-charged and the batteries could become damaged. Does my coach have a 'SMART' inverter that prevents over-charging? I cannot imagine that shore power cannot be hooked up all the time while parked in the garage. Can you please explain this dilemma to me?

Charles Meyers
Gig Harbor, Washington

Dear Charles,

Your inverter has a built-in regulator that will back off the charge rate to "float" when the batteries are near maximum charge. However, with any lead acid battery, the water level in the batteries must be checked on a regular basis. If your incoming power were to spike or fluctuate, the inverter might go into a fault mode and stop charging. If you are going to be away for extended periods of time, you may want to fully charge the batteries and then turn off the inverter and the house battery disconnects located in the house battery compartment.

Looking for a Unit with an Outside Kitchen

We have an Allegro Open Road. My wife and I really enjoy it. She would love to upgrade, and is looking for an outside kitchen unit. Someone told me Tiffin is starting to install outside kitchens on your 45-ft. units. I am looking to upgrade to a 36- or 38-ft. unit. Is Tiffin going to build any shorter coaches with outside kitchens?

Terry Weber
Berkeley Springs, West Virginia

Dear Terry,

Tiffin offered the outside grill on the 2021 Allegro Bus 40-ft. and 45-ft. units. In 2022, it will be offered on the Phaeton 40IH. If we placed it on the 36- and 37-ft. units, it would remove the primary stor-

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age area where you can install the powered slide-out storage tray.

Adjusters on Rear Brakes Are Hanging Loose

I have a 2014 Allegro Bus. How often should the slack adjusters on the rear brakes be replaced? They have come apart and are hanging loose.

Larry Akin
Plano, Texas

Dear Larry,
Unless they were hit by road debris or sustained some other unusual damage, I would expect them to last 10 years or more.

Request for a Manual Release for the Entry Step Cover

We have a 2018 Phaeton 44OH. I am requesting Tiffin to consider a manual release for the electric entry step cover. Our motor went out with the cover extended over the steps. My wife had both knees replaced and had no ability to exit the coach. We stopped at a hardware store to buy the necessary tools to release the cover and push it in, and have since had the motor replaced. This type of incident creates an unsafe environment in non-emergency situations. Had I not been with my wife, she would have had no means to safely exit the RV. A manual release of some type should be installed. Thank you.

Ted Kostich
Leesburg, Florida

Dear Ted,
The location and construction of this step assembly makes it very difficult to add a manual release. It would still be easier to take the motor loose. We will forward this issue to engineering to make them aware of your request.

Securing the Freshwater Tank Cap on a Wayfarer

In January 2020 I purchased a 2020 Wayfarer 24TW. The freshwater fill cap is located on the outside left rear of the

unit. It is just a screw-on cap. Is there a way to secure the cap, i.e., a locking cap or locking door that I could install? Anyone could pour any substance into the tank and ruin the water and/or the tank. I'm not happy with the tank design.

William Young
Lake Havasu City, Arizona

Dear William,
There are aftermarket locking caps available for the fill spout on this coach. Many owners have installed these. Beginning with 2021 models, all Wayfarers now have a lockable door over the inlet that is painted to match the coach's color scheme.

Crack in the Fiberglass

We recently purchased a 2013 Allegro Open Road 32CA, and have an issue. We have a 12-inch crack in the fiberglass on the right side under the bedroom slide-out. Our questions are as follows: Have you seen this issue before or are we the first reported case? Is this a cosmetic issue or is this a structural issue? Did the slide-out play a part in the damage? What is the recommended repair? Thank you for your attention in this matter,

Bryan Muth
Barataria, Louisiana

Dear Bryan,
Yes, we have seen this issue in the past. Normally, it is strictly cosmetic. As far as the slide-out playing a part in the damage, it did not. Since the hole in the sidewall leaves small edges and corners in the wall, they may be prone to crack. Call and speak with one of our service techs at 256-356-0261 to develop a plan of action to correct the problem.

Engine Charging System Doesn't Always Charge the Batteries

I have a 2010 Phaeton 40QTH and am trying to figure out why the engine charging system intermittently doesn't charge the house batteries. I am familiar with the charge solenoid, resident in the right rear of the motorhome which doubles as the

auxiliary start solenoid when the button is pushed in the cockpit and that part seems to work.

