

RV

MAGAZINE

SIMPLE **SLIDEOUT**
MAINTENANCE TIPS

TOP **LOCKBOXES AND**
SAFES FOR YOUR RV

THE INS AND OUTS OF
DRIVING IN THE DARK

It's Showtime!

{ RVS WITH EXTERIOR ENTERTAINMENT
CENTERS TO HOST MOVIE NIGHT

SUMMER'S HIDDEN GEMS

VENTURE OFF THE BEATEN PATH FOR AN
UNFORGETTABLE FAMILY ADVENTURE

+ MUST-HAVE GEAR TO KEEP
THINGS COOL AT THE CAMPSITE



THE PINNACLE OF LUXURY TRAVEL

It's no wonder the Cornerstone has been the **#1 selling coach in the Cummins X 605HP engine category**. Power meets beauty in this impressive package—and the new model year has even more to love. The new décor and modern interior design packages are just the beginning; driver and passenger will love the leather massaging seats in the cab and navigate with ease thanks to the iGO Primo navigation system with V attribute routing. When it's time to park it, state-of-the-art entertainment systems, residential furniture and appliances and spacious living quarters will have you feeling right at home. This is a lineup you don't want to miss.

TOP FEATURES

- Spartan® K3 chassis with Cummins® 605HP engine and E-Z Steer™ adjustable power steering assist
- Reyco® Granning® passive-steer tag axle with air dump
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ENTEGRACOACH, CIRCLE 113 ON READER SERVICE CARD

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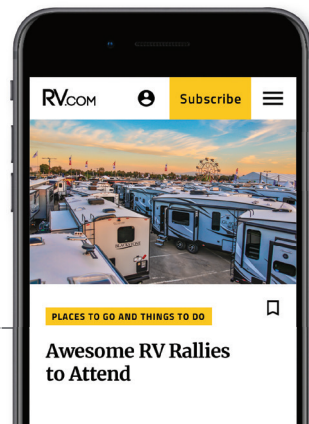
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PUBLISHER, CEO, & CHAIRMAN
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EDITORIAL

Managing Editor Kristopher Bunker
Features Editor Donya Carlson
Art Director Rick Damien
Production Manager Kath Cunningham
Consulting Tech Editor Jeff Johnston

Contributors

Stefany and James Adinara, Amanda Adler,
Ray Diehr, Ken Freund, Robert Irvine, Rachael Johnson,
Peter Mercer, Nancy Moeller, Julie Perry Nelson,
Sean Pierce, Abbey Robertson, Bryanna Royal,
Bruce W. Smith, Terri Peterson Smith

ADMINISTRATIVE

Chief Operating Officer Tamara Ward
President - GS Media & Events Vilma Fraguada
Vice President - Media Services Pete Filkis
Marketing Director Amber Kansou
Director of Operations Lori Guiang
Business Manager Katey Purgatorio

ADVERTISING

West Region Scott Oakes
847-229-6758, scott.oakes@goodssam.com
Midwest/North-East Region Ryan Reinke
612-695-3219, ryan.reinke@goodssam.com

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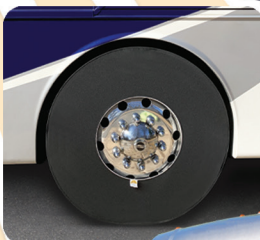
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June 13-18 50th Anniversary Tiffin Rally Rock Springs, WY

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MAGNE SHADE. CIRCLE 116 ON READER SERVICE CARD

SUMMER BREEZES

What is it about June that makes us so cheerful? Is it the freedom to truly roam in our RVs since the kids are out of school? Is it the warm sunshine, so refreshing after the frigid winter and the rain-soaked spring? Is it the abundance of activities, from hiking to biking, from swimming to fishing, or from visiting local markets to attending festivals? How about all the above?

June means family time. Once that final bell rings, RVing families can hit the road without worrying about the kids missing class. There's so much to do, but it helps to have a plan to truly experience "The Joys of Summer." Turn to page 61 for more.

June means adventure. And while biking on a former railway path or US Forest Service trail may lean more into mild than wild, there are few better ways to appreciate your natural surroundings than a leisurely pedal on a cool morning. If that sounds like your cup of tea (or iced

*We welcome
the warm
sunshine, so
refreshing
after the frigid
winter and the
rain-soaked
spring.*

coffee), turn to page 28.

June is derived from a Latin word that means "young." Did you know RVing can help to reduce the effects of aging? Check out "Forever Young," on page 66 to learn how. And since you deserve some down time after exploring, go ahead and wind down with movie night. Our advice? Take it outside! There are dozens of RVs with exterior entertainment centers, and we've selected five of our favorites beginning on page 24.

However you decide to enjoy this summer, we thank you for spending it with us. Happy travels! ■



Marcus Lemonis
Publisher
@marcuslemonis



VISIT THE MUSEUM'S WEBSITE FOR EXHIBIT INFO.



WINDOW ROCKING

Here's a picture we took during our fantastic trip west in our wonder, a 2001 Newmar Mountain Aire motorhome. The Navajo Nation Museum (navajopeople.org/nnm) in Window Rock, Arizona, is on the Navajo Indian Reservation and is a wonderful place to visit.

Don and Melanie David, via email

FROM TWITTER

What hidden talent would you show off at the campground?

@Christi64113542
My mad crochet skills. It's so relaxing to sit in nature and play with yarn and a stick.

@Glaskat26
My ability to turn a sandy beach rock into art.

@Bill01579830USA
Backing up a trailer skills.

@Odonata6500
Cornhole. I have skills!

@pannme
My yo-yo skills! With a light-up yo-yo! When do we go?

@Canadian_Girl_7
Sorry, but I can't tell you! If I tell you, then it's no longer a hidden talent!

• • •

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WELCOME ABOARD!

I'll admit I was a little wary of a magazine being put out by the most major retail player in the RV industry. After reading all the issues since *RV Magazine's* inception, I am pleasantly surprised, and I'll eat a little crow. There are a wide range of authoritative articles that pertain to all manner of things RVing/camping, and there is a lot of content in each issue. Well done!

Steve Lucchesi, Illinois

MORE IS MORE

I guess you could call us newbies. We purchased a 27-foot-long travel trailer and

have been having a fun time with it. We try to go out for a week every month. I love the magazine. Love it. But there is one problem with it ... it is absolutely too short. It should be around 150 pages, so reading it lasts all month. Or it should be published every two weeks. That way it will last until the next issue comes out. When a new magazine arrives, I read it every day and then reread it and then keep rereading it till the next comes. Good job. Keep 'em coming.

Bob, Northern Georgia

MAKE THE CALL

Regarding backing into RV sites, I hate the screaming when parking our RV. The easiest solution: I call my husband on his cell phone, and my instructions play over the speaker in the truck. I just give him instructions from the back of the RV, and it works perfectly. It also works well for a hearing disadvantage, or for husbands who just don't listen!

Perry Fillion, via email



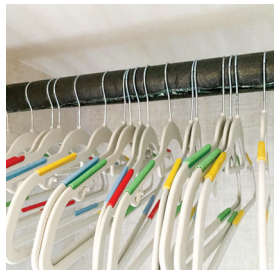
Rather than shouting back and forth while backing in to a campsite, why not try using your cell phone?

GOTCHA, TOO!

First I'd like to report that having been a trailer guy for almost five years, the issues of your previous trailer magazine were enjoyed with every one received. Then the change came to *RV Magazine*, and oh my gosh, at first I did not like it. I sent in complaints about the lack of articles on repairs and articles from other RV owners' experiences, and their questions asked about problems. I even left messages about my displeasure with the magazine, as well as some suggestions. Now [after the changes you've made], I again enjoy a magazine that has almost everything I want and need as an RV owner.

Moreover, regarding the "Gotcha" letter in the March issue, I hope those were tongue-in-cheek comments by Erik Dunn. After reading the letter, I said to myself "What is up with this person?" Seems quite selfish to want a magazine with ONLY what he

RV QUICK TIP



SECURE HANGERS

To keep our clothes from falling off the closet rod while en route to our destination, I use foam pipe insulation that fits over the rod. It keeps the hangers from bouncing off the rod during trips. Insulation foam is available in different diameters at most home-improvement stores.

- **Ronald Carlson**, Fairfield, California

wants. Give me a break, it doesn't work that way. Many, if not most, people enjoy a glass of wine or a cold beer, so if you don't, then ignore the articles.

Jere O. Myers, Roseville, California

Editor's Note: *We received quite a bit of mail regarding the "Gotcha" letter. At the risk of putting words into Erik Dunn's mouth, yes, that letter was entirely tongue-in-cheek. We apologize for any confusion.*

ALWAYS CALL AHEAD

I just finished reading the February issue. When I saw you included Hidden Valley Campground in Joshua Tree, California, in the "Going Public" sidebar to "Reservation Rules," I got a good laugh. I worked for the National Park Service for 31 years, and my last 15 were at Joshua Tree. Most of your readers will have a very hard time getting in Hidden Valley to camp, if they can get in at all. The campground has a 25-foot length restriction; there are a few tight turns in both loops that anything longer will just not make it. The road is lined with large boulders, so people with longer rigs often damage their RVs. Only small Class B or C motorhomes, or very small trailers, will fit. The parking spaces are also not very level. It is set up more for people who are tent camping.

Plus, Hidden Valley is the campground that the climbers use. So, between September and May, it is full just about every night.

Your readers are better off going to Black Rock, Indian Cove, Cottonwood, and some sites in Jumbo Rocks. These are more RV- and family-friendly, with larger sites. They are also reservation only, so you are guaranteed a site when you show up. Make those early. I bet most of the popular times are already booked up.

Dan, Cedar City, Utah

STEP TO IT

We just purchased a 2021 Puma 253FBS fifth-wheel that has the solid steps. We have owned numerous RVs in the last 21 years, and all had the folding steps, which were never a problem.

We have just completed 5,000 miles with our new fifth-wheel, and the biggest problem has been the steps. We were wondering if other RVers are having similar problems?

The steps are very heavy. If the rig is not perfectly level side-to-side, the door will not close. Sometimes we have had to dig holes in

the ground so the feet of the steps can drop down to allow the door to close.

Then there are the times when we needed to enter the rig while at rest areas and could not drop the stairs because they would come in contact with the truck next to us, or if the steps were down, we could not lift them because a truck pulled in next to us. We also worry someone will hit the stairs when they are down. The steps are 10 inches high, making the four steps very steep. For reference, stairs in homes are no

more than 7½ inches tall.

Lastly, the steps need to be kept clean so that dirt will not be tracked into the rig. Just wondering what other RVers do.

Ray and Naomi Jodoin
North Port, Florida ■

JOIN THE CONVERSATION

How do you handle the bulky steps on your RV? Do you just go with it, or have you replaced the OEM steps with a more user-friendly model?

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BUTTERNUT SQUASH SOUP

SERVES MANY (YIELDS 1 GALLON)

PREP TIME 5 MINUTES COOK TIME 25 MINUTES

Butternut squash soup is a personal favorite of mine—and a seasonal favorite in restaurants everywhere. But the shame of it is that it's hard to find outside of autumn months. Not to worry. With this recipe, you'll be able to make this creamy, delicious, and uniquely satisfying salty-sweet treat any time of year—and in any setting. You'll just need to bring a Dutch oven and a blender with you. Small price to pay for a little taste of heaven. — **ROBERT IRVINE**

You'll Need

- 5 lbs butternut squash, peeled, seeded, and diced
- 1 stick butter
- ½ cup honey
- ½ tsp ground cinnamon
- ¼ tsp ground nutmeg
- 1 quart water
- 2 cups heavy cream
- Salt and black pepper, to taste

At Camp

- 1 Place all ingredients—except heavy cream—together into a large Dutch oven.
- 2 Bring to a simmer and cook until butternut squash is tender.
- 3 Add the heavy cream and stir.
- 4 Remove the pot from the heat and transfer the mixture to a blender (only fill the blender half full at a time), cover, and carefully puree the soup on low speed until smooth.
- 5 Repeat this process until all the soup has been pureed, then season to taste with salt and pepper. ■

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Taughannock Falls

LOCAL FLAVORS

FINGER LAKES, NEW YORK

by TERRI PETERSON SMITH

► **The Finger Lakes** were formed more than 2 million years ago when receding glaciers gouged deep slices into the land. They filled with water, resulting in the 11 narrow lakes spread between what is now known as Rochester and Syracuse, New York.

Naturally, the region is a mecca for water sports of every kind but it also contains major historic and cultural sites including the

fabulous Seneca Art & Culture Center in Victor, the Women's Rights National Historical Park at Seneca Falls, and the Harriet Tubman Home and National Historical Park in Auburn. And don't miss the beautiful Sonnenberg Gardens in Canandaigua. State parks abound in the Finger Lakes and many, Watkins Glen for example, feature great hiking among striking waterfalls. Many of these

lakes are super deep and consequently moderate the temperature of the air around them, making the region just warm enough for grape varieties like riesling, chardonnay, and cabernet franc to flourish, despite the cold winters. Local vineyards and farms make great places to relax with a glass and enjoy the scenery, and if you're a Harvest Host member, stay the night.

On the Menu

Pasta with Spring Vegetables

We're going vegetarian this month in salute to the bountiful Finger Lakes farms and farmers markets, and to Ithaca's Moosewood Restaurant, an early leader in vegetarian cooking.

YOU'LL NEED

- 1 cup pine nuts
- 3 tbsp butter
- 1 garlic clove, finely chopped
- ½ cup asparagus, cut on the diagonal
- ½ cup small tender green beans, in 1-inch pieces
- ½ cup shelled peas
- ½ cup carrots, chopped
- ½ cup yellow crookneck squash
- ¾ cup heavy cream
- 1 tsp dried thyme
- salt and ground pepper
- ½ lb cooked pasta (Barilla Ready Pasta works great)
- chopped cherry tomatoes
- grated parmesan cheese
- chopped fresh basil

MAKE IT

- 1) In a large frying pan, toast pine nuts, stirring until golden brown. Remove to plate.
- 2) Sauté garlic in butter over medium heat.
- 3) Add vegetables and sauté, stirring until crisp-tender, about 5 minutes.
- 4) Pour on cream and season to taste with thyme, salt, and pepper. Let boil for 1–2 minutes.
- 5) Add cooked pasta and mix thoroughly. Cover and let sit about 5 minutes to thicken.
- 6) Serve topped with pine nuts, cherry tomatoes, parmesan cheese, and garnish with basil. Serves 4–6.

PHOTOS: TERRI PETERSON SMITH, PAUL MASIE PHOTOGRAPHY/GETTY IMAGES



Coachmen Cross Trail 20CB

With so much to explore in the Finger Lakes region, Coachmen's versatile 23-foot, 9-inch Cross Trail 20CB is a winner for on- and off-road adventures. Seating for six, a J-Lounge and table that converts into a 41-by-64-inch bed, a cabover bunk, and a rear 52-by-80-inch residential bed offer room to accommodate the whole family. Powered by the fuel-friendly Ford Transit 3.5-liter EcoBoost engine, an AWD version with up to 4,000 pounds of towing capacity is optional. Standards include a 4,000-watt Onan generator, Wi-Fi Ranger, and heated black and gray tanks. coachmenrv.com

WHY WE LIKE IT

Abundant storage inside and out | 16 gallons of propane | Open-concept RV with seating for six



FINE PAIRINGS

This month we feature two wines from the Finger Lakes region. To pair with the pasta, try **Red Tail Ridge** unoaked chardonnay. Its zippy acidity with notes of citrus and apple works well with the rich creaminess of the pasta. \$16.

Ice wine is a signature Finger Lakes offering. It's produced from grapes that have been frozen while still on the vine, which allows a more concentrated and very sweet wine. **Wagner Vidal Ice** combines flavors of ripe pears and citrus fruit. Drink it with dessert, or it's sweet enough to be dessert all by itself. \$30. ■



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ON TAP THIS MONTH

A NICE, COLD BREW

Iced coffee is the perfect way to get your caffeine on during hot summer months.

by KRISTOPHER BUNKER

When it comes to universal appeal, it's tough to beat coffee. Most of our best days at the campground start with a piping-hot cup, whether from the countertop coffee pot (a must, in my opinion), a single-serve maker, or even percolated over the coals of a morning campfire. And, why not? Coffee can give you a quick pick-me-up, and it pairs well with most breakfast foods (the good *and* the bad). In fact, nutrition experts from Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine say additional benefits of moderate coffee intake may include improved liver health; a lessened likelihood of developing Parkinson's disease, type 2 diabetes, or heart disease; and a longer life overall.

But if the thought of sipping a steaming cup while sweating in the midafternoon sun isn't high on your list, you can get your fix—and cool off—with one of these delicious coffees, each available as a one-time purchase or as part of a monthly subscription, delivered right to your door. Just add ice and enjoy!

Brewing your own iced coffee (or limiting it to a can or two a day) can save hundreds of dollars over the course of a year when compared to big-bucks coffee shops.



