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Beaufort, South Carolina, is a quaint coastal town brimming with historical significance, stunning architecture and Southern elegance [see page 23].



We shine the spotlight on 10 fully appointed motorhomes that offer the ultimate in livability and residential convenience at a number of agreeable price points. **Pg. 54**

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ON THE COVER

With European styling inside and smooth, aerodynamic lines outside, the Winnebago View 24J offers inspired living amenities and fuel-efficient travels (see test on page 38). Photo by Scott Hirko.





By Kristopher Bunker

The Best of Both Worlds

In addition to rallies, shows and sharing stories around the campfire, a great way for us to gauge the pulse of our readers is *MotorHome's* monthly P.O. Box department. In the January issue, we asked what type of content you'd prefer we include in future issues, and the response was nothing short of overwhelming — and eye-opening.

We learned that while readers still value travel and destination articles, a large number prefers more DIY and technically oriented articles. We even had a few requests that we go more in-depth with our product installation and maintenance articles, including more photos, more tips and more real-world troubleshooting situations. There are also those who like to browse material on new vehicles, including tests and vehicle roundups — if only for the chance to dream about owning a shiny, new rig with the latest in technology.

So, more in-depth tech and new-product content? We've got all that, and more, in this jumbo-sized May issue.

Dual-pane windows can become foggy after years of use, leading to a difficult — and potentially dangerous — proposition while on the road. "Clearing the Fog" on page 48 discusses the ins and outs of replacing dual-pane glass with laminated glass, and includes a step-by-step discussion of doing just that.

Once that glass is perfectly clear,

it may be time to replace the window treatments on the motorhome's interior. MCD Innovations has just the product for you, offering a variety of manual and automatic roller shades for replacement. Whether you decide to do the swap yourself or to let the pros handle the task, turn to "High Rollers" on page 83 to learn more about the experience.

All motorhomes are equipped with a water pump; it's one of the conveniences that separates us from tent-camping adventurers. But when the pump acts up (or doesn't act at all), what can you do, other than take it in for what's likely to be a costly repair? "Keep the Water Flowing," beginning on page 75, includes maintenance tips and troubleshooting tricks from a certified professional.

Another thing all motorhomes have is wheels, of course, many of which are of the aluminum variety. In "Shine

On," beginning on page 65, we roll out the details on properly cleaning your motorhome's aluminum wheels, ensuring a showroom sheen that will be the envy of everybody in the RV park.

And for the dreamers among us (or, for those who are interested in purchasing a new motorhome), this month we have included "10 For the Road," a roundup of motorhomes that will set you back less than \$200,000. These motorhomes have been selected to offer a variety of different amenities, at several different price points — but all of them should help put a smile on your face. Add in the *MotorHome* test of Winnebago's View (page 38) and we're sure there's plenty for you to begin your new-RV shopping list.

We encourage you to continue to voice your opinion on the magazine's content, on what you'd like to see more of in the future, or even just to say hello. Please visit our website, or send us an email at letters@motorhomemagazine.com. And be sure to tune in each month for the P.O. Box Question of the Month, for a chance to have your response published in the magazine. **M**

“So, more in-depth tech and new-product content? We've got all that, and more, in this jumbo-sized May issue.”

Contributors | May



Ed Bolduc is an RV technician with 23 years of experience specializing in motorhome repair, maintenance and upgrades. A life-long RVer, Ed and his family enjoy traveling and camping.



Bruce W. Smith has had a long, respected career as an automotive/RV journalist. He began contributing to *MotorHome* nearly 30 years ago, and sees his home state of Oregon as a paradise for outdoor adventurers.



E. Don Smith is a Tennessee-based freelance writer and photographer who has been a frequent contributor to *MotorHome* magazine since 2006. He is the proud owner of a Tiffin Phaeton coach.

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If you use an RV cover — and you should, really, if you plan on storing your motorhome for long periods of time — do you have any tips or tricks to make installing the cover a smooth process?

That's the question we asked in the February issue, and here are some of the responses we received.

Step by Step

Our 27-foot Class C gets parked for a few months a couple of times each year. Where we live, at 5,000 feet elevation in the high desert, the intensity of the sun would destroy the motorhome's roof and paint if we didn't cover it.

Putting on a cover does require two people: one to get on top of the motorhome, and a helper on the ground with a soft- or blunt-tipped pole. But installing a motorhome cover is easy if you have removed it properly, so we'll begin by describing how we take ours off.

First, release all the straps. Then start at the rear and gather one side of the rear of the cover in your arms as you climb the ladder. With help from below, get the back of the cover up on the roof, then lay it out flat, extending from the back of the motorhome forward, with the back of the folded

cover flush with the back of the coach.

Next, walk carefully to the front, being aware of the vents, the antenna and other roof-mounted components. Pull the front up, with help from below, and lay it out on top of the motorhome, just like the back. Next, bring up one side, and stretch it across the roof. Repeat with the other side.

Now, the cover should be flat on the motorhome roof, and about the same size as the roof. Fold it in half lengthwise, again being aware of the items on the roof. Now fold in half again, in the same direction, so the cover is the length of the roof, but only about one-quarter as wide. Start from the back and roll it as tightly as possible to the front. Have your helper pole-up the storage bag, with a few feet of heavy rope inside the bag. Stuff the rolled cover into the bag, tie the rope around it and lower it back down.