If the auxiliary start system works okay, it would seem that the solenoid is not at fault. Then the next question is: what tells the solenoid to engage to allow charging of the house batteries? There are two wires that go to the positive side of the charge solenoid coil. One, I assume, is from the auxiliary start switch in the cockpit, and the other wire comes from where? Is there a relay involved?

Someone has posted a fix on the web for this very problem, but the fix design makes no sense to me. They claim the length of wire from the front to the back of the coach causes too much voltage drop. I have tested a new solenoid and it will engage at two volts, so I don't believe that's the problem. Using the same wiring the author claims has too much voltage drop to fire an additional relay makes no sense.

Can you help me understand how to fix this problem?

Tom Frost
Vero Beach, Florida

Dear Tom,
The signal wire comes from the ignition output and goes to the small ignition solenoid post in the front compartment. The second wire leaves the small post on the front solenoid and goes directly to the rear charging solenoid small post to activate it. The second wire on the rear solenoid small post comes directly from the aux switch on the dash. The length of the wire from the front to back should not have an issue as long as you are getting 12 volts to the front solenoid small post and it then travels to the rear solenoid with the ignition on.

Procedures for Winter Storage

I have a 2007 Phaeton with a 350 Cat diesel. I live in Ohio and store the motorhome in an unheated garage. It is on shore power, inverter off but still charging, the DC disconnected by way of the switch inside

by the entry door. The jacks are down to take some weight off the tires and there is anti-gel in the fuel. I have been told in the past that I should start it and let it run periodically. Recently I read that I should not start it unless I can drive it about 25 miles. I would like to know what I am doing right or wrong and what is correct about starting it once a month or so.

Mark Vorhees
Germantown, Ohio

Dear Mark,
We believe you are following the right procedure by starting the engine at least once a month. Allow the engine to come up to operating temperature. Be sure to check all of the gauges in the display to see if there are any issues. Also be sure to start your generator and run it for 30 minutes. If possible, turn the air conditioners on to put a load on it. When following these procedures, you should feel assured that everything will be working properly when you are ready to use it.

Support Bar Needed Under 1995 Allegro Bay Slide-Out

I recently purchased my first RV, a 34-ft. 1995 Allegro Bay. Do you recommend placing a support bar under the slide-out when the slide is out for several days at a time?

Tim Bensette
Linden, Michigan

Dear Tim,
No support bar is needed to support the slide-out box. The mechanism is designed to support the furniture that was placed in it. Unless the unit has been modified after its original construction, there is no need to add a support bar.

Every Owner Needs a Printed Copy of the Chassis Manual

I have owned an Allegro Red and two Wayfarers, and loved them all. We downsized, but it was too small, so we have now purchased another motorhome, an Allegro Breeze 31BR. Love it as we have all the Tiffin products. My problem is I am

over 80, and need the chassis manual in my hand when I am in the driver's seat. You supply it only as a computer edition. You gave us a driver's manual, but not the chassis manual. Mt. Comfort was wonderful and printed it out for me. I think you should print that for every owner.

Merrill A. Ritter, MD
Indianapolis, Indiana

Dear Dr. Ritter,
I certainly agree that a hard copy in hand is better than trying to look at a screen while you are making a repair. Unfortunately, our younger generation is accustomed to looking at computer screens and the industry, in the interest of being environmentally friendly, has taken this route.

Mice Were a Problem in our Allegro Red

I have a new Wayfarer on order, scheduled to be built in February, and I would like it to be "Mouse PROOF!" I traded in a 2014 Allegro Red. Mice were always a problem. I could not keep them out. Hope you can get word to the production line to do whatever they can to make it mouse proof. Thanks for your help in this problem.

Gail Bennett
Garden, Michigan

Dear Gail,
This concern was discussed in these pages ad infinitum several years ago. Dave McClellan, who wrote for *RIS* for several years, as did his wife, Terri (On the Road with Dave and Terri), finally penned the definitive article on the subject. Go to our digital magazine, rismag.org, April 2013, pages 47-50. Just as mice can find a place to get into your stick-built home, the ingenious little creatures can also find a way to get into your motorhome. Dave tells you how to keep them out!