Austin, Texas-based **High Brew Coffee** offers more than a dozen delicious flavors (including some that are sugar-free), but the simplicity of the lightly sweetened Black & Bold is tough to pass up. This potent dairy-free delight includes 130–150 milligrams of naturally occurring caffeine per serving and is less acidic than traditional hot-brewed coffee. highbrewcoffee.com



Based out of Jacksonville, Florida, **Javy** utilizes a proprietary roasting and extraction process using Artisan roasted arabica beans for a smooth sipper called Micro-dose that yields 60 milligrams of caffeine per serving. The concentrate comes in bottles with up to 30 servings, and you control how much (or how little) kick you want when adding to your favorite liquid. try.javycoffee.com



Jot's motto is "One tablespoon changes everything." That's because the Boulder, Colorado-based brewer makes a liquid that's "20 times more concentrated than traditional coffee," using only organic beans and water. You can expect to get about 14 cups per 6.8-ounce bottle of Ultra Coffee; all you need to do is add it to 8 ounces of ice water and away you go. It's also great in milk for a richer, creamier alternative. jot.co



Wandering Bear changed the game when it became the first to offer cold-brew coffee in a tapped box. That convenience is perhaps overshadowed only by the delicious rich flavor of the 100% organic coffee the New York City-based brewer uses. The packaging is fully recyclable, and the 96-ounce box is available in a variety of flavors, including straight black, vanilla, and mocha—all of which are dairy- and sugar-free. Each serving yields about 150 milligrams of caffeine. wanderingbearcoffee.com





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Hidden Gems

Avoid the crowds this summer while seeking new adventures in these underrated destinations.

BY AMANDA ADLER

Robert Frost expounded the virtues

of following “the road not taken” in his iconic poem from 1916, and more than 100 years later weekend warriors and long-haul travelers continue to look for peaceful escapes from the chaos of modern life. When seeking a summertime getaway locale, consider diverging from your usual hot spots and instead head for an unsung destination that offers natural beauty and untapped options for adventure.

Room to Roam

A serene setting is essential to enjoying a quiet vacation away from the masses. Whether you prefer mangroves, grapevines, or forested hillsides, you'll find ample room to spread out at these peaceful retreats.

The Everglades, Florida

A trip to Florida generally evokes images of luminous beaches, palm trees, or perhaps a bustling theme park, but when it comes to finding a different sort of natural beauty

Devil's Bridge Trail, Sedona, Arizona.

Verde Valley, Arizona ▲

Arizona has no shortage of popular sun-soaked sights to explore, but the peaceful Verde Valley in Northern Arizona offers a lush landscape of green mountains amid the red rocks, fed by the picturesque Verde River. Conditions here are ripe for grape production, making the area home to the Verde Valley Wine Trail, a series of wineries winding through the towns of Jerome, Cottonwood, Sedona, and beyond. Relax and unwind as you sip and savor your way through this sprawling region, then hop aboard the Verde Canyon Railroad (verdecanyonrr.com) and keep an eye out for wildlife as you take in the dynamic scenery.



in the Sunshine State, head for the underrated, and often overlooked, Everglades. Spanning 1.5 million acres of wetlands in the southern portion of the state, the region is the largest remaining subtropical wilderness in North America. You'll find solitude surrounded by coastal mangroves, pine flatwoods, and sawgrass marshes, as well as more than your fair share of gators! For a truly unforgettable experience, venture off the well-traveled paths and explore the area by kayak or airboat.

• • •

Ozark Mountains, Arkansas and Missouri

Those looking to take in sweeping vistas atop rugged mountain peaks may be drawn to the iconic Blue Ridge, Smoky, and Rocky Mountain ranges, but the equally breathtaking Ozarks often go unrecognized. The Lake of the Ozarks in Missouri famously boasts more shoreline than the state of California, making it a water-recreation-lover's dream, but Arkansas' portion of the Ozarks is not to be outdone, with the Buffalo National River winding its way through 135 miles of wilderness. Visitors can paddle, canoe, kayak, or tube, and the region's many camping spots provide explorers with ample opportunities for dark-sky stargazing.

▲ **Hawksbill Crag, also known as Whitaker Point, is a beautiful spot found along the northern edge of the Upper Buffalo Wilderness in the Ozark National Forest. We encourage caution and common sense when posing for photos.**

FAMILY FUN

Branson, Missouri's dinner shows, live music venues, and bustling tourist attractions offer countless options for over-the-top fun, but for more laid-back family-friendly amusements head to nearby Dogwood Canyon Nature Park instead. Here you'll find wildlife tours by tram and Segway, horse-back riding, trout fishing, and other kid-approved activities, all in a serene setting that embraces the natural beauty of the Ozarks.

National Park Neighbors

America's well-traveled national parks offer compelling hikes and famous views. To get a true taste of these destinations, steer clear of tourist towns and seek out a campsite in one of these sleepy spots.

Townsend, Tennessee

Tennessee's Great Smoky Mountains offer magnificent views, miles of epic hiking trails, and easy access for travelers. These factors help to make it the most visited, and often the most crowded, national park, especially come summer. Those wanting to make the trek to this well-worn wilderness while also avoiding the throngs should consider staying off the beaten path in the relatively sleepy town of Townsend. Located outside the hubbub surrounding the tourist towns of Gatlinburg and Pigeon Forge, Townsend bills itself as "the peaceful side of the Smokies." Here you'll find opportunities to get a closer look at Appalachian culture through museums, historic sites, and less-traveled trails to remarkable vistas and cascading waterfalls.



Visit Dollywood in Pigeon Forge, Tennessee, for thrill rides like Dragonflyer.



Essex, Montana

The region surrounding Montana's Glacier National Park offers no shortage of towns with breathtaking backdrops, but along the park's southern border you'll find the not-so-touristy enclave of Essex. Though situated just a short drive from Glacier's popular Going-to-the-Sun Road, Essex also makes for an ideal home base for discovering the lesser-visited but beautiful Two Medicine Lake. Canoe across the surface and enjoy waterfall hikes through mountains and forests, or travel to the nearby Walton Goat Lick Overlook for a chance to spot mountain goats grazing. Railroad buffs will also enjoy a visit to the historic Izaak Walton Inn (izaakwaltoninn.com).



Lone Pine, California

When you think of an Old Western-style getaway, California is likely not a destination that springs to mind. But in the small, rustic town of Lone Pine that's exactly what you'll find. Situated in the Great Basin Desert between the soaring peaks of the Sierra Nevada and the jumbled boulders of the Alabama Hills, Lone Pine is a place to truly escape. Or enjoy the juxtaposition of desert and mountains when teeing off for 18 holes at Lone Pine's Mount Whitney Golf Course. Lone Pine's remote location allows for easy travel to the desolate setting of Death Valley National Park and the alien landscape of Devils Golf Course.

Small-Town Charm

Those looking for locales with a quaint downtown, hip microbreweries, thriving art scene, or gourmet eateries can find all that, and more, in these small towns with massive appeal.

Marquette, Michigan

Marquette's remote location and small population of just 20,000 residents means it often slips off the travel radar. But those who make the journey quickly fall in love with the hip craft-beer scene, striking Lake Superior views, and craggy Black Rocks that attract brave souls to cliff jump into the frigid Great Lakes waters below. Mountain bikers will find an extensive network of trails of varying degrees of difficulty throughout the region.



YOUR TURN!

What are some of your favorite off-the-beaten-path or lesser-known RV destinations that you return to as often as possible (or wish that you could)? Please send your top suggestions, along with high-resolution photos, to info-rvmagazine@rv.com

Greenville, South Carolina

Art lovers may find themselves drawn to renowned museums in New York, Chicago, and Washington, D.C., but the lesser-known Greenville County Museum of Art (gcma.org) in South Carolina is considered the premier American art museum in the South. After viewing the institution's vast collection of watercolors by iconic

BIG THRILLS

IN A SMALLER PACKAGE

Families and adventure seekers looking for big thrills in the form of roller-coasters, bumper cars, and alpine coasters can also take the road less traveled by heading off the beaten path to one of these smaller, regional amusement parks.



GLENWOOD CAVERNS ADVENTURE PARK: GLENWOOD SPRINGS, COLORADO

Originally designed to allow visitors the opportunity to tour caves found in this region, Colorado's Glenwood Caverns Adventure Park has now expanded into a stunning theme park with alpine coasters, a zip line, theater shows, and more. glenwoodcaverns.com



KNOEBELS AMUSEMENT RESORT: ELYSBURG, PENNSYLVANIA

The family-owned Knoebels Amusement Resort offers free admission with a pay-as-you-go approach to the park's roller-coasters and other attractions. With two onsite campgrounds to choose from, Knoebels makes for an easy summer getaway for families. knoebels.com



THE PARK AT OWA: FOLEY, ALABAMA

Coastal Alabama's newest theme park, The Park at OWA offers 23 attractions all within a stone's throw of the Gulf of Mexico's warm waters and sugar-sand beaches. The family-friendly park's subtropical location offers an idyllic hideaway spot that's miles away from buzzy beach party locales like Panama City. visitowa.com



HOLIDAY WORLD AND SPLASHIN' SAFARI: SANTA CLAUS, INDIANA

With appropriately themed attractions located in a destination named after the legendary gift giver, Holiday World offers a chance to enjoy rides that celebrate Halloween, Independence Day, Thanksgiving, and, of course, Santa Claus himself. Every day is a holiday here! holidayworld.com

American artist Andrew Wyeth, visitors can continue their exploration of this artsy town's science, music, baseball, history, and children's museums, as well as Greenville's many performance arts venues, breweries and distilleries, fine-dining establishments, and more. Nearby state parks offer chances to fully immerse yourself in nature, while the city's Falls Park on the Reedy provides a natural oasis right in the center of downtown.

• • •

Ouray, Colorado

Tucked away in the San Juan Mountains in southwest Colorado, Ouray, with its natural alpine environment, is heralded as the "Switzerland of America." For the most scenic views, head to High Bridge Trail at Box Canyon Falls Park.

Here you can climb 200 feet to a lookout that offers a dramatic panorama of the mountains and town below, before taking in the powerful 85-foot waterfall cascading into a quartzite canyon. Ouray also offers an enchanting downtown area, ample hiking and biking trails, and easy access to the famed Million Dollar Highway. ■

FAMILY FUN

Ouray Hot Springs Pool is a sulfur-free swimming spot offering five geothermal heated pools surrounded by snowcapped mountain peaks. Kids will delight in two waterslides, a playground, obstacle course, and climbing wall, while grown-ups can enjoy adult-only soaking areas.



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**SURROUNDED
BY WATER,
MOUNTAINS, AND
LUSH GREENERY,
THIS JEWEL OF THE
PACIFIC NORTHWEST
COMBINES BIG-CITY
OPPORTUNITY WITH
STORIED HISTORY,
CULTURE, AND
COFFEE.**

BY JULIE PERRY NELSON

Seattle is called “Emerald City” for a reason, as ample greenery carpets the surrounding area. Perched on a hillside overlooking Puget Sound, Seattle is surrounded by verdant islands and peninsulas with ferries zigzagging through endless waterways. From the waterfront to the Space Needle, Seattle hums with constant activity. Known for its prodigious music scene, extensive dining options, culturally rich heritage, and notable skyline, Seattle is a must-see on any trip to the Pacific Northwest.

Seattle is a wonderful place to visit, but it can be a real challenge to locate parking for large vehicles. When leaving the RV at the campsite and piloting your tow vehicle or dinghy is not possible, contact Visit Seattle (visitseattle.org) for a copy of its RV parking “cheat sheet.” The list includes many affordable parking lots that are suitable for RVs. Once in town use your dinghy or tow vehicle, public transportation, Uber, or Lyft to travel to tourist destinations. Scooters are available for rent near most attractions and are especially useful in the lively waterfront area.

Whether exploring peaceful islands, unique museums, or architectural marvels, and with shopping and restaurants galore, Seattle is sure to have something to entertain everyone in your crew. Oh, and did I mention they have some world-famous coffee?

*RV Road
Trip**

SEATTLE

UNDERGROUND TOURS | SEAFOOD

MUST-DO

When visiting the newly renovated Space Needle (spaceneedle.com), make sure to buy the combo ticket that includes Chihuly Garden and Glass (chihulygardenandglass.com). Brilliantly colored orbs, flowers, and ribbons of glass surround visitors at the garden. While there, make sure to catch one of the fascinating glassblowing demonstrations.





◀ OFF THE BEATEN PATH

Go underground and experience a colorful part of Seattle's past in Bill Speidel's Underground Tour (undergroundtour.com). Explore three sections of town buried under present-day Pioneer Square. Learn about the former houses of ill repute and septic difficulties (yuck!) of early Seattle.

▶ ON THE MENU

Jack's Fish Spot (jacksfishspot.com) is a busy, noisy, fun lunch or early dinner locale at Pike Place Market. Guests sit at counters to watch their food being prepared. The salmon and chips and sourdough clam chowder bowl are local favorites. Owner Jack Mathers is a Seattle native who has more than 40 years of experience in the fish business. Jack's is completely family-owned and operated; all three of Jack's children work there.



▶ STAY HERE

Maple Grove RV Resort (maplegrovervresort.com) is just north of Seattle and close to the Whidbey Island ferry and the Boeing factory (tours). The Good Sam Campground has more than 80 large, paved sites including numerous pull-throughs for added convenience. Maple Grove gets its name from the Armstrong Maples located throughout the area—but the branches of the trees grow upward rather than out, minimizing overhead clearance issues.



WASHINGTON

FOOD | WATERFRONT VIEWS | POP CULTURE | CRUISES

The Seattle skyline is enhanced by beautiful Mount Rainier, which is the tallest mountain in Washington at 14,410 feet above sea level.



FAMILY RVERS

MUST-DO

The Seattle Great Wheel (seattlegreatwheel.com) is the largest observation wheel on the West Coast. Enjoy spectacular views of the waterfront from one of 42 fully enclosed gondolas. The wheel can hold 300 passengers at a time!

► OFF THE BEATEN PATH

Fly through the air at Emerald City Trapeze Arts (emeraldcitytrapeze.com). Kids (and kids at heart) 12 years and older learn how to swing and hang from their knees above the ample safety net. If prone to motion sickness, make sure to take your favorite remedy beforehand.



► ON THE MENU

Let the kids eat with their hands at Piroshky Piroshky (piroshkybakery.com) at Pike Place Market. Choose from a variety of delectable sweet or savory flavors of hand pies. Vegetarian and vegan options available.



STAY HERE

Vasa Park Resort (vasaparkresort.org) is a small campground with big-fun activities. The park is on Lake Sammamish and includes a beach, horse-shoe pits, and a playground. Kids will love the floating platform with slides that empty into the lake.

RETIRED RVERS

MUST-DO

Pike Place Market (pikeplacemarket.org) is a whirlwind of activity. The outdoor venue is filled with merchants offering fresh flowers, fruits, vegetables, and seafood. Grab the catch-of-the-day to grill at your campsite or a bouquet of flowers to brighten up the rig.



OFF THE BEATEN PATH

Klondike Gold Rush National Historical Park (nps.gov/klse) chronicles the hardships and adventures of people struck by gold fever in the 1890s. Seattle was the jumping-off point for an estimated 100,000 prospectors on their way to Canada's Yukon.



ON THE MENU

Since 1981, The Pink Door (thepinkdoor.net) has been a premier destination for eclectic decor and elegant fine dining. Reserve well in advance to catch the evening entertainment ranging from jazz, electric cello, and even acrobats flying overhead.



STAY HERE

Experience a peaceful respite from the bustle of the big city at Sun Outdoors' Gig Harbor RV Resort (sunoutdoors.com). Located between Seattle and the Olympic Peninsula, the resort offers short- or long-term stays in a lovely, wooded setting.

▶ OFF THE BEATEN PATH

Embark on a locks cruise with Argosy Cruises (argosycruises.com). The tours are a great way to learn about the area with live narration on Seattle's history and neighborhoods. The cruise travels through the Ballard Locks, a.k.a. the "Boat Elevator," and offers views of seaplanes and floating home communities.



▶ ON THE MENU

For something different, sample Moroccan food at Marrakesh (marrakeshseattle.com). The delicious, authentic five-course meals are served in a traditional setting. Reserve a table Wednesday–Sunday to enjoy a belly-dance performance while dining.



MUST-DO

The Museum of Popular Culture or MoPOP (mopop.org) is a must for fans of grunge music. The anticultural wonder designed by Frank Gehry and the two-story pyramid of guitars must be seen to be believed. MoPOP also has cool rooms with costumes and props from sci-fi, fantasy, and horror movies.



STAY HERE

Tall Chief RV & Camping Resort (rvonthego.com) is a Good Sam Campground with a bevy of things to do. Amenities include a swimming pool, hot tub, sauna, mini golf, dog park, basketball, and volleyball courts. While at Tall Chief, visit nearby spectacular Snoqualmie Falls.