To install the cover, use the rope to pull it up, still in the bag, to the roof. Remove it from the bag and lay it in the front corner of the roof. Unroll it, unfold it, and then drop the sides down, followed by the front and rear.

We also place a slit tennis ball over the slideout topper's arms to prevent them from ripping through the cover, and we use two sliced basketballs to cover the ends of the rear bumper to do the same.

A cover costs us about \$300, and we get four to five years from one. We plan to keep our motorhome for a long time, so at \$60-\$75 a year for that level of protection, we feel it is money well spent.

George R. Woodside | Reno, Nevada

Editor's note: We must caution that climbing a ladder while using your hands for anything other than holding

Featured Letter

You Old Sew and Sew

In 2001 we purchased a Fleetwood Fiesta 26Y Class A motorhome. Three years later we ordered a Sunbrella cover from CalMark Cover Co. to protect our investment. The cover has endured all these years in the heat, but the wind has caused some rips and tears. To fix small tears I applied khaki-colored iron-on knee patches. I had larger tears on the rear bumper, so after putting carpet scraps over the ends of the bumper, I repaired the tears with a yard of Sunbrella from a fabric shop. I placed wax paper under the tears while placing the cover on a large folding table. I used masking tape to outline the area to

be repaired, then cut a patch of Sunbrella the size needed and rounded off the corners. Then I sprayed both the patch and tear area with adhesive spray, and placed the patch in place and rolled out the area with a wooden wallpaper roller. After it dried, I used a sewing machine to sew around the edges to keep them from coming loose. To prevent tears on the roof, I put sections of swim noodles over the antenna and satellite dish using zip ties to keep them in place.

David Corrasa | Payson, Arizona



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on to the ladder can be dangerous. It's safer to place the bag/cover on a second ladder, climb up ladder No. 1 and then hoist the bag/cover up from ladder No. 2.

Bring in the Trash

We purchased a CalMark Cover Co. Sunbrella RV cover in 2010. It is a bit heavier and bulkier than a nylon cover, and it has held up well over

the years. When we remove the cover in the spring, I fold it up lengthwise (approximately 26-by-4 feet) on top of the RV and attach a rope to the front end. I gradually lower the back end down a ladder and my wife guides it into a 70-gallon plastic trashcan. It sits loosely in the trashcan, which is then rolled away for storage with the rope still attached on the cover. In late fall, we station the trashcan directly

behind the RV and ladder and I slowly pull the cover out of the trashcan and up the ladder and on to the top of the RV. I then spread it out across the top of the RV and drop the sides. The ladder rails work as a guide in the process. I'm 80 years old and I can still handle it this way.

Paul Rubel | Via email

Editor's note: *This is the best way to bring up a cover, but holding on to the cover while going up the ladder is, again, risky. It's better to go up the ladder and have someone throw the end of the rope up to you.*

Feed Me More!

Using a combination of things I've learned, this is how I suggest installing a motorhome cover: First, spread out the cover on the ground and roll each side to the middle — you now have the cover in a long, narrow shape. Then tie a rope or string around the cover in several places to keep it rolled up as you bring it up on the motorhome. Next, tie a rope (long enough to go to the top of the motorhome) on the end of the cover that will eventually go over the front of the motorhome. Climb the ladder with only the rope in hand (be careful!) and once on the roof, use the rope to bring the cover up onto the motorhome. It helps to have someone on the ground feeding the cover up to as you pull it. After the cover is laid on top of the motorhome from the front to the rear, unroll the sides and then tie it down. That's pretty much it.

Greg Gaskill | Enon, Ohio

IS YOUR MOTORHOME AS SLOW AS MOLASSES IN JANUARY?

We don't know who came up with that phrase, but it paints a pretty good picture of what it's like hitting the road without Banks Power. Here's another good one: ***Slower than a herd of turtles stampeding through peanut butter.*** Was that *you* on your last outing? That's no way to travel; you bought your motorhome to go on adventures, not so you could worry about merging onto the freeway without getting run over, or fret about making it up steep grades without feeling like you're **dragging an anchor.**

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Freestyle Wrapper

We have an ADCO cover for our 25-foot Class C motorhome, and it works very well when we are not using our coach in winter. Fortunately, we do not have the type of sun damage experienced in the Southern U.S. here in the cold north. Unfortunately, installing the cover typically involves climbing up on the motorhome, although it could probably be completed using a 12-foot stepladder. One thing we have found to be important is to wrap all projections (TV antenna, ends of awning

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mechanisms, etc.) with foam pads or carpeting to prevent wear and tear. We have had our cover for many years, and have yet to see any significant wear on those potential trouble spots.

D. Crookshanks

Brandon, Manitoba, Canada

Errata

In the March Road Ahead column, the author states that all the Navajo code readers received the Congressional Medal of Honor in 2001. I believe 29 of them actually received the gold medal and several hundred received the silver medal, among other certificates and awards. These medals are civilian medals, not to be confused with the Congressional Medal of Honor.

Gary Thompson | Via email

Editor's note: *The column mistakenly stated, "All of the code talkers ... received the Congressional