Fred Thompson
EDITOR & PUBLISHER

Enhancing RV Tire Life

In the last issue of *Roughing It Smoothly*, there was a discussion regarding the

DIAMOND SHIELD
Advanced Paint Protection System

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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expected life of RV tires. I'd like to offer a helpful addition. If possible, take your motorhome out for a short run about once a month. This is good for the motorhome and the tires. Tires have lubricants that keep the rubber pliable, but only when the tires are rolling. I put a piece of tape on the top of one wheel lug and have it on the bottom when I return. This might be helpful in preventing flat spots on the tires.

Russell Geren, North Fort Myers, Florida

Dear Russell,
Thank you very much for your information. We recommend that owners take their coach out and drive it for half an hour.

Owner Needs Schematic for Battery Connections

I have a 2011 Allegro 35QBA. I replaced our house batteries in Fall 2019 before storing the RV for winter. I crossed the terminals

in error, and then corrected my error but the batteries are not charging from the truck. They charged from the generator and also from shore power. My plan was to have it looked at when we come to Red Bay for upholstery work, but we don't know when the borders will open again. Can you suggest anything I could check when I take it out of storage in the Spring. Maybe a schematic of the battery wiring that is involved. We bought it new and take pride in the quality and reliability of your products. Thanking you in advance and stay safe.

Dave Fougere, Dartmouth, Nova Scotia

Dear Dave,
Hopefully, it is only a blown fuse or a relay. You will need to contact our service department at 256-356-0261 and ask for technical electrical assistance. When you call, have a volt meter ready to troubleshoot it.

Replacing a Storage Door Latch

I have a 2006 Allegro 30DA. The latch on the door of the PS storage compartment at the extreme rear of the coach needs to be replaced. Please furnish me with the part number and instructions on how to remove and replace it. Paint covers part of the latch (gold on the bottom portion). Can I get the latch correctly painted or do I need to try to match the paint? Thank you for your help.

Pius Kuhn, Lodi, California

Dear Pius,
Please call the Tiffin Parts Department and place the order for the latch. You will need to match the paint line after the latch has been installed. The Parts Department can also supply the paint if you will supply your VIN. To get the best results, we recommend the painting be done professionally.

Opting Out of Features I Do Not Need or Want

I have never understood why Tiffin, and other motorhome manufacturers, don't offer the option of replacing the bedroom TV with a wardrobe closet. We need four TVs like we need a leak in the fuel tank. We have probably used the outside TV in our 2017 Allegro Bus once or twice and the bedroom TV— ZERO. The same was true of our previous three coaches. I would also recommend that installers of the under-coach lights and other electrical items consider mounting them on the compartment ceiling or high enough NOT to block or restrict use of the storage spaces. You provide nice big pass through spaces then hang outlet boxes, lights, and other components that prevent full use of the space.

Harold Borland, Lake Tapps, Washington

Dear Harold,
The majority of RV owners want more TVs rather than less.

Trying to delete a TV from a unit and replace it with cabinetry is a nightmare for a standardized production line. If each coach was custom-built, then it would not be a problem. Every TV could be an option.

Over the last few years, we have tried to improve on the storage boxes under the unit. We will pass your evaluations on to our engineers.

Lenses on Ceiling Lights Falling During Travel

We have a 2018 Phaeton 40QKH. Several of the lenses on the ceiling lights have fallen out while we are traveling. Most were chipped when they hit the floor. Now we check them before every trip to make sure they are tight and secure. One fell out and we have not found it. I will use Loctite Threadlocker Blue 242 to hopefully keep them in place during future travel. Do you have any solutions? I could use several replacement lenses.

Klaus Dahl, Gurley, Alabama

Dear Klaus,
If the lens is installed correctly, you will feel it "lock" in place. The threadlocker glue might prevent removal of the lens if it needs to be replaced due to the LED light going out. If you need more lenses, please call our parts department at 256-356-0261 and ask for replacements.

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When you are planning your trip Red Bay, Alabama, contact Ricky Johnson for a quote.

ON THE ROAD WITH CAROLYN *Continued from page 47*

John and Ronnie Ricks *(continued)*

reading, going for walks, and exploring the area and figuring out what they will do on his days off.

John and Ronnie clearly live by the advice John's 80-year-old father gave him. "My dad told me, 'The time will be very short from the point when your last kid leaves home to the time you are too tired or ill to do all those things you wanted to do. Take advantage of it.'"