Seattle's Scooter Share program allows visitors to rent an electric scooter for exploration. Rentals and payment are app-based, and when you're finished riding, simply park it responsibly anywhere. ■



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STARRY NIGHTS

**ENJOY MOVIE TIME
OUTDOORS WITH
THESE FIVE RVs
WITH EXTERIOR
ENTERTAINMENT
CENTERS.**

BY BRUCE W. SMITH

I'd never been to

a big NASCAR race until a decade ago when friends invited me to join them in Alabama at the famed Talladega Superspeedway for a couple of days to experience the Talladega 500, now called the GEICO 500. They owned a nice motorhome and made reservations every year to park it on Allison Motorhome Ridge located on the hill overlooking the backstretch.

It was an amazing experience. In addition to the festive racing atmosphere and the event itself, what I remember most was enjoying the great food they cooked in the outside kitchen and watching the prerace coverage on the big-screen TV mounted in their motorhome's outside entertainment center. What made it even more memorable was being with my friends and their family—all of us sitting under the

awning in lawn chairs—talking, eating, and soaking in the surroundings while we watched movies after the track shut down for the day.

I've enjoyed RV "tailgating" the same way at college football games, off-road races, airshows, family reunions, golf and fishing tournaments, and other special events over the years. Entertaining and being entertained are joys shared by RVers of all types, and having an exterior entertainment center adds to the fun, especially in the summer when you can enjoy evenings sitting outdoors watching movies with the kids.

A wide variety of RVs today offer outside entertainment centers of which these five are great examples. Whatever RV fits your lifestyle best, an outside entertainment system is a feature that will be truly appreciated now—and for years to come.

◀ CEDAR CREEK 38EL CHAMPAGNE EDITION

Fifth-wheel trailers suited for extended stays don't get much more opulent than the Cedar Creek 38EL Champagne Edition. This 42-foot fiver is a premium RV package and well suited for entertaining inside and out. What makes it a top choice for outdoor movie night, or any type of family-and-friends gathering under the stars, is this tandem-axle, triple-slide's 32-inch flat-screen in its own exterior compartment. But the pièce de résistance in the 38EL is the optional pullout Outdoor Party Center in the pass-through storage compartment that includes a Power Lift 50-inch TV, mini fridge, and griddle cooktop. Outdoor entertaining and movie nights don't get any better than the Cedar Creek 38EL's setup.

This fiver exudes luxury. It features such items as a built-in dishwasher, walk-in pantry, four-burner stove with turkey-sized 30-inch oven, separate wine chiller, residential-size French door fridge/freezer, awesome interior woodwork front to rear, and a dual-vanity bathroom adjacent to the master suite with its king bed and nine-drawer dresser. The attention to details, the quality of the furnishings, and creative design, such as being prepped for a side-by-side washer and dryer tucked into the front cap, set this fifth-wheel a level above most top-shelf ones in this class. MSRP: \$124,469

forestriverinc.com



DUTCHMEN VOLTAGE 4145 TOY HAULER

Families with a shared love for motorsports and exploring the outdoors while four-wheeling, ATVing, or motorcycle riding will find the big, triple-slide Voltage Toy Hauler 4145 from Dutchmen RV provides everything from a place to transport the toys to providing great creature comforts to handling exterior entertainment needs. This 44-foot dual-entry fifth-wheel has a 13-foot garage and has a very nice exterior setup with a 50-inch TV with exterior speakers, outside grill, and mini fridge.

The 4145 comes with a king bed and full bath in the master bedroom. In the garage is a half-bath, a twin loft bed, a power bunk, and sofas and a tabletop. In the living area is a residential sofa that has heat and massage, a fireplace, and a big kitchen with a peninsula countertop. The dedicated heat ducts for the underbelly and the All-Weather Package with additional insulation ensures the Voltage is protected and prepared for all sorts of weather. The Voltage also incorporates a Zero-G ramp door that turns into a patio once the toys are off-loaded. Let the party begin! MSRP: \$155,000

dutchmen.com



JAYCO PRECEPT 36C

If you're looking for a Class A that has a nice outdoor entertainment system but don't want the financial hit and driving challenges of a huge semi-sized coach, Jayco's midsize Precept is a great place to start. This 39-foot gas-powered motorhome is loaded with amenities, residential-size appliances, sleeps up to seven, and is filled with more standard features than the competition, according to Jayco. Having a full bath in the rear bedroom and a half-bath amidships provides maximum privacy and convenience.

The 2022 Precepts have a new interior design and three new full-body paint schemes that set them apart from earlier models. The new 36C has a Sony infotainment center on the interior as well as an exterior

entertainment center with a Sony DVD/FM sound system and big LED TV mounted on a swivel bracket so it can be viewed from anywhere movie-night attendees are sitting. Parked off-the-grid? The quiet 5,500-watt Onan generator delivers more than enough juice to keep everything powered up. MSRP: \$216,150
jayco.com

"ENTERTAINING AND BEING ENTERTAINED ARE JOYS SHARED BY RVERS OF ALL TYPES, AND HAVING AN EXTERIOR ENTERTAINMENT CENTER ADDS TO THE FUN."

**FOREST RIVER
FORESTER 2861DS**

Those who prefer the layout and ease of driving a Class C coach, plus love entertaining and grilling outdoors and being able to enjoy movie night under the stars will find the nicely furnished 30-foot, 9-inch Forester 2861DS, one of six floorplans mounted on the Ford E-450 gas platform from Forest River, an excellent choice. The exterior kitchen/entertainment center features a fridge, cooktop, seamless countertop, sink, soft-touch drawers, overhead cabinet, and a built-in LED TV. Make movie night and outdoor entertaining even sweeter with the optional exterior entertainment center that sports a 28-inch flat-panel TV and sound system.

This Ford-based Class C is also one of the best handling because it's equipped with the Forest River EZ Ryde premium suspension system that includes Bilstein shocks to dampen excessive sway and bounce, Firestone Ride-Rite air springs to provide a better way to balance loads, and a heavy-duty Hellwig sway bar to increase driving stability at highway speeds while reducing the effects of crosswind. With all the amenities and features inside, the great feel behind the wheel, and exterior entertainment package, this coach is destined to help create wonderful lifelong memories. MSRP: \$115,900
forestriverinc.com



WINNEBAGO VISTA E29V

Available in the fourth quarter of this year, Winnebago's updated 2023 Class A Vista E29V will have a king bed and a larger dinette. The full-featured E29V sleeps five in luxurious comfort with its 72-by-75-inch walk-around bed in the master suite, plus a sofa bed (theater seating optional) in the living area, along with a convertible dinette. An optional StudioLoft Bed that powers down from above the driver's compartment is also available. Winnebago offers five floorplans in the Vista line in lengths from 28 feet, 5 inches to 35 feet, all with optional exterior entertainment centers, and all based on the Ford F-53 chassis powered by the 7.3-liter gas V-8.

You'll never miss an outdoor movie night when camping in the new Vista E29V with its big 39-inch HDTV mounted in the exterior entertainment center and a wonderful option called the Tailgate Package that features a beautiful outdoor kitchen. If entertaining outdoors and tailgating are high on the family's priority list, this 30-foot coach transforms the



outdoors into a spacious living room without walls under a 17-foot awning.

The huge exterior kitchen has everything one needs to keep movie-watchers well fed as they watch the big-screen TV mounted in its own compartment a few feet away. The Vista's remote-controlled entertainment system and built-in speakers let you really crank up the volume. MSRP:

\$179,252

winnebago.com ■



Winnebago's E29V Vista coach is a wonderful motorhome for family adventures. It gets even better in 2023. The new model removes the pantry that was next to the dinette, which allows room for a king bed and a 6-inch-wider dinette. The 2023 will also have two small wardrobes instead of one large one, and a storage area inside the bathroom.

Igave up bicycling on the streets years ago. Between heavier traffic and an increase in distracted drivers, I just didn't feel comfortable taking my bike on any road with a line down the center.

When we got our travel trailer, I researched mountain biking, but my aversion to risk reared its head again. Those fast downhill, sharp turns, and lumpy roots looked like a recipe for a broken arm. Then I found trail riding.

Trail riding is a milder form of mountain biking, done on flatter, wider trails with very few obstructions. It allows me to get farther out in nature in less time, while exercising different muscles than I do when hiking or walking around a campground.

GEARING UP

While any bicycle will work, I chose a mountain bike because I thought it would be more comfortable to ride on dirt roads. My local bike shop representative listened to my preferences—a smooth ride and a seat that didn't leave me limping the next day—and fitted me with a new Trek.

Many adults have done their most recent biking on their 10-speed road bike from high school, and that is quite different from a mountain bike. The tires on mountain bikes are fatter than road bikes, and the shock absorber on the front tire—and sometimes the back one, too—makes it much easier to ride over rough terrain.

ADVANTAGES OF TRAIL RIDING

Prior to the pandemic, biking by adults had been fading in popularity a little each year. According to a study done for PeopleForBikes (peopleforbikes.org), 48% of respondents listed fear as their main reason for not biking.

Safety is one of the biggest advantages of trail riding, which is great for all ages and cycling-ability levels. Bikers are not sharing the space with cars, and the lack of congestion makes it much easier to make quick corrections or stops.

Most of the trails that are good for biking are also open for hiking, but bikers can cover 2–3 times as much distance in the same amount of time using their muscles in a different way. Plus, the width of the trail allows people to ride side by side, making it much more social than road cycling.

Biking on Rail

TAKE A RIDE ON THE MILDER SIDE ON TRAILS ONCE USED BY TRAINS FOR FUN FOR ALL

BY NANCY MOELLER



British Columbia's Chance Creek Forest Service Road crosses over Chance Creek Bridge near the ghost town of Garibaldi just off the Sea-to-Sky Highway (Highway 99). The forest service road covers scenic and tame terrain. The area's breathtakingly beautiful spots include turquoise-colored, glacier-fed Garibaldi Lake. Rising above the alpine lake is British Columbia's most well-known volcano, Mount Garibaldi, a potentially active stratovolcano.

Trails

AGES AND FITNESS LEVELS.



TRAINS TO TRAILS

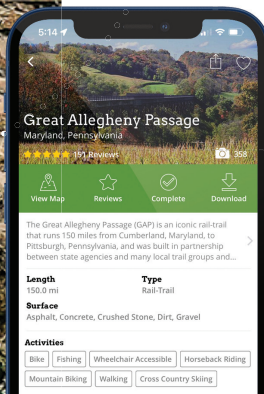
Some of the best maintained, mostly flat trails in the US and Canada are former rail beds that have been repurposed through a Rails-to-Trails initiative across the country. One huge advantage of these trails is the lack of incline. Most are a 3% grade or less, which is not even as steep as a wheelchair ramp.

One popular example is the Virginia Creeper Trail, which traverses 34 miles between the Virginia mountain towns of Abingdon and Damascus. The Virginia Creeper is 35 years old, so a brisk tourism business has grown around it, offering bike rentals, camping, restaurants, and shuttle services. The trail itself winds through the forests of the Appalachian foothills, crossing several rivers, and at one point intersecting with the Appalachian Trail.

Nestled in the Allegheny Mountains, Borden Tunnel passes through a rugged ridge in Maryland along the 150-mile-long Great Allegheny Passage.

FINDING GREAT TRAILS

The Rails-to-Trails Conservancy operates TrailLink (traillink.com), a website and downloadable app that allows users to explore easy trails near home, RV campgrounds, or wherever they are traveling. The app has filters that allow a



The TrailLink app and website (traillink.com) make it easy to find riding trails near you. A free account allows you to view more than 40,000 miles of trail maps; with an unlimited account you can create custom guidebooks and more.

PHOTOS: NANCY MOELLER, COURTESY SWAGMAN, GREAT ALLEGHENY PASSAGE CONSERVANCY, IDAHO PARKS AND RECREATION



Conant Creek Trestle along Idaho's Ashton to Teton Trail is one of three that are open to bicyclists, hikers, and horseback riders. In the winter, they're popular crossings for cross-country skiers and riders on fat bikes.

biker to limit the search results by length of the trail, trail type, and surface material—concrete, dirt, gravel, or asphalt—and the map of the trail indicates water stops, bathrooms, and trailheads.

For example, a search on TrailLink for trails in Pennsylvania yields more than 250 results, including the popular Great Allegheny Passage. This 150-mile dirt and gravel trail extends from Pittsburgh to Maryland, passing near dozens of terrific commercial campgrounds as well as Ohiopyle State Park.

GETTING FARTHER OUT

Scott Gutzke is a lifelong RVer who has made trail riding a staple

of his family's camping trips. As a teenager, he and his father rode many of the state bike trails in Wisconsin. "Most are former railroad grades, which means they are more level than the surrounding countryside," Scott explained. "It's neat to ride over old bridges, through tunnels, and past structures from the railroads. You get a taste of history, but also some incredible scenery and stops at quaint towns," he added.

BIKES AND RVs

Scott has a travel trailer, so his family carries the bikes in the back of their tow vehicle, a pickup. This doesn't work for everyone, so luckily there are quite a few

"Safety is one of the biggest advantages for trail riding, which is great for all ages and cycling-ability levels."



MILD + WILD
Rail trails and forest service roads are generally wide and rut-free, making them good choices for bicycling; just be sure to research the elevation gain. Plus, it's tough to top Mother Nature's handiwork!

TERRIFIC TRAILS

- **Old Croton Aqueduct Trail**—Yonkers, New York. parks.ny.gov
Trail overview: This 26-mile trail follows an old aqueduct that supplied water for New York City. History is everywhere on this trail, and it passes through the famous literary town of Sleepy Hollow.
Set up camp: Croton Point Park Campground is right on the Hudson River. parks.westchestergov.com
- **Great Allegheny Passage**—Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, to Cumberland, Maryland. gaptrail.org
Trail overview: This 150-mile trail provides dozens of places to hop on and off. It's one of the most popular trails among new bicyclists.
Set up camp: Yough Lake Campground, near Ohiopyle State Park, offers whitewater rafting and water sports at the campground. laurelhighlands.com
- **Virginia Creeper Trail**—Virginia/Tennessee/ North Carolina border. vacreepertrail.com
Trail overview: Filled with railroad trestles, this trail winds 34 miles through the mountains and crosses the Appalachian Trail.
Set up camp: Damascus Creekside RV Park, in "Trail Town USA," Damascus, Virginia. The town has great restaurants that cater to through-hikers on the Appalachian Trail. damascuscreeksiderv.com
- **Wild Goose Trail**—Fond du Lac, Wisconsin. dnr.wisconsin.gov
Trail overview: A very flat, tree-covered 34-mile trail that is filled with wildlife and skirts the western edge of the Horicon National Wildlife Refuge.
Set up camp: Breezy Hill Campground in Fond du Lac is a full-service, tree-filled campground that offers lots of activities for adults and children. breezyhillcamp.com
- **Galloping Goose Trail**—Telluride, Colorado. telluride.com
Trail overview: A 20-mile-high elevation trail from a narrow-gauge train used during the mining era with gorgeous views the whole way.
Set up camp: Silverton Lakes RV Resort in the San Juan Mountains is a full-hookup RV park. silvertonlakes.com
- **Ashton to Teton Trail**—Southeast Idaho. parksandreccreation.idaho.gov
Trail overview: This 30-mile trail offers beautiful views of the Tetons for riders going the slightly uphill direction toward Teton.
Set up camp: The Jolley Camper just outside Ashton offers views of the Tetons and close access to world-class trout fishing and multiple natural spots to explore. jolleycamper.com

options for RVers who want to bring along bicycles.

One option, of course, is to put them inside the RV. This is the option that Mark Sheldon, an RV product specialist from Chattanooga, Tennessee, chose for his recent trip to Florida in his hybrid camper.

"We had recently bought eBikes, and I was a little worried about the weight for our first trip," Mark explains. He wrapped the bikes in blankets to make sure they didn't mar the RV's interior, and they had no problem. "Now that I have had more time to research carrying eBikes," Mark said, "I am not worried about their weight on a rack."

BIKE-RACK OPTIONS

There are several options for carrying bikes on the exterior of an RV, and it's worth looking at each one before deciding.

Swagman (swagman.net) has

quite a few models for RVers. The company offers a sturdy hitch-mounted rack and hitch extender (if needed) as well as an RV bumper adapter. In addition, Swagman offers a bike bag to surround the bikes and protect them from the elements, both while on the RV or parked in the campground.

Many RVers find a ladder-mount



The Jack-It Double Bike Carrier System from Lippert (also above left), with an 80-pound load rating, carries bicycles by the wheels. It fits most A-frame travel and cargo trailers, mounts over the A-frame jack, and attaches directly to the frame. Swagman (above right) offers RV bumper adapters to create a 2-inch hitch receiver. Bike racks include zero-frame contact models, platform racks, and hanging racks. Some can carry up to four bikes.



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rack, made by Venture Forward (item 85024, campingworld.com) or Camco (camco.net) a great option. It holds the bikes higher while leaving the hitch available for other uses.

For bikers with travel trailers, Lippert (lci1.com) manufactures the Jack-It, a Y-shaped bike rack that mounts on the front of the travel trailer above the propane cylinders. Placing bikes here allows the driver to keep an eye on the bikes while en route.

Pickup drivers might find that tailgate bike pads work best for them. A tailgate pad is a durable pad that folds over the tailgate and attaches to itself with straps that slip through the hinge of the tailgate. Once on, bikes are fitted on the tailgate—one tire in the bed and one tire out—and strapped to the pad with hook-and-loop. This cost-effective option will usually carry up to six bikes, making it a great choice for families.



Pieces of history, like an old grain elevator, can be spotted along Idaho's Ashton to Teton Trail. Wildflowers pop up in June and July, in the summer the rolling hills are green with alfalfa from local farmers, and fall brings a kaleidoscope of color.

GETTING READY TO RIDE

I wear a helmet, and in addition to carrying a water bottle, I bring a basic repair kit that includes a spare bicycle tube. I have also found that a handlebar cell-phone mount keeps the map handy for a quick glance.

When I originally looked into mountain biking, I took two workshops so I knew what I was getting into. One lesson has been invaluable in my trail biking as well—keep two fingers on the back brake lever at all times. Even on a slow, smooth trail, you never know when you may run into a huge puddle, a loose dog, or other obstruction that requires quick braking.

No matter where you are traveling, there is a mild bike trail near you. Whether you choose a dirt, gravel, asphalt, or mixed bike-path surface, getting out on the trail will help extend the fun and adventure of an RV trip for every member of your family. ■

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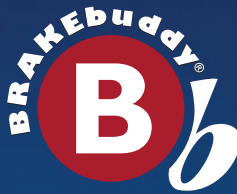
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BUILDING A DREAM RV

Gino Lucci's one-of-a-kind airplane-turned-motorhome is a true labor of love.

BY DONYA CARLSON

Air Force veteran Gino Lucci had dreamed of building an airplane motorhome since he was 8 years old when he saw one on TV, and he even collected parts for it throughout the years. After 25 years in the Air Force, he retired, but his lifelong hobby and career as an airplane mechanic led him to start a father-and-sons business, Round Engine Aero, quite by accident: "We started off buying a couple of airplane parts and selling them, and next thing you know, we've got 5 acres of airplanes and parts!"

Building The Fabulous Flamingo was a team effort. The Lucci family from left: son Giacinto, wife Laura, son Garrett, and Gino.

In 2019, he acquired a 1943 Douglas DC-3/R4D (U.S. Navy) transport aircraft and began the yearlong process of converting it into an RV. He used the chassis of an International 4300 with a DT466 7.6-liter engine and "merged the two, hillbilly scientifically," described Gino. Named "The Fabulous Flamingo," it is registered as an International truck conversion. "We had to meet all the requirements of a new car manufacturer. We had to show them stuff like the airplane windshield is triple-pane safety glass, better than the double-pane required for regular cars."

The Lucci family travels all around the country in their motorhome—and no surprise, "We've gotten pulled over in almost every

state we've been in—usually more out of curiosity."

Wind Beneath My Wings

The DC-3 was damaged beyond repair in a tornado and sat on the ground for 30 years in Missouri. Gino's oldest son had located the plane, and after a year of negotiation, they purchased the plane from Barron Aviation and had it transported to their home in Michigan. They started by gutting the plane from the nose to the tail, down to the aluminum frame. They then rewired the plane using the original airplane wire. The cockpit's driver's side is all to DOT compliance, and on the copilot's side, "It's all airplane. There's the copilot's yoke [steering wheel, nonfunctioning], and we reinstalled all the radios and instruments, which actually work. We can go to an airport and turn on the radio frequency."

PHOTOS: GINO LUCCI



The DC-3's original 1940s' intercom system works, as do the emergency exits. To meet DOT regulations, he used airplane fixtures with DOT-approved lights. The front fenders are the engine cowlings from the DC-3, and the back fenders are fuel tanks from a plane. The Flamingo sports the original FAA logo on the side, and the side mirrors are repurposed from a 1970 Ford pickup.

When the owner of a local junkyard, Frontier Truck Parts, found out what Gino was up to, "He gave us access to their semitruck junkyard and that way we could learn how certain things worked. For instance, we had to make the computer for the truck

FROM
DAMAGED
AIRPLANE TO
FAMILY
RV!



operate everything in the motorhome. He let us take apart air-conditioning systems to figure out how to modify this to work in our motorhome."

Inside, there are two single beds at the back, another bed that mimics the crew sleeping area from a 1930s'-era plane, an eating area/bed that is part RV dinette and part Gino's creation, a couch/bed, and a seat out of a U.S. Navy submarine chaser. The door into the bathroom that has a tub and shower is the actual door from the DC-3 that led into the cockpit, and the drawer knobs are toy airplanes. The kitchen cabinets are made from old radio and equipment racks, and the countertops are another Gino creation.

Adventures on the Road

The Lucci family has all kinds of crazy and wonderful stories to tell about their experiences in the Flamingo, from the fun they have driving around car shows, to being followed to gas stations, to hearing on scanners, "There's this plane driving down the road," to reactions when the airplane's door opens and they descend the airstairs.

One time in New York they got pulled over on a two-lane road and "The officer was checking over our documents, and when he looked up there was this huge traffic jam with people stopped and taking pictures. The officer said, 'We're causing a public scene—just go!'"

One of their most heartwarming experiences was when a woman they didn't know asked if they would show her dad the RV because he had flown a DC-3

Above from left: The Luccis did all the work, from gutting the DC-3 to turning it into a Class A motorhome that incorporates many of the plane's original parts. All the woodwork in the bunk space came from 1930s' and 1940s' aircraft. The Flamingo's air conditioner is under the bed. The fridge and range were repurposed from an old camper, and the DC-3's original galley is below the microwave. Gino created the blue butcher-block-and-Formica counters.

during World War II. Gino and his oldest son drove to the house, where the veteran was in the front yard in a wheelchair, wearing his U.S. Air Force hat and shirt, and waving an American flag. "He was touching the airplane and telling incredible stories, some of which his daughter had not heard, and we were stunned at this hero's experiences. When we left there, my son and I were totally silent; what do we say at that point?"

A family friend has a child who had to go to the hospital regularly, so Gino would drive her there in the motorhome, along with a bunch of her friends, and let them have fun talking on the intercom and flipping all the switches. "Those are some of the best times," he said.

Building his childhood dream was "A true labor of love. It was so exciting that I'd get up at 2 or 3 in the morning to work on it before doing my regular job, and then I'd cut out early and go back to working on this." His reward is in spending time with his family and sharing his unique project and seeing how it makes people happy. Gino says it's a work in progress as he's always finding some aviation component to add. Though unlike many airlines, "We haven't lost any luggage yet!" ■

**We had to
make the
computer
for the truck
operate
everything
in the
motorhome.**

PERFECT PARKS

LOGAN ROAD RV PARK

BY KRISTOPHER BUNKER

Location isn't everything ... but a good one sure helps. And, in the case of Logan Road RV Park in Lincoln City, Oregon, location teams up with an impressive list of amenities, overall convenience, and mild weather to produce the perfect base camp

The view from above Logan Road RV Park is stunning, but you simply can't beat the sights while visiting the area, which varies from traditional seaside architecture to old-growth timber to misty mountaintops.

for a coastal getaway. With 51 full-hookup sites offering the latest in internet bandwidth and cable technology, all located just a few blocks from the beach, we know you'll enjoy a retreat with the whole family—including pets, too. Logan Road offers plenty of space to explore, and has a large dog run as well. On-site showers and laundry service are also available. No pool, you say? Well, location strikes again, as visitors to Logan Road are free to use the world-class swimming pool and spa at nearby Chinook Winds Casino Resort. Round-the-clock shuttle service is available to the casino—which offers more than 1,100 slot machines; table games like blackjack, craps, and roulette; big-name entertainment; signature outdoor events; and world-class dining options. And, cut into a mountainside and bordered by natural wetlands and water features, the challenging 18-hole Chinook Winds Golf Course is just a tee shot north of the casino.

loganroadrvpark.com



3 Reasons You'll Want to Stay!

Beachcombing or gambling not your thing? Fear not, there's plenty to do because of the prime—you guessed it—location, and overall quality, of Logan Road RV Park.

10/10*/9.5

Logan Road has achieved a near perfect rating from the *Good Sam Guide Series* for the facility, overall cleanliness, and visual appeal.

URBAN ENJOYMENT

Nearby attractions like the Lincoln City Outlet Center, quaint Bijou Theater, and modern Lincoln City Cinemas will offer something for everyone.

THAR SHE BLOWS!

Scan the Pacific horizon for majestic gray whales migrating in pods. The best times for whale-watching are during spring and fall. ■

SUMMER STOPS

Celebrate the solstice by planning a trip to these three national parks.

BY ABBEY ROBERTSON

At Parks Project, summertime has always made us think of a few things—sunny afternoons exploring trails, late nights staring up at the stars, and the open road stretching out as far as the eye can see. Summer has always meant the beginning of something—maybe it goes back to being kids in school, waiting for that last bell to ring and freedom to begin. There's something deeply nostalgic about this time of year as we look back on fond memories as well as look forward to making new ones. It's only natural that summer makes us think of parks, too. Okay, fine—if we're being honest, we think of parks all the time anyway, but there are certain parks that only get better as the warmer months begin. Here's a few of our favorites to that we love explore.

Cuyahoga Valley National Park, Ohio

Looking for something in the Midwest? Cuyahoga Valley is a hidden gem not far from Cleveland, Ohio, with fascinating historical sites, a lake in which to cool off, and a train you can take through the heart of the park. With more than 125 miles of hiking trails, varied-terrain biking trails, and even a butterfly observation area, there are numerous opportunities for exploring. Be sure to check out the Ledges, which was once a playground for 18th-century park-goers. There's a reason why it was an instant classic.

nps.gov/cuva

Canyonlands National Park, Utah

Okay, we know—it gets hot in Utah in the summer, but you're going to have to take our word on this one. While the Utah heat can be stifling, the dry desert heat makes everything more palatable, and one look at the view down into the park's canyons will have you so distracted you won't be thinking about the sweat you're working up—just don't forget the water! With a beautiful drive and plenty of trails to explore, this park is definitely worth a summer visit. And be sure to stick around after sunset to take in the stars.

nps.gov/cany

Grand Teton National Park, Wyoming

There's truly nothing like your first view of the Tetons. Rising high off the horizon, the park's unmistakable peaks stand in stark beauty from the woods that surround them, their reflection rippling in the crystalline waters of Jenny Lake. You can explore the lake by boat or take in its parameter from the shade of the trails that circle it. For an easy hike with fantastic views, check out the trail to Inspiration Point.

nps.gov/grte

Picture-Perfect

The Teton Range towers over the valley of Jackson Hole, Wyoming, reflected in alpine and backcountry lakes. The national park's breathtakingly beautiful scenery and almost pristine ecosystem is a draw for outdoor lovers of all ages.

NIGHT DRIVING

WHEN DARKNESS FALLS

Navigating your RV at night calls for some additional measures, but an extended camping season is well worth the extra effort.

BY PETER MERCER

More RV owners are stretching their camping season from earlier spring days to later autumn times. This allows them to visit and enjoy special spring gatherings and the festivities of the local fall fairs.

Extending your camping season presents some other benefits such as possible reduced shoulder season camping rates, choice located sites, and less crowded park and surrounding amenities.

However, for those RV owners who take advantage of this, they are often exposed to an increase in night driving due to the shorter daylight hours at either end of the extended season. While this normally presents no issue for most smaller vehicle drivers, RVs come with their own night travel challenges. So, let's look at some of the tasks and cautions you may face.

RV DEPARTURE INSPECTION

First, unlike your daily driver, a basic departure inspection should be carried out prior to setting off in your RV. Things like hitch lock integrity, safety chains secure, leveling jacks retracted, basement doors secure, running-light check, trailer-light check, brake and turn signal test, and, confirming the correct tire pressures are just some of the items that should be checked. Unlike a daytime inspection, a missing pin or other fault can easily be hidden in a cloak of early morning or evening darkness.



CLEAN GLASS INSIDE AND OUT

Driving at night, or into the sun, requires a clean windshield both inside and out. A hazy film on the inside of the windshield may look very clear when driving away



from the sun or on a dark road, but that all changes when facing a bright light. The film coating illuminates with a dull glow while the light diffuses into large halo-like blotches. This makes it difficult to see. To check the inside for clarity, use a flashlight laid near flat against the outside of the windshield, tilted slightly into the glass. Now observe the glow from the light beam along the glass. Run your finger on the inside of the glass in the light beam and watch for any marks. If it leaves a clearer mark, the inside of the window has a buildup of film. For motorhomes, early camp departures often face an additional issue, heavy condensation on the windshield inside. This is generally caused by morning showers and coffee or food preparation within the coach. This sometimes can be evaporated by the defrost fans prior to leaving.

However, it more often needs to be towed off until dry. Either way, make sure the windshield is thoroughly clean inside and out.

The most obvious way to get better night vision is to get better overall vision. If you require glasses or contacts, be sure the prescription is up to date, and always wear them when behind the wheel.



NIGHT VISION

Nighttime driving requires extra attention as vision is greatly reduced and exposes the driver to rapidly changing light bursts from oncoming traffic. Additionally, bright light reflections from trailing vehicles from the RV's oversized outside rearview mirrors further reduce the eye's pupil dilation. Help with reducing these excess light sources requires not looking directly at the oncoming lights and instead looking beyond them in your soon-

to-be path. One advantage many motorhome and trailer tow-vehicle drivers have is a higher eye level than automobile operators. This higher elevation puts the RV driver's view further from the approaching headlight's aim. The reflected light from the rear can be eased by tilting the mirrors slightly outward. While this will then require you to lean up slightly to view the traffic behind, it will substantially reduce the reflected light and will improve your forward view.



REDUCE INTERIOR LIGHT SOURCES

In addition to dealing with outside light sources, the reduction of any unneeded lighting internally will benefit the driver's night vision. Turning the dash lights to the lowest point, yet still usable, is a good measure. Putting your GPS in the darker display night view mode will also help. Alternatively, covering or turning off the unit if not needed is even more effective.



"NIGHTTIME DRIVING REQUIRES EXTRA ATTENTION AS VISION IS GREATLY REDUCED AND EXPOSES THE DRIVER TO RAPIDLY CHANGING LIGHT BURSTS FROM ONCOMING TRAFFIC."

Don't worry about observing any traffic approaching from behind, you will be aware of it by the increasing glow as they approach.

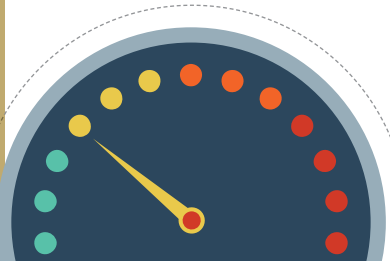
ADJUST SPEED

Driving at too high a speed can overdrive your headlight's illumination. This can leave you with too little time to react should a danger lay ahead. For example, if you are travelling at 60 miles per hour, your vehicle's velocity is 88 feet per second. With the average vehicle headlight illumination distance being about 350 feet, that distance would only take about

four seconds to reach. Obviously, a portion of this time would be lost to identifying and reacting to the issue. Needless to say, a reduction of speed is the prudent decision, especially when driving a larger, heavier vehicle like a motorhome or a tow vehicle/trailer combination.

ROAD MARKINGS AND DEFINITION

Fading road markings and centerlines become very apparent in some regions during the spring. More aggressive tread patterns of snow tires combined with the sandy aggregate from winter sanding is responsible for grinding off the paint. When using the centerline to aid in tracking the roadway, expect the centerline on a two-way road (yellow centerline) to be most erased on left-hand curves and bends. This is due generally to traffic tending to favor the inside of a turn. This



INCREASED WILDLIFE ACTIVITY

From dusk and into the blanket of night, wildlife activity increases greatly. Whether it is deer, moose, antelope, or other animals depends on your location, but all pose a danger of collision. Unlike most other road hazards, animals can run out without warning. Avoiding such events can really only be reduced by driving at a lower speed and watching for the glow of their eyes ahead. And remember, deer normally travel in groups of two or more.

○ ○ ○

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causes them to ride onto or over the road center markings. On a multiple lane highway (white centerline), both left and right curves sustain equal damage as the centerline can be the inside of the bend depending on the lane the vehicle is in. The residual of the winter sand can disguise the definition of the road edge and any markings.

FOG LIGHTS

Many RV owners often use their vehicle's fog lights with their headlights. This must be because they think it looks cool as they do little else save for short range additional illumination. Like the name implies, they are for use when operating in foggy environments. However, there is another reason to avoid their use for non-foggy night highway driving. When these lights are enabled, they increase the illumination in the immediate area in front of the

vehicle for a relatively short distance, perhaps 30 feet or so. This brighter area does not aid in increasing your driving vision further ahead when operating at highway speeds. The fact is, it actually reduces your distance vision. This is caused by the brighter short illuminated area in the foreground causing your eye pupils to contract. This reduces your night distance view. Additionally, the use of fog lights in normal clear weather can cause oncoming traffic to mistakenly think you are using high beams. You may get a bright flash response.