Libby Pogue *(continued)*

"I spent untold hours reading and researching how the brain affects our health and wellness in order to help Isiah in his long road to recovery," Libby said. "He is a brilliant young man and I am hoping he will be able to resume his education plans."

Jaye, now 26, is married to Aaron who is serving in the Air Force. "Jaye works as an assistant to a veterinarian where they live in Fort Worth," Libby related.

Libby's traveling companion is a rescue dog named Bhear who is now 11 years old. "Bhear isn't a trained watchdog as his name might suggest," she said. "But his acute hearing and barking always lets me know if someone is near my motorhome. He is good company."

"I worked for a company that served as a clearing house for doctors and nurses who have the mobility to go where there is an immediate need," Libby explained. "While doing contract nursing in the southeastern and midwestern states, I realized that there had to be a better way than living in short-term rental apartments and pulling a U-Haul trailer when I moved. So my research led me to a new 2015 Allegro 32SA that I bought from DeMontroind in Houston. "I made my decision to buy a Tiffin after I talked to Bob Tiffin at the Houston RV Show in Reliant

Jim and Chris Russell *(continued)*

Canyon State Park. "The bison walked through our campground and were right outside our door," she recalled. "We didn't want to go outside because they were so close, so I just sat watching them graze."

Jim and Chris have traveled to 49 states. Over the years, they have joined RV touring companies to see New England and the ABQ Balloon Fiesta, but they truly love boondocking and try to

John's goal is to live the RV lifestyle for the rest of his life and instill a love of camping in his grandchildren as his aunt did for him. He loves fly fishing and visiting our national parks, especially Glacier, Yosemite, and Denali. He says in each place the people are 80 percent the same and 20 percent different. "I like to meet and learn about the 20 percent and find out what makes them different," he said.

Stadium," Libby said. "The salesperson started with the Tiffin coaches. The third one I saw I bought. 'She' has been great. I love her. An awesome coach. She needs a little rehab from time to time, and that's why I am here now (Red Bay, March 2021)."

The Tiffin Service Center and the technicians who answer Libby's questions have kept her going whenever she needed help. "I am very hands-on, have a good tool box, and can check a lot of things with their directions. In August 2015, soon after I bought my coach, I was in Fort Worth and needed help. 'Hollywood' (nickname for a Tiffin technician) was working at Vogt RV that week and came to my RV site to take care of a problem. He has been my go-to-guy ever since!" Libby said with a big smile.

Libby's work with Cerner to provide training on the MHS Genesis system fits well into her lifestyle. "I usually work for three months at each assignment which gives me plenty of time to visit and see the sights. I pull a four-wheel drive Jeep which can take me off-road about anywhere I want to go. I see the MHS Genesis as a long-term part of my career."

After finishing with repairs at Red Bay, Libby was leaving for an assignment at Ellsworth Air Force Base near Rapid City, South Dakota.

do so at least once a month. "It's just so quiet and pretty when you are all alone on a mountaintop in Colorado," Chris and Jim agreed.


Jim is quite the photographer and enjoys taking his camera everywhere he goes. They also enjoy sharing their adventures and RV tips and tricks on their YouTube channel RV4X40.com. "Our YouTube channel is a way to share our trips with our family, plus it's fun to do." Jim smiled.

ST. GEORGE, UTAH *Continued from page 46*

a site two weeks in advance, or even earlier for October visits. Rates: \$52 weekdays, \$55 weekends. (800) 776-6410.

St. George Campground, 2100 E. Middleton Drive, off I-15 Exit 10. Campground upgraded in 2016. Mixed reviews online. 100 sites, full hookups, 30/50 amps. \$48 per day. (435) 673-2970.

St. George/Hurricane KOA, 5800 Old Highway 91, Hurricane, UT. Take I-15, Exit 16 (SR-9). Use your phone or car navi-

gation to reach the park. The park has many full hookups and amenities such as billiards, heated pool, horseshoes, and a pickleball court. Several sites are shaded. Online reviews are mixed. Premium sites are wider, longer, have campfire rings and other improvements. Rates are \$55 for a standard back-in, and \$85 for premium sites. Holiday rates are higher. The park is about 12 miles from St. George. (800) 562-8607. 

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