ADDING WEATHER TO THE MIX

If night-driving visibility becomes poor due to snow squalls or fog, stopping and holing up is usually the best

plan. A similar plan may also be said if heavy rain is encountered. Heavy precipitation, be it rain or snow, is generally associated with squalls. Squall conditions usually last an hour or less. So, stopping briefly is well worth the wait. Extra caution is needed if the road surface is wet. Not only will it make the roadway very dark but will also cause reflective light from the oncoming traffic. A pause allows a chance to stretch your legs, round up a snack, or perhaps take an en-route inspection walk around the rig, which is never a bad idea.

PRO TIP

It's always a good idea to check the weather before you hit the road, day or night. And though a weather forecast simply can't be 100% accurate all the time, you can at least get an idea of conditions from sources including local news outlets or weatherband radios. And, there's likely a weather app built into your phone; check it before heading out.

PERSONAL VISION AIDS

Wearing sunglasses during the day prior to a night drive can substantially benefit night vision, according to the American Optometric Association. Adding to the credence of this are the many aviation pilots that adhere to this practice. The wearing of so-called "Night Driving Glasses" with yellow lenses has mixed reviews, and may be more beneficial to those with certain eye conditions.

BE PREPARED

Be sure to have at least one flashlight with extra batteries. Carry emergency flares or similar warning lighting. Large RV vehicles often cannot fully clear the roadway in case of breakdowns.

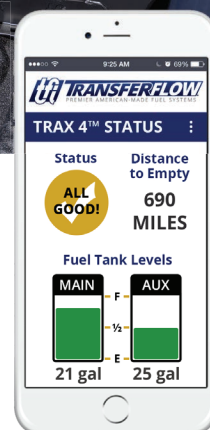
These are just some of the things that RV drivers have to deal with when the dark sets in. But the many benefits of extending your camping season can make it all well worth it. ■



Long distances, harsh elements, and high fuel prices are just some of the challenges you and your truck face on the open road. Be ready with a range-maximizing in-bed auxiliary fuel tank system from Transfer Flow.

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PREVIEW



THOR INCEPTION/PASADENA

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DIMENSIONS
Exterior Length: 39' 10"
Exterior Width: 8' 5"
Exterior Height: 13' 3"

CAPACITIES
Freshwater: 100 gal
Black-water: 40 gal [BK]
80 gal [MX]
Gray-water: 41 gal [BK]
80 gal [MX]
Propane: 25 gal

WEIGHTS
GCWR: N/A
GVWR: 32,700 lbs

All-new sister coaches from THOR Motor Coach pull out all the stops to provide high-end diesel luxury and comfort, plus an impressive 15,000-pound hitch rating. Perched atop the Freightliner S2RV chassis and powered by the Cummins ISB-XT diesel, the Inception and Pasadena MEGA Class C motorhomes successfully toe the line between stump-pulling power and upscale living. Both coaches are available in two floorplans—the 38BX bunkhouse and the bath-and-a-half 38MX—and both layouts provide luxurious living amenities that include washer and dryer prep, a tankless water heater, theater seating, a Tilt-A-View

king-sized bed, residential kitchen features, and a large Dream Dinette.

The cockpit features air-suspension seats, a 10-inch touchscreen dash radio with Bluetooth and back-up camera, plus there's a side-view camera system, heated remote mirrors, and keyless entry. In the ceiling above the rounded over-cab bunk area, a skylight increases headroom and creates the company's SkyBunk configuration for sleeping under the stars while indoors. All floorplans also feature an exterior entertainment center with a 39-inch TV on a swivel bracket and built-in Bluetooth soundbar and radio.

thormotorcoach.com ■

Entertain Us With a big-screen LED TV, Blu-ray player, and a soundbar in the living area, plus a 32-inch TV in the bedroom and a 39-incher on the exterior, there's always a place to watch TV. **Charge Up** THOR's MEGA Class C's include an Onan 8.0 kW genset, 100-watt solar system with controller, and four house batteries to ensure there's plenty of power on hand.

[1] Fully equipped kitchen includes residential fridge, two-burner gas range with single-burner induction cooktop, convection microwave, and stainless double-bowl sink. [2] Residential linoleum throughout makes clean-up easy. [3] Attractive satin-finish cabinetry utilizes solid doors and nickel-finish hardware.

TECH Q&A

Holding tank indicator, steering-wheel wobble, slideout weight capacity, larger propane tank, locking gas cap.

by **KEN FREUND**

Holding-Tank Indicator Problem

Q We have a 2013 Keystone Cougar 333MKS fifth-wheel trailer. After I empty the black-water tank, the indicator shows that it's still two-thirds full. Is that due to a faulty indicator?

Will Phelps, via email

A This is a rather common problem, often caused by bath-tissue buildup on the level sensor inside the tank. Try filling the black-water tank with hot water, using a hose from your home water heater into the toilet. Just make sure the water is hot to the touch, but not scalding. Add a little automatic dishwasher detergent and make the tank about ½ to ¾ full. Drive around with the trailer on curves to slosh the water sufficiently. Then dump and check the indicators.

There are some products such as Thetford Level Gauge Cleaner (available from Camping World) that help keep the sensors clean. Also use holding-tank chemicals designed to help keep sensors clean and use RV toilet tissue, which breaks down easily in water, not household types that are somewhat “stronger.”

Problem with Leveling Jacks

Q My fiancée and I have a 2014 Winnebago Vista 35F Class A. It has the LCI system in it. Every time we start the engine, we get a warning and beep about the jacks. I go through the sequence to reset it, and the jacks are fine and don't act up for a while. I always have the engine running when doing the reset. Why is it occurring again and again?

Michael J. Maniscalco, via email

A The issue as you explained it is a “Retract Timeout: Return Levelers for Service” message on the leveling control pad. Resetting the levelers requires you to press the “Enter” and “Retract” buttons simultaneously. The leveling controller (brain) used with this system monitors the hydraulic pressure on the retract side of the hydraulic system using a pressure switch. It must maintain pressure on this side because that's what holds the jacks in the retract position. The pressure switch breaks a ground signal to the controller when it sees a pressure of under 2,150 psi. If the controller doesn't see this signal within a set period of time, it will stop the

voltage output to the pump to protect the pump motor from damage. This is when the controller will display the retract time-out error.

The controller will also monitor this pressure while the ignition is on. If, for instance, you're driving and the pressure falls below about 1,500 psi the controller will start the pump to build pressure; if it regains the 2,150 psi, it will shut the pump off. If this cycle continues to happen (about three times) the system will lock out and trigger the error code.

There are a few reasons the system might lose pressure:

1. A bypassing leveling jack. Fluid will pass from the retract side of the jack to the extend side.
2. The pump is bypassing internally, which will prevent the pump from building pressure.
3. There's an external fluid leak.
4. Low fluid level in the reservoir.
5. Faulty pressure switch (the switch is not opening when the pressure is reached).
6. This doesn't normally throw the retract error, but all hydraulics bleed over

Steering-Wheel Wobble

Q We have a 2004 Bounder diesel pusher 37U on a Freightliner chassis. It gets occasional steering-wheel wobble. It has 60,000 miles on it, and all steering components appear to be okay. Road surfaces seem to make the difference. Would a steering damper/stabilizer help? —Larry Wolfe, via email

A This wobble is common on nonindependent suspensions with beam front axles, especially after hitting bumps. Drivers sometimes refer to this as “the death wobble.” Wear and front-end play or looseness should be checked carefully by a truck front-end shop. If everything checks out, try installing a good steering damper designed for this heavy axle.

time, so it's possible the pressure could be below the threshold when the ignition is first turned back on after sitting for an extended period of time. When this occurs the pump will automatically run until the system rebuilds the proper pressure (within a set period of time) and will then shut off.

The pump has a place where a test gauge can be connected. An internal bypass condition in a jack can be tested by applying retract pressure while the line to the extend side is disconnected. It will push out bypassed fluid. For safety, these pressure tests should only be performed by qualified technicians. LCI is part of Lippert Components, and customer service can be reached at 574-537-8900 or via email at customerservice@lci1.com. Lippert also has a good troubleshooting section on its website (lci1.com).

Batteries Go Dead

Q *What causes my RV's starting battery and coach batteries to run down when sitting for several days? The RV is hooked up to shorepower electric during that time.*

Amos Hamilton
Shelby Charter Township, Michigan

A You didn't mention what year, make, and model motorhome you have, so I can only give you general information. Many motorhomes do not charge the engine-starting battery with the power converter while plugged into shorepower. It may only get charged by the alternator when the engine is running. You can check this easily by measuring the voltage at each battery before and after the converter is powered up by plugging in. If the voltage in each individual battery climbs above 13 volts with the converter on, it is getting charged. If not, try starting the engine (voltage should come up). If your motorhome doesn't have a charging circuit for the engine battery when parked, get a product such as Trik-L-Start (lslproducts.net/TLSPage.html).

Motorhome batteries have slight constant parasitic draws from onboard electrical devices such as circuit boards,



A member of the Good Sam family since 1988, **Ken Freund** has been helping readers better understand their RVs for more than 30 years. Throughout his career, he has been a service manager, technician, shop owner, an ASE Certified Master Technician, an instructor of the California Smog Check Program, and author of Haynes Repair Manuals.

radio memories, alarms, etc. These draws should be limited to less than about $\frac{1}{10}$ of an ampere. Often power draws such as compartment lights left on, etc., add to the draw. Check for draw with the batteries fully charged (around 12.6 volts). Remove the negative battery cable to each battery, one at a time. Then connect a digital ammeter set on a 10-amp scale between the negative battery post and the negative cable just removed. This should measure parasitic draw when everything is supposed to be off. If you detect a draw of more than roughly $\frac{1}{10}$ amp, try removing fuses powered by this battery. When you disconnect a fuse and draw drops, you've found a culprit circuit. Check what is connected to that fuse and you found the problem.

If the batteries are getting properly charged, and there is no excess draw found, the batteries may be faulty. Take them to an RV shop or auto parts store for testing.

System Upgrades

Q *We have a 2020 25-foot Class C on a Sprinter 3500 chassis motorhome. It has a 12-gallon propane tank, but I want to exchange it with a 20-gallon propane tank. Is this doable and, if so, fairly easy to do? I also want to install three permanent 100-watt solar panels on the rooftop. Will I need to upgrade any other components with this?*

Robert Castaneda, Redlands, California

A About the closest tank size I know of to what you are asking about is the 24.2-gallon Manchester permanent horizontal-mount ASME propane tank. I don't know if you have room under your coach for one, nor if the added weight will cause an imbalance or overload situation. Additionally, the installed cost will be more than \$1,000. You might consider carrying a 5-gallon barbecue-style propane cylinder

properly secured in a storage compartment instead and have a connection pigtail installed so you can take it out and connect when needed. These propane-connection adapters are available at propane and RV parts centers.

As for the solar, you didn't mention what brand or model coach you have, so I suggest you work with an experienced RV solar installer and make sure there is room for all panels, that they are mounted properly, and won't cause roof leaks. If you start with bare solar panels, you'll also need to use a charge controller that regulates the solar charging voltage going to the batteries. Complete solar charging kits, with suitably matched components, can be had from several suppliers such as Go Power!, available at Camping World. A battery upgrade may also be in the works, so check with the solar component supplier for specific advice to fit your situation.

Fridge Madness

Q *I have a new 2022 Entegra Esteem 29V Class C motorhome equipped with a Norcold refrigerator. When the fridge transfers from electric to propane, it displays a blinking red light and the propane icon. I can hear a puffing sound, like it is having problems getting propane. Any ideas on this?*

Rodger Borge, Eagle, Idaho

A You need to count the blinks, as Norcold uses a blinking trouble code. Count how many times it blinks every second until it pauses for five seconds. Then look up codes on page 13 of this online document: norcold.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/636355B_SM_N611vN811.pdf.

It's likely that DC voltage is low at the fridge. It must be at least 10.5 volts for normal operation, or the gas valve may not open. Also, have the gas pressure checked by an RV shop or propane

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specialist. It should be 10.5–11.5 inches of water column.

Single Rear Wheel vs. Dually

Q I just finished reading an article about big super-duty pickups, but there was no mention or advice on when to upgrade to dual rear wheels. What are the pros and cons and your recommendations?
JB Beaver, via email

A Pickups with dual rear wheels (DRW) have higher rear gross axle weight ratings (GAWR) than single-rear-wheel (SRW) pickups. They are much more stable on the road when towing heavy trailers or top-heavy slide-in truck campers compared to a SRW truck. A rear tire failure is also less likely to cause a loss of control on a DRW. However, initial cost of a DRW truck is usually higher, tire replacement is costlier, fuel economy lower, and they tend to ride rougher when empty or lightly loaded. Also, they are too wide for many garages and parking spaces, and the wide rear fenders tend to get banged up a lot if the driver isn't careful.

Therefore, most RVers choose a DRW pickup if the pin weight or tongue weight of their trailer is too high for a SRW truck. The last part of the calculation is the empty weight on the rear axle. You'll need to use a truck scale to determine actual weight, with full fuel and passengers. Subtract the empty weight from the rear GAWR to determine available payload for pin weight.

If you don't know the tongue/pin weight of a trailer, you can estimate by using 18% of the gross vehicle weight rating (GVWR) of the trailer for fifth-wheels, or 12% for conventional travel trailers. Pin weight is centered over the rear axle centerline, so almost all of the pin weight will go on the rear axle. Leave a safety margin, too. Conventional trailer hitches are far aft of the axle and have a leverage effect which lifts weight off the front axle and adds it to the rear, above and beyond tongue weight.

Towing a Hyundai Santa Fe

Q I have a 2018 Winnebago Aspect, and I want to tow my 2020 Hyundai Santa Fe. It has front-wheel drive, so it will

need to be lifted on the front axle. I would like to know what tow dolly you would recommend. Roadmaster has an adjustable tow dolly, and it has electric brakes.

Larry Hall, via email

A The 2020 Hyundai Santa Fe is not approved by the manufacturer for flat towing, so you are correct in looking for a tow dolly to carry the front wheels. I prefer to avoid making brand recommendations, and there are a number of good dollies. However, Roadmaster has a lot of experience in towing products and should be a satisfactory choice because you seem to like its features.

Locking Gas Cap

Q We have a 2019 Coachmen Leprechaun 260DS. The coach is on a 2018 Chevy 4500 Express cutaway chassis. We've been experiencing some fuel theft where we store the unit. I've tried through GMC and Chevy to locate a locking gas cap for this chassis, and I'm having zero luck. I've found them for the 3500 chassis, but neither Chevy nor GMC will say if they are interchangeable.

Daniel Hills, Covina, California

A Most recent-era vehicles use the same type of threaded gas caps. Therefore, you should be able to easily find a locking cap at most auto parts stores. You can try it right there. Enclosed fuel doors are not very practical on your type of vehicle because of the filler's flat surface mounting. I suggest sticking with a locking cap.

Slideout Weight Capability

Q My question is about weight limits of RV slideouts. I have inherited my parents' 36-foot 2006 Alfa See Ya! Class A motorhome. I'm renovating the interior to make it "mine." I want to swap out the four independent, high-backed dining chairs for bench seating so I can add storage under the bench seats. Will the added weight be too much? The dining area is in the main slideout. There is also an original couch that folds down into a queen-size bed in the same slideout. I don't plan to store heavy tools in the benches, but I can't find information regarding load limits for slideouts.

Teresa Brown, Clio, Michigan

A RV manufacturers don't normally publish weight limits on slideouts, which is likely why you didn't find any. Designers have to build in a safety margin to allow for heavy objects and people to be accommodated on the slideout rooms. Based on your description, the modifications should probably be within the practical limits of the slideout, assuming you store lightweight items such as blankets and pillows under the bench. Many such slideouts are equipped with the dinette bench seats you have in mind, so your plan is sound.

Unfortunately, Alfa went out of business in March 2008 so you cannot contact the manufacturer for engineering information. You may be able to get information or ideas from other Alfa owners: alfaseeya.groups.io/g/motorhomes.

Stone Bennett Shifter

Q I have a 1990 Sportscoach 34-foot diesel pusher with an Allison transmission. It is on a Spartan chassis and has 70,000 miles on it. It has a Stone Bennett air shifter that is on the fritz. I have tried to find a shop to service and/or replace it. The few places that carry it have not answered my emails, and those that don't say they know nothing about it. Any information would be greatly appreciated.

Jim Jensen, Big Lake, Minnesota

A Check out United Transmission Xchange (utxchange.com, 800-527-1637) in San Bernardino, California, and ask for Donnie. These shifters are fairly simple and can be cleaned out. You may be able to clean up the shifter internally and check the air system. If there is oil coming into it, then it means that a compressor rebuild is due. If there's water and crud but not much oil, check the air dryer. ■

HAVE A QUESTION?

Looking for answers on all things RV, including systems, engines, accessories, or construction? Submit it to our expert at techqa@rv.com and it may be selected for publication. You must include your name, city and state, phone number (will not be published), and type and model of your RV.



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RV TECH

SLIDEOUTS 101

Class is in session: Here's a primer on what you need to know about opening up the RV's interior.

by JAMES ADINARO

Time for a confession: I've never owned an RV with a slideout. This puts me in the minority because many RVs today are made with slides ... oftentimes more than one.

There are a few reasons we never looked at slides, but one of the main ones has been maintenance. I perceived RV slideout rooms as another lengthy maintenance chore that would likely require several new tools, a few new products, tedious adjustments, and—mostly—time.

Perhaps I've mellowed with age (my spouse disagrees), but recently I began wondering if I had been hasty in my judgment of

Slideout rooms can greatly expand your RV's living space. Periodic cleaning, inspection, and maintenance will keep them running smoothly for years to come.

slides. While there is certainly some effort involved, with so many RVs having them, slideout maintenance couldn't be that difficult, could it? I honestly didn't know since I had never owned one.

Curiosity got the better of me, and I eventually went to Gander RV (gander-rv.com) in St. George, Utah, to chat with Brad Green, RVIA Certified Master Technician, about slideouts. Brad's been in the RV industry since working at his father's RV dealership in his teens. For more than 30 years, he's done everything from manage a service department to run his own mobile tech business, so he's seen his share of slides. He agreed to show me the basic slideout maintenance tasks: Slideout 101, as it were.

PHOTOS: JAMES ADINARO



The Elephants in the Slideout Rooms

Regardless of the type of slide, I learned that there are two main things that cause problems when they're used. The first is voltage.

Slides are big, heavy components. Moving them takes a fair amount of force, and an electric motor won't be able to generate the necessary force if it doesn't have adequate voltage available. So, the first step in slideout maintenance is to practice good battery maintenance.

I won't cover battery maintenance here because that could be a whole book by itself. Generally speaking, a good state of charge and clean and solid connections are going to be your friends. Battery voltage should be the first thing you check if your RV's slide won't move.

The second common issue affecting slideouts can be broadly called "obstructions." These can be anything from hitting a tree on the way out to catching a flip-flop on the way in. Over the years, Brad has seen pine cones,

critters, cabinet doors—you name it—get stuck in slideout mechanisms. When this happens, typically one side of the slide gets stopped, but the other keeps moving. Even if nothing breaks, a slide that encounters an obstruction will likely need to be adjusted to get it back into proper alignment and working order.

The way to combat obstructions with the slide is to pay attention. Check for trees or bushes before extending slides. Check the outside of the slide—particularly the roof—for debris or obstructions before bringing it in. And be sure to check inside your RV for anything that might get caught in the slide before moving it in either direction.

Cleaning

Cleaning the slides seems like a natural step to me, but according to Brad, a lot of people don't put in the effort here that they should. As for washing the outside of the slide room, you can do that with the same soap and water you wash the rest of the RV with. Most folks like a clean RV, so that part tends to get done. The more important step is cleaning the mechanisms that make the slides work.

TYPES OF SLIDES

Knowing what type of slide is on your RV is important, because the maintenance procedures are slightly different for each of them. The maintenance rankings below are from easiest to most involved; the higher the number, the more steps/components there are to check.

POWER GEAR SLIDES

are electrically driven slides that share some features with both Schwintek and rack-and-pinion slides. These are typically used on heavier slide rooms, and can be used in the design of carpetless interiors.

MAINTENANCE RANKING



PROS

Light and fast; Uncluttered exterior

CONS

Not able to be floor-flush

SCHWINTEK SLIDES

are easily identified by the aluminum guides with the "worm tracks" in them on the outsides of the slide rooms. These electrically driven, self-adjusting slides are typically used on lighter-weight slide rooms.

MAINTENANCE RANKING



PROS

Lightweight; Cost; Self-adjusting

CONS

Best suited for lighter-weight slides

CABLE SLIDES

use a system of cables and pulleys, in combination with an electric motor, to drive the slide room in and out. These systems are lightweight and capable of handling longer and heavier slides. Cable-driven slideouts were among the first kind used in RVs.

MAINTENANCE RANKING



PROS

Lightweight; Can handle heavy loads

CONS

Cost; Intrusion on living space

RACK-AND-PINION SLIDES

use round gears (pinions) that rotate with electric motors to move a linear track (the rack) in and out. These systems are quite common; as a tech, Brad appreciates the easy adjustability of these kinds of slides.

MAINTENANCE RANKING



PROS

Cost; Can handle heavy loads

CONS

Heavier components than others

HYDRAULIC SLIDES

use a hydraulic pump and fluid to provide the driving force to extend and retract the slides, but they still rely on mechanical components to keep them aligned. There will be a reservoir for hydraulic fluid and hoses leading to the slide(s).

MAINTENANCE RANKING



PROS

Fast; Cost for more than one slide

CONS

Additional components required



MAINTENANCE

Beyond having the proper voltage and paying attention, slide maintenance seems simple. Today's slide mechanisms don't require a lot of periodic maintenance. Once a year is a suggested minimum for preventative maintenance, and twice a year for you over-achievers. The three main steps to a periodic maintenance routine include **cleaning, inspection, and lubrication and conditioning.**

The slide mechanisms are exposed to the elements when they're extended, so they pick up their fair share of dirt and grime. But at the same time, you count on these parts to move some heavy loads. Moving parts don't play nice with grit and grime, so you need to periodically clean the slides.

Fortunately, cleaning slides is easy. This is not something you go after with a pressure washer. Simply wipe away the worst of the dirt with a clean, dry to damp rag. You can use a soft bristle brush if necessary, but don't use anything aggressive like a wire brush. If you happen to have compressed air available, that can be an easy way to blast away the crud.

Inspection

The next step in the slide-maintenance routine is to thoroughly inspect the slide mechanisms. The particulars are different depending on what type of slides your RV has, but there are some steps that are common to all of them.

Seals should be the first thing you inspect. Your RV relies on these seals to keep the outside out, so they need to be in good shape. There are actually two sets of seals for each slide, an inner and an outer, so you'll want to inspect both. And the seals go all the way around the slide, so you'll need to inspect

all four sides, and pay particular attention to the corners.

At each seal, look for trapped debris or tears in the seal. Remove any debris you find. Tears in the slide seals might require professional evaluation. You should also check each seal for dryness and cracking. The seals should be soft and pliable, not stiff. Watch as the slide extends and retracts to make sure that the seals flip over properly. Finally, make sure that all the seals are attached tightly to your RV.

If your slides have slide toppers, you'll want to inspect those to make sure they're operating properly. Check to see if any debris has gotten jammed into their covers. If it has, you may be able to remove the covers and clean out the debris. You'll also want to inspect for tears or sagging.

And regardless of the type of slide, you'll want to check to make sure that there aren't any bolts or screws that have worked loose. One place that problems seem to show up is

- 1) Cable slides are easy to identify by the cables inside the RV. Proper tension on the cables should sound like a bass guitar note.
- 2) Keeping the level of hydraulic fluid topped off, as shown in this fluid reservoir, is a maintenance step unique to hydraulic slides.
- 3) There are two sets of seals on slideout rooms, both inside and outside the RV. Inspecting and keeping them in good shape will be part of your maintenance routine.



Easy Does It

Two things that slideout maintenance requires are a dry lubricant and a slide seal conditioner, both of which you should apply sparingly. Check the owner's manual to make sure the specific products are compatible with your RV.



on the underside of the slide room; if something is loose and dragging across the floor inside, you'll want to get that fixed. You can also look underneath the slide room to see if the rollers and supports on the bottom of the room are operating properly, or if they're stuck or dragging.

Beyond that, the specifics of your inspection will vary according to the type of slide in your RV. If it has cable slides, be on the lookout for frayed or damaged cables, particularly at points where the cables pass through other components. More common problems with cable slides are what Brad called "tension issues." An easy tension check on cable slides is to listen for a bass guitar kind of note as you pluck a cable. (I play bass, so this caught my attention.)

If the slides are hydraulic, you'll want to check the level of fluid in the reservoir, and make sure there are no obvious leaks in the system. Rack-and-pinion slides should have gears and teeth that are aligned and in good repair. Further inspections specific to your RV can be found in your RV's owner's manual.

Finally, Brad pointed out that it's a good idea to learn what the slides look and sound like when they're operating normally. That way, when something makes a strange sound, you know straight away if it's normal or not.

Remember, the name of the game here is preventative maintenance, so it's unlikely you'll uncover anything in your inspection that you're going to want to fix yourself. I know I certainly don't have the equipment or the know-how to realign a heavy slide room or repair a hydraulic pump. Instead of that, the goal here is for you to identify emerging problems while things are still working.

should be using a light, dry lubricant, like a silicone-based lube. Lubricants that stay wet, like oil and grease, tend to attract dirt and should be avoided.

The main thing you're going to want to lubricate are the drive gears and tracks—the parts that move your RV's slide in and out. Since you've already cleaned them in the first step, lubricating them is easy. Simply spray on a light coating of lubricant and wipe off any excess.

Schwintek "worm" rails don't require any lubrication themselves, but the rollers and gibs inside the wall call for a specific lubricant applied in a certain way. If you're not comfortable performing that task, it's better to take it in for servicing. Similarly, a cable-driven system should be largely left alone, but a squeaky pulley might be cured with a quick hit of a dry lube. And if your RV has hydraulic slides, while you won't service the hydraulic system



Lubrication and Conditioning

The last step is to lubricate and condition the parts that keep the slide working as it should. Chief among these parts are the seals. Brad was careful to warn me here that most seals do well with the common seal conditioners, but a few do not. The only way to know the difference for sure is to consult the owner's manual, so that's step one.

If the seals require it, conditioning them is an easy "spray and wipe" affair. There are several products marketed for this task, but Camco Slide-Out Rubber Seal Conditioner is a popular choice, and it's readily available. The application instructions couldn't be easier: "Spray it on, spread it evenly with a cloth, and allow to dry." Don't forget that there are two sets of seals, inside and outside.

Once the seals have been taken care of, turn your attention to the mechanisms that move the slide in and out. This is another area where the steps will be different depending on the type of slide. Put yourself in a minimalist mindset when lubricating the slides. Modern slides take advantage of sealed bearings and maintenance-free motors, so there's typically nothing to do on the motors themselves.

The final word on exactly what and how to lubricate should come from the owner's manual. But in general, you

- 4) The rack-and-pinion slide mechanism under this slide is common, affordable, and capable of carrying heavy loads. 5) While Schwintek slides are largely maintenance-free, there are rollers and gibs inside the walls that may require periodic lubrication. 6) Proper inspection of slideouts calls for checking all sides, top to bottom, inside and out. Plan on using a ladder (safely) and also crawling underneath the slides to get the job done right.

specifically, you will want to lubricate any gears or tracks that keep the slideout moving on the correct path.

Graduation

Altogether, my conversation with Brad, including the show-and-tell, took less than two hours. I think I could run through those three main steps—clean, inspect, and lubricate and condition—in less time than that on an RV I owned.

Am I a convert? Will our next RV include slides? I can't say for sure. But it really is hard to argue against more space. ■



RV TECH FOR EVERYONE

James Adinara is a former aerospace engineer who discovered a love of RVing, and especially RV modding, when he and his wife, Stefany, bought their first RV more than a decade ago. Since that time, James has tackled hundreds of complex RV modifications, usually without a net. He's chronicled his RV mod adventures—and misadventures—over on thefitrv.com. Check it out to learn more.

NEW PRODUCTS

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by **KRISTOPHER BUNKER**

We feel it, too. It's getting hotter every day. Along with the freedom of summer, temperatures begin to creep up and by August, things can be downright unbearable. But that doesn't mean the fun has to stop.

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The 10-cubic-foot 12-volt refrigerator features quiet operation and a high-efficiency DC compressor to keep the drinks cool, and the freezer, well, freezing—and it will fit into the existing space. Available in black or stainless steel (panels sold separately).



COOL

Love the sunshine but want to keep the heat at bay? Check out the latest gear to cure your hot summertime blues.



For campfire chefs, the **The Kozy Canopy Portable Fire Pit Shelter** keeps you in the shade while you cook. The 10-by-10-foot canopy features a hole at the top to let the smoke out, or leave the cap in place for total protection. It weighs less than 50 pounds for easy transport.



Keep it simple with a **7-foot beach umbrella** for your own personal oasis. The tilting umbrella includes eight sturdy fiberglass ribs and a rugged aluminum pole. An easy push-up, standard mechanism allows anyone to put up or take down this lightweight umbrella.



The **Carefree EZ ZipBlocker** shades the area under the RV's awning. The EZ ZipBlocker slips quickly and easily into the open slot on most awning roller tubes, and is available in three sizes for the perfect fit.

Shelter Me

The **5-Sided QuickSet Screen Shelter** from Venture sets up in less than a minute and offers 63½ square feet of shaded sanctuary. No-see-um mesh keeps the bugs at bay, while water-resistant taped roof seams help tame the typhoons. The 82-inch center height accommodates the tallest of RVers, while corner grommets stake down on the inside.



LEMONADE

An easy, tangy-sweet recipe starts with simple syrup, which is made by "simply" adding 1½ cups of sugar to a cup of water, and boiling until the sugar is dissolved. Add that to the juice of 10 freshly squeezed lemons and a pitcher of cold water, stirring as you go. Pour into a glass full of ice and enjoy!

Swinging Single

The Camco 450 portable 45-liter single-zone electric cooler runs on 120-volt AC or 12-volt DC power to keep your food and drinks at the ready. Use your smart device to adjust the temperature from -4°—68° F, while interior LED lights make it easy to find your refreshments.



Power Couple

Dometic's CFX3 95DZ dual-zone powered portable fridge/freezer will hold up to 133 cans of your favorite drinks, with independent temperature control for each zone. Plus, you can control the temps via Wi-Fi on your smart phone, which is a smart choice.



PHOTOS: COURTESY THE MANUFACTURERS

Blowin' in the Wind



Air circulation is important when cooling off, and the **NewAir 20-inch High-Velocity Fan** gets things moving with three speeds and up to 4,650 cfm of airflow. It's motor is water-resistant, and the powder-coated steel construction make it durable and capable in most weather conditions.



Enjoy fresh air on-demand with the remote-controlled **Dometic Fan-Tastic Ceiling Fan/Vent**. Fourteen fan speeds ensure comfort, whether in automatic or manual modes. Designed for standard RV roof-vent openings, it also features reversible airflow and a rain sensor.



Quickly get a cooling breeze from the dashboard or dinette with a **12-volt clip-on fan**. The 6-inch fan features oscillating or stationary airflow and plugs in with the included 4-foot power cord with a fused plug and in-line switch. The simple design includes a metal body and a plastic grill.



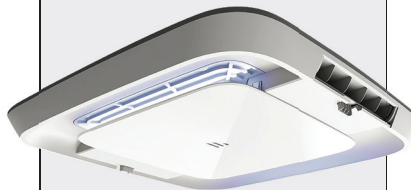
Power Player

Sometimes keeping cool means being cool. And what's cooler than an awning rail that also powers your favorite campsite accessories? The 12-volt accessories for the **Dometic PowerChannel** awning rail include a cooling fan, a light, and a Bluetooth-enabled speaker. You can keep the party going late into the night (while being respectful to your neighbors) with all the sights, sounds, and comfort of an RV's interior. How cool is that?

IT'S NO SECRET THE BEST WAY TO KEEP THE RV COOL INSIDE IS WITH AN AIR-CONDITIONING SYSTEM. IF YOU'RE LOOKING TO UPGRADE, WE HAVE JUST THE THING FOR YOU.



The **Furrion Chill 14.5K Rooftop Air Conditioner** is designed with two fans to reduce and manage the workload. Furrion claims the 14.7-amp A/C offers up to 50% better cooling capacity, and is up to 50% quieter than single-fan units.

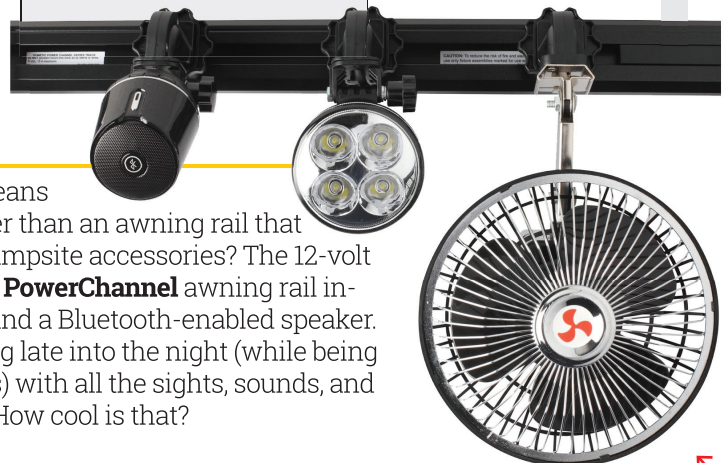


Finish your new system (or upgrade the old one) with **Furrion's Air-Distribution Box**. It offers stylish LED lighting and is compatible with ducted and non-ducted systems. Featuring a sound pressure level of 60 dB, the box is designed for 3-6-inch roof thicknesses and 14-inch roof openings.



Mr. Mister

Beat the heat in dry climates with the **Frigidaire Outdoor Misting Fan**. Simply connect a freshwater hose, plug it in, and enjoy cool breezes that lower temperatures by 10-15° F in minutes. Three speeds offer up to 1,600 cfm of airflow. The fan can also be used without the misting function, perfect for those humid days at the campground.



If you prefer a more traditional looking fan for your PowerChannel, more styles are available online, including the timeless tried-and-true version shown here.

Bed Buds



Cool Carpenter

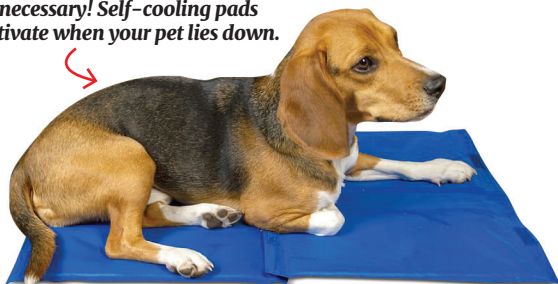
The **Isontonis Iso-Cool Memory Foam Pillow** is made using high-density visco-elastic foam with Active Air Technology for increased cooling airflow. With a 300 thread-count, the 100% cotton cover is super soft, while the Outlast material helps balance your changing body temperature while you sleep.

You Gellin'?

The **4-inch Gel Memory Foam ComboTopper** fits a variety of mattresses (including unique RV sizes) and provides a cool night's sleep on a luxury surface. The 2-inch memory-foam top conforms to the curves of your body, while the 2-inch high-density urethane foam base provides comfort and support.



Whether for at the RV park or inside your rig, no refrigeration necessary! Self-cooling pads activate when your pet lies down.



Paw Prints

Don't forget about your four-legged friends! Humans aren't the only RVers who need the comfort of a nice cool spot for relaxing on a hot afternoon. These self-cooling **Pet Cooling Mats** use a gel formula that's activated when your pet lies down on it. It's simple to use and easy to take to the campground, on a picnic, or anywhere your pet needs a cool place to rest. The mats are sold in pairs, each of them measuring 15¾-by-19½ inches.

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RV SECURITY

SAFE PLACES

Lockboxes can keep valuables and personal-protection devices secure in your RV or tow vehicle.

by **BRUCE W. SMITH**

A common thread that runs silent but deep through every RVer is finding a safe place: A safe place to visit, a safe place to camp, a safe place to explore, a safe place to get away and recharge, and a safe place to enjoy time with family and friends.

Those who travel know finding such safe places are becoming more difficult these days with thieves and troublemakers on the lookout for easy targets such as an unattended RV parked in an isolated location or even at the far side of a busy supermarket parking lot.

That has led to an increase in RVers installing small lockboxes and safes in their coaches, pickup campers, trailers, and fifth-wheels to secure valuable documents, keys,



LOCK IT UP

Obviously, the first line of defense against theft is to verify your RV is locked when you are away, or have retired for the night. This is a good habit even if you're in a crowded RV park; that way, when you're in a secluded area, it will already be second nature.

money, and jewelry. RVers are also looking for safe places to keep personal-protection devices locked up while children are about, and still allowing quick access if needed.

Michele Bennett of V-Line Industries (vlineind.com), a California-based manufacturer of American-made security products, says the growing demand for a safe place to store valuables and handguns has led to a number of RV manufacturers such as

Marathon Coach, EarthRoamer expedition vehicles, and Outdoors RV to install its products on a regular basis.

Bennett says many RV dealers are now installing lockboxes and wall safes for customers in both new and used units. Retail outlets such as Camping World (campingworld.com) also carry a wide variety of security storage devices, including a variety from Barska, that DIYers can install themselves.



Originally designed for the Ford Transit Connect, the *Tuffy Ford Underseat Security Drawer* will mount under any vehicle seat with adequate clearance using the OEM seat-mounting points and hardware. The 19.25-by-2.25-by-10-inch drawer features 433 cubic inches of storage space. \$269



Choosing a Lockbox or Safe

Deciding which lockbox or safe to use in your RV depends on a number of variables, with the value of the contents, size, and level of security being key factors. Value of the contents should dictate the level (price) you should invest. In general, the higher the price, the higher the level of quality (material and security features) the lockbox or safe provides: A \$50 lockbox is not going to provide the level of security as a \$350 lockbox.

Make sure the interior dimensions of the safe or lockbox you are looking at is large enough to accommodate whatever it is you need secured. Most lockboxes are designed to secure a handgun, jewelry, passports, money, keys, and other small items. However, they may not be deep enough to store a can of bear spray, or wide enough to hold manilla folders that have important documents. So be sure to measure the items you want to secure when making

Underseat lockboxes are often model-specific due to fitment issues. This Tuffy is designed for 2007–2018 Chevy Silverado and GMC Sierra Crew Cab pickups. Universal options are also available, but the quarters are tight so your measurements need to be precise.

your purchase.

Some lockboxes are designed with top-opening lids, some with front-opening ones, and others with slide-out trays. Some mount laying flat, some vertical, some can be mounted either way. Again, determining which to use is dependent on what design best fits your needs.

Portable models, like those offered by V-Line and Colorado-based Tuffy Security Products (tuffyproducts.com), come with special universal mounting brackets so the lockbox can be used in multiple locations such as the RV, tow vehicle, and in your home without wheels. One bracket is mounted in the RV and the other in the secondary location(s) so it accommodates the lockbox.

Safe Bets



BARSKA AX11556

Available from Camping World, the 21-pound Barska Top Opening Biometric Drawer Safe can store up to 30 different fingerprints and comes equipped with a dual-hydraulic hinge that allows for quick access to your valuables. The reinforced motorized dead-bolt safe door can be effortlessly opened with just one finger. \$292



BARSKA AX11682

It looks like a real hardback book with real pages on the exterior. But the Hidden Real Book Lock Box's solid-steel lockable 5.5-by-1.0-by-7.75-inch interior compartment makes it great for safely storing money, passports, jewelry, and other small valuables. It's available at Camping World, as is a slightly larger version in dictionary form. \$38



BARSKA PORTABLE

Camping World's solid-steel Barska Portable Digital Keypad Safe weighs 16.5 pounds so it's light enough to be transported. Or use the steel tethering cable to secure it to a fixed object. It operates on four AA batteries (included) and exterior dimensions are 12.5-by-17.5-by-5 inches. \$114



TUFFY 182-01

Tuffy's made-in-America welded-steel Universal Laptop Security Lock Box is specifically designed to provide a secure and protected place to lock up portable computers and for securing other valuables in all types of RVs and tow vehicles. Tuffy's exclusive Pry-Guard locking system and mounting holes for bottom or back flush surface are nice touches. \$229



TUFFY 376-01

Ford Center Console Security Safe is just one example of Tuffy Products for Ford, GM, and RAM heavy-duty pickups. The safe inserts into the center console to provide safe storage of firearms, camera, and other valuables. It installs in minutes without drilling. \$199



V-LINE 10123-S

The US-made Slide-Away Portable Safe from V-Line is a welded, 12-gauge steel security case that can be mounted above or below an area using the included mounting bracket. The 12-by-4-by-10-inch interior makes it a good under shelf/cabinet option for the bedroom or kitchen area of an RV—as well as inside a tow vehicle—for small items such as keys and personal security products. \$339



V-LINE 41214-S

V-Line's Quick Vault In Wall Pistol Safe mounts between the studs, and the door is inset for both flush installation as well as maximum security. An adjustable shelf and 12-by-4-by-14-inch interior easily holds wallets, jewelry, and other valuables. The Quick Vault utilizes a Simplex lock for quick access. \$334



1) Lockboxes can be mounted in many locations in an RV. This one was installed in a cabinet over the cooktop. 2) The popular SIMPLEX lock is a push-button system that has five buttons and a turn knob, with 1,082 possible combinations. The buttons can be pushed individually in any order and/or multiple buttons pushed at the same time.

Lockbox Mounting Locations

The external size will be determined by where and how you intend to mount the lockbox or wall safe. Pay close attention to length, as depth and width are of less concern in RVs.

Lockboxes can be easily mounted in a wardrobe, pantry, nightstand, dresser, an overhead cabinet, or just about anywhere by using lag bolts or self-tapping screws. When most security boxes are locked, the mounting hardware is also inaccessible.

Wall safes are being used more and more in larger RVs such as Class A motorhomes, big fifth-wheels, and toy haulers. They can be mounted between wall studs, in a center island, or in a wardrobe. Wall safes are easily hidden behind artwork or wall hangings. Talk to the safe provider and your local RV dealer about mounting recommendations.

Best Lock Types for RVs

Once a size and mounting location are figured out, it comes down to choosing the lockbox that has the best locking system for your application and budget. Lockboxes that use the inexpensive style of key locks are usually the budget models, but the easiest to punch out or pick, according to security experts.

Keyed locks, like those used on premium lockbox products, have built-in backplates and other higher-security internal lock features that make them much more

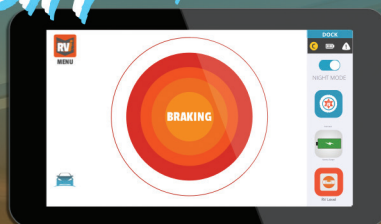


YOU ARE THE KEY

Biometric locking systems are a popular option for security. They use electronic technology to scan (and store) your fingerprint. Most allow for more than one fingerprint to open the lock. If the batteries fail, fear not: there's always a backup key.



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secure against the efforts of casual thieves.

A combination lock is a better locking alternative but can be hard to read/open if you depend on reading glasses to see up close, or are trying to get the box open in a hurry in the dark. And if you forget the combination, that compounds the problem.

Electronic biometric locking systems are cool and prevent anyone but those whose fingerprints are entered from opening the lock. Camping World sells a variety of these drawer safes under the Barska brand. As with any electronics, these types of security storage devices require diligence in keeping an eye on battery life. If the batteries die, then you have to use the backup key.

The best lockbox/safe mechanism, according to security experts, are the ones using mechanical push-buttons. V-Line, for example, uses the popular SIMPLEX push-button system, which has five buttons and a turn knob. The buttons can be pushed individually in any order and/or multiple buttons pushed at the same time, resulting in 1,082 possible combinations.

SIMPLEX locks, and the Pry-Guard 10-button locks Tuffy Security Products uses on some of its valuable's safes, open fast and don't have the downsides of fancy electronic locks or entry-level key locks.

Lockbox Design

Pricier lockboxes typically use a thicker gauge metal than their less-expensive counterparts. They also tend to be of stronger welded construction rather than riveted.

Ones that have "clamshell" lids that extend nearly to the bottom of the lockbox are much more difficult for a thief to pry open than a lockbox that has a shallow lid.

Lockboxes that have the mounting holes inside are more secure than those that have exposed mounting hardware. Lockboxes that mount under the driver's seat via the factory seat mounting brackets are also quite secure.

Tow Vehicle Lockboxes

Speaking of vehicle lockboxes, Tuffy Security Products has been a leader in that arena for decades, specializing in

keeping valuables stored in pickups, SUVs, and other vehicles safe and secure. All of their products are made in the USA, and they are a big supplier of security storage products to law-enforcement agencies.

Security products that are ideally suited for RVers who use full-size pickups for towing travel trailers and fifth-wheels are the Tuffy underseat lockboxes, center console safe inserts, and

complete replacement center consoles. All items are made from heavy-duty steel and welded.

The company also makes security lockboxes that go under the rear seats of Dodge/RAM, Ford, and GM pickups, plus a wide variety of security storage components for Jeep Wranglers, Toyota pickups, and even some Class B motorhomes such as those built on the Ford Transit Connect. ■



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FAMILY TRAVEL

The Joys of Summer

Now that school is out, there are plenty of fun things for full-timing families to do in the warm weather.

BY BRYANNA ROYAL @CRAZYFAMILYADVENTURE

Awaken your inner cowboy with a horseback ride through rivers and open fields and up mountains in Montana.

Summer for us

always means heading to the northern states in our RV. We don't enjoy being in the heat of the South and know that when it comes to RVing we only have so many months to appreciate all the beauty that the country's northern states have to offer during warmer weather.

There are so many great lakes to swim in, rivers to tube down, hot springs to visit, and hikes to take. Here are our recommendations on fun RVing destinations this summer:



Adventurers can camp next to the water in Montana's Flathead Lake State Park.

Montana

The Treasure State calls us back every single year. The mountains, the valleys, the streams—we can't get enough. Some of our favorite boondocking spots and campsites are located in Montana. Find a river spot in Red Lodge at the Parkside Campground. Boondock at Carbella Rec Site right on the Yellowstone River by Gardiner, or check out the Yellowstone Hot Springs campground. Secure a spot at Big Arm campground

on Flathead Lake. There are so many amazing places to RV in Montana.

Once you are settled in, head out to paddleboard or kayak on the river, go fly-fishing or horseback riding, or book a rafting trip. Check out the local hiking as Montana is filled with some of the best hiking in the US!

Go even farther north and head to our favorite national park: Glacier National Park, and be awed by the mountain views, glacial lakes, and the wildlife.

"There are so many great lakes to swim in, rivers to tube down, hot springs to visit, and hikes to take."



Yellowstone National Park

Go into Yellowstone National Park to experience the thermal features, wildlife, and beauty of the park. Look into booking a wildlife tour with Yellowstone Wild out of Gardiner and spend your day finding the wild animals of Yellowstone, which includes grizzly bears, wolves, black bears, and mountain goats.

Don't miss out on the neat towns surrounding Yellowstone, like West Yellowstone and Bozeman. Each of them offers their own selection of fun activities. We recommend checking out the Grizzly & Wolf Discovery Center next to the West entrance of Yellowstone and going rock climbing outside of Bozeman.

Oregon

Oregon is so beautiful! Head to the coast if you are seeking cooler summer weather

and go ATVing on the beach or crabbing off an ocean pier. Head inland to Bend and the high desert, where the days are hot and the nights are cool. Plus, they have amazing local breweries and cideries in the area. Add in cliff-jumping, river tubing, hiking, and lakes to play in, and you may just spend all summer in Oregon.

If you are looking for a more off-the-beaten-path location, head to the McKenzie River area for amazing hiking, activities, and crystal-clear lakes.

Stanley, Idaho

This area of Idaho has won us over. With unbelievable hot springs, gorgeous mountain views, and awesome hiking, Stanley is a perfect summer destination. Head to Redfish Lake for boating, paddle-boarding, biking, and ice-cream cones as big as your face!



Above left: An easy 2-mile-round-trip hike will get you to colorful Morning Glory Pool on the Upper Geyser Basin Trail near Old Faithful in Yellowstone National Park, Wyoming. The Royal children receive their Junior Ranger badges after completing the booklet on New Mexico's Carlsbad Caverns and exploring the caverns.

WASHINGTON



Go from the rugged coasts of Olympic National Park to the Hoh Rain Forest and on to the top of Mount Rainier. Head to **North Cascades National Park** to learn all about glaciers and visit a lesser-known national park. Which means less people!

Washington offers so many great outdoor activities and learning experiences.



TEACHABLE MOMENTS

There are many ways to continue learning throughout the summer, and really all year, while you are traveling. A few of our favorites are listed here:



Junior Ranger Programs

National parks and some state parks offer a Junior Ranger program where you can get an activity booklet for your kids to learn about the park you are visiting. Once completed, they will be sworn in as Junior Rangers for that park and get a badge!



Ranger Talks

A lot of national parks have free scheduled ranger talks designed to educate and entertain where you can listen to the park ranger talk about topics related to the park. Always be sure to stop in the visitor center to get the schedule.



Hiking

There is so much to learn just from getting out in nature, hiking, and talking to your kids. Plus, a lot of the hikes have great signage along the trail that teaches you about the foliage, the animals, and the trail itself. Remember to bring plenty of drinking water!

Stanley is a tiny town that comes alive in the summer with outdoor adventurers who are looking to soak up every part of summer in this beautiful area. There are RV parks, recreation areas, and boondocking all around. Just be aware that cell-phone coverage does not work everywhere—but honestly, that is a good thing.



SIGHTS TO BEHOLD!

The challenging Acadia Beehive Loop traverses narrow ledges and hikers ascend iron rungs, but the reward is outstanding views.

Acadia National Park

An East Coast treasure, Acadia National Park is a great summer RV destination. Acadia encompasses 50,000 acres along Maine's coastline, including Mount Desert Island, Schoodic Peninsula, and Isle au Haut, plus other islands. Head to the national park to take on the Precipice or Beehive trails, which will have you climbing up the side of a mountain. Go on a lobster tour boat to learn about lobstering in Maine and to get out on the water.

The area around Acadia is rugged and gorgeous with quaint towns like Bar Harbor filled with yummy restaurants and cute shops. And, of course, be sure to stop somewhere to get a succulent Maine lobster to eat.

Festivals

For a different experience, check out Renaissance Faires and music festivals that have overnight RV parking as an option. We loved going to the Washington Renaissance Faire and being able to stay in our RV overnight in the parking lot campground.

We also know of multiple music festivals where you can get an RV site at the festival and spend your days listening to music and your nights hanging out with the other concert-goers. A lot of these festivals have family-friendly sections as well.

Exploring as a Family

There are so many amazing adventures to do with your children in your RV during the summer. Get on your hiking shoes, grab your bathing suit, pack some snacks, and spend the day exploring and being in nature together as a family. ■

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Forever Young

RVing can help turn back the clock on the effects of aging.

BY STEFANY ADINARO @THEFITRV



Did you know?

We're living longer! Check out these fascinating longevity projections:

Back in 1990 there were around 95,000 centenarians. In 2015, that grew to 450,000, and by 2050, that's expected to increase to 3.7 million people living to 100 and beyond, according to a United Nations estimate.

The number of "supercentenarians"—those who are 110 or older—has multiplied at least tenfold over the past 50 years.

About half of the babies born in the US in 2007 will live to 104, according to a report by the World Economic Forum.

Whether you're exploring a national park or visiting loved ones across the country, RVing is good for you. Science tells us that travel not only helps you feel younger, it also can turn back the clock on aging. Every trip is an opportunity to engage, learn, and be adventurous—all things that can have a positive impact on your health and longevity.

As an RVer myself, none of this surprises me. When James and I are on the road, I just feel different. It's hard to describe, but the act of

traveling changes me. I feel younger, and I even think I LOOK younger when we're out RVing. My outlook morphs to a more youthful and adventurous version of me, less aware of my age or my stresses back home. Each morning I'm eager to jump out of bed, check the new scenery outside the RV window, and start the day's adventures. I like "RVing Stef" a lot.

But it's not just about feeling different while RVing, there is more at play than that. RVing actually is good for your health. Here are some ways—all identified by research—that travel makes you younger.

"RV adventures aren't just fun and exciting; there's ample research to suggest your travels are highly beneficial for your physical, mental, and emotional health as well."





Above, from left to right: Hiking adventures on your RV trips are a great way to exercise your body and your mind. Make healthy eating a part of your RV adventures; it's easy, fun, and oh-so-delicious! Research shows that time spent in nature improves both your physical and mental health.

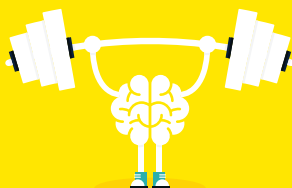
Resiliency Builder

Research tells us that resiliency—or the capacity to recover quickly from difficulties—significantly contributes to longevity. People with elevated levels of resiliency not only live longer, they're also more protected from various mental health issues, such as depression and anxiety. The good news is that the level of resiliency you have now isn't static. You can nurture and grow it. One of the best ways to build resiliency is to do things outside your comfort zone, like RVing. So much is out of your control when you're traveling, and every challenge you face on the road makes you a little tougher. If you've ever read through any of the RV-specific

BRAINPOWER. ACTIVATE!

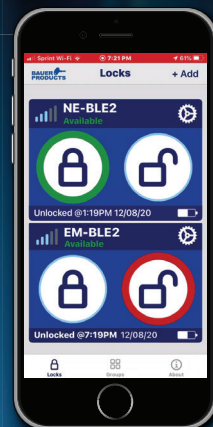
Did you know that RVing literally changes your brain?

When you're traveling somewhere new, your brain gets to work making sense of all the new stimuli. This triggers the production of new neural pathways—and the more neural pathways you have, the better your brain performs. The personal trainer in me loves this, as I see travel as its own form of exercise. Instead of dumbbells though, you're training with new experiences, scenery, people, and destinations. Every RV trip exposes your brain to an environment that's novel, activating cognitive networks that keep it healthy and sharp. So, RV trips are like a twofer—you get the fun factor PLUS more brainpower. Who doesn't love a good deal like that?!



Facebook groups, you can easily pick out the resilient RVers from the less-resilient ones based on how they share their challenges. Most of the time, the resilient people are the ones who have been RVing a long time. The sky stopped falling from challenges they encountered on the road years ago. With experience, you learn to roll with the punches, to problem-solve, and to be resourceful. RVing not only makes you exceptionally resilient, but it also gives you a more flexible mindset that carries over to all facets of your life. Challenges happen on the road and off; that is an unavoidable part of life. The question is, how will you react to those challenges?

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Self-Efficacy Booster

Want to live to 100? Having a healthy dose of confidence and belief in your abilities has been found to be a major distinguishing trait in centenarians. People with high self-efficacy tend to enjoy the challenge of problem-solving and trying new things—it helps keep them young. My husband James is a perfect example, the most self-efficacious person I've ever met. He lives by the little train's motto, "I think I can I think I can" and has no fear tearing apart our RV to do major modifications, like rewiring the entire electrical system, without a plan or net. Self-efficacy doesn't require anything that extreme, though. The RV lifestyle itself takes its own level of self-efficacy, too. You're throwing yourself out there, taking a chance on adventures unknown; that takes confidence! The more trips you take, the more your confidence and your own self-efficacy levels grow.

Healthier Mindset

Travel is a way to keep you distracted, busy, and connected to something larger. When you don't have distractions in your life, it's easy to get focused on yourself and you're more likely to have trouble with the aging process.

Exercise is the most important thing we can do to live long and stay healthy. RVing gets us moving, and we may not even realize we're getting exercise.

RVing helps you take your mind off things causing you stress and gives you something to look forward to. It lowers your cortisol levels, making you feel more calm and content. Too much cortisol can affect your heart and lower your immune system—neither being friends to longevity. Visiting new places can get you out of your head and give you a fresh perspective, so you can tackle life with lowered stress and a healthier mindset.



**WARNING:
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TO FEEL (AND
ACT) 13 AGAIN!**

Exercise in Disguise

I am a personal trainer after all; I couldn't leave this one off. Exercise is the most important thing we can be doing to live long and stay healthy. The beauty of RVing is that it gets us moving, and we many not even realize we're getting exercise! RVing makes us want to explore, and that usually requires a physical effort. Hiking the state park you're camped at, wandering the tourist town on your driving route, riding your bike to the market ... all those things get you coins in your exercise bank, no gym required. Science has consistently established how physical activity plays a significant role in how long—and well—you live.

So, even if you don't exercise regularly, RVing has a way of helping you out with that. But don't let yourself off the hook

completely. Still make sure to get your exercise on top of that!

These are just a few of the ways RVing keeps us young. If you've been RVing awhile, you can probably relate to all of them; I know I certainly do. So, consider this your permission slip to add RVing as one of your strategies to improve your health and stay young. Great news, right? Something fun to add to your healthy-living To-Do list! ■

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PETS

Canine Summertime Safety

Here are some tips and reminders for keeping your dog out of harm's way while enjoying the sun and fun outdoors.

BY RACHAEL JOHNSON
@2TRAVELINGDOGS

We learned a very hard lesson recently with our dogs in the Florida Keys. We were having a great time with our newly adopted dog, Fruitycake, and our senior dog, Brickle, on numerous area hiking trails. Being Florida natives, we thought that we knew all about the wildlife and plants to be aware of. However, we could not have been more wrong.

The poisonwood is a tree that is prevalent in the Florida Keys. Touching it, or even standing under this tree when it rains, can cause a lot of pain, rashes, and sickness. We read the signs on the trails, but we didn't think about this tree affecting our dogs. Fruitycake had to deal with weeks of rashes, itching, and discomfort from coming in contact with this tree. Yes, there are dangers that exist when we travel with our dogs. But we could have saved our dog (and us) a lot of trouble if we would have researched the dangers ahead of

time and been prepared.

Summer is a time to ensure our dog's safety. The summer season is a favorite and fun time for many travelers with their dogs, but it can also turn tragic quickly. Being full-timers now for five years has shown us we never know as much as we think that we do! New places—and even old places—always have a way of teaching us lessons, like our encounter with the poisonwood tree, so the following are some of our summertime safety tips for dogs.

Exercise Precautions

Dogs, just like people, need to take extra precautions when exercising during the summer months. Our dogs are from Florida, so they are accustomed to the heat. However, we limit our hikes to early morning hours or early evening hours to avoid peak heat times. As our dogs Brickle and Digby aged, they became more sensitive to

“New places—and even old places—always have a way of teaching us lessons.”



the heat as well. Watch for signs of heat exhaustion in your dog, even if you don't feel hot. Excessive drooling; bright red, gray, purple, or blue gums; rapid pulse; and muscle tremors are just some of the signs of heat exhaustion. Every dog is different and you know your dog best. Watch for subtle signs and, if in doubt, take an immediate break in the shade or air conditioning.

Fresh Water

During the hot months of summer, your dog will want to drink extra water and she should. But when traveling, carrying your own supply of water will ensure that you know it is safe without contaminants. On travel days in the RV, I pack three extra gallons of water for emergencies. If we break down in the summer heat, water will be consumed quickly. Also, when we arrive at a campsite, before we even set up, I get out the dogs' water bowl and fill it up. Travel can leave us and our dogs dehydrated. Replenish to get ready for fun!



SUNBURN

Yes, dogs can get sunburned, just like humans. Different breeds and different types of dog coats mean a different risk to sunburn. Choose a dog-formulated sunscreen for your dog and do not use sunscreen made for people as it can be harmful to your pup. Be mindful of the time your dog spends in the sun (set up a shady spot if staying put for a while) and remember that sand on a beach can also be very hot.



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While every effort is made to maintain accuracy and completeness, last-minute changes may occasionally result in omissions or errors.

LIFE ON THE ROAD | canine safety



Before your dog hangs 18 (or 20) in the ocean, secure her with an approved life vest, and make sure she drinks plenty of fresh water to discourage saltwater intake.



LIFE JACKETS

Some dogs just love the water. Our newly adopted dog, Fruitycake, loves to go kayaking and paddleboarding with us. But just like we need to wear a life jacket while enjoying water activities, so do our dogs. A life jacket made especially for dogs is a must. Dog life jackets cover more of your dog in the correct areas and provide both buoyancy and visibility.

Dangers of Saltwater, Ponds, and Lake Water

Brickie loves the beach and he loves to drink the saltwater. The only way we can get him to stop drinking saltwater is to make sure he is hydrated ahead of time with fresh water. For a dog, drinking large amounts of saltwater can be fatal. When a dog drinks saltwater, the excess salt draws water from the blood into the intestines, leading to diarrhea, vomiting, and dehydration. Saltwater also disrupts the fluid balance in your dog.

Lake water and pond water can contain contamination, algae, and other bacteria and parasites. Do not let your dog drink any water except what you bring, and bring twice as much water as you think your dog will drink.

Swimming Lessons for Dogs

We have all heard the term "dog paddle." I thought that all dogs naturally know how to swim. But I asked Laurie Plessala, who has taught hundreds of dogs how to swim and is known as the Dog Lovers Guru, if all dogs automatically are good swimmers. Her answer surprised me.

"People often assume that dogs just know how to swim. Some do, but some don't. When a dog panics

in water, they are at great risk of drowning. Before you ever put your dog in a situation where he could accidentally fall into water, best to take him to a dog pool to get a safe introduction to water, or to some safe still water and keep them on a leash until you know they can swim confidently. You can also put them in a dog life jacket. If you go to iaamb.org, you will find a list of dog pools by state, or you can google 'dog pool near me' and probably find someone."

Flea, Tick, and Pest Control

During our travels, we've had our fair share of fighting bugs off of our dogs.



FIREWORKS, STORMS, AND OTHER TRIGGERS

Our dogs have had their share of anxiety when it comes to loud noises like those from fireworks and storms.

We use organic Pet Releaf CBD formulated for dogs. ThunderShirts, essential oils, and other dog-specific medication should be in your first-aid kit and also on hand in your RV, car, and home at all times during the summer months. Because we travel full time, we are always watching the weather. Be proactive before storms, and keep your dogs away from fireworks and safe inside.

We love insects, but not biting our dogs, causing disease, and getting in our RV. We have decided on a natural method of pest control with diet regulation, natural and organic dog shampoos from 4-Legger (4-legger.com), and frequent baths. We also wash all dog sheets frequently and keep carpet to a minimum. However you decide to control pests from getting on your dog, make the commitment to be regular with that routine. Every state has its own bugs. Research ahead of time and check your dog frequently.

Mind the Paws

We may be aware of the temperature outside but think about your dog's paws. Pavement, asphalt, wood, metal, sand, and car or truck surfaces can become very hot during the

summer months. Place your bare skin onto the ground for 10 seconds. If you cannot keep your hand or foot there, or it feels very hot, then it will be too hot for your dog's paws.

Keeping Your Dog Cool When Alone

We rarely have to leave our dogs alone in the RV. However, sometimes we have to run errands and we used to worry when we left them. Power outages in campgrounds are common, and air conditioners can fail. The Waggle RV Pet Temperature Monitor (mywaggle.com) alerts us if there is a change in temperature in the RV.

Recently, a fellow camper left the vehicle's windows cracked when grocery shopping and her elderly dog surprised everyone when he

jumped out of the window during a hot summer day. Don't take chances with summer heat temperatures that can affect your dog in minutes.

Summer Nutrition

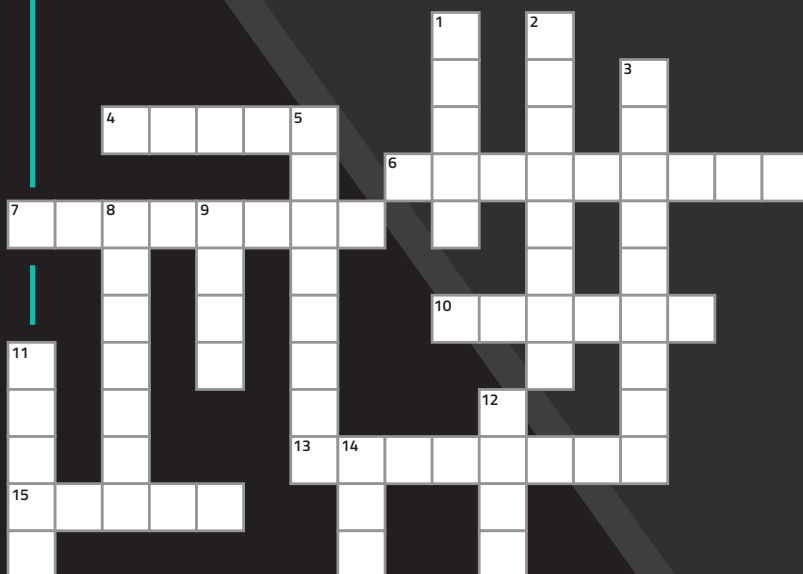
An increase in activity should mean increased nutrition for your dog. Consider "pupsicles" made with fresh, dog-friendly strawberries and unsweetened yogurt and then frozen, for a hydrating snack. Give your senior dogs joint supplements to help with long hikes, and don't forget the dog massage.

Summertime fun isn't something to be missed with our dogs. Making safety preparations can remind us how amazing it is to live life to the fullest with our dogs for as long as we can. Have fun out there wherever your dog decides to take you this summer. ■

FUN + GAMES

Summer Stumper

Did you miss us? Well, we couldn't miss ringing in the summer season with this month's crossword puzzle, filled with bits and pieces of information from all across this issue. So, when you think you're ready, grab your pencil and an ice-cold beverage, find a shady spot outdoors, and dive into this month's brain buster.



ACROSS

- One of the many benefits of RVing is that it can help you feel "forever" this way.
- A type of locking technology that uses your fingerprints as the key.
- A great gathering to attend for music-loving families, especially during the summer months.
- Freeze a mixture of dog-friendly fruit and this to make a sweet summer treat for your pup.
- This is used to significantly open up interior space in your RV.
- Reduce this while driving at night for additional safety.

DOWN

- A type of biking that can be easier on the rider.
- Along with "The Fabulous," the name of Gino Lucci's motorhome built using a converted 1943 Douglas DC-3 airplane.
- This type of squash is most popular in the fall but actually available year-round.
- New York's Finger Lakes were formed by these "chilly" masses millions of years ago.
- Washington destination whose nickname is "The Emerald City."
- This type of coffee can keep you cool on a warm summer day.
- The famous American poet who wrote "The Road Not Taken" in 1916.
- THOR calls its Inception and Pasadena this type of Class C motorhomes.
- Perhaps the most popular type of television in RVs today.

Across: 4: Young; 6: Biometric; 7: Festival; 10: Yogurt; 13: Slideout; 15: Speed
Down: 1: Trail; 2: Flamingo; 3: Butternut; 5: Glacier; 8: Seattle; 9: Iced; 11: Frost; 12: MEGA; 14: LED

Holding Court

Part of the sandstone columns of Courthouse Towers in Arches National Park in Moab, Utah, Three Gossips rise in unison above the desert floor. The tower likely got its name from its resemblance to three heads “gossiping” to each other. Whether you’re gossiping about the park’s soaring pinnacles or gazing in awe at the variety of geological formations that include natural sandstone arches, it’s a must-see. *Photo by Gina Caravaglia.*

Share your photo with us: info-rvmagazine@rv.com





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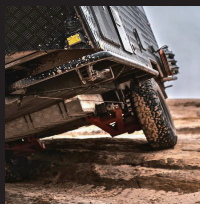


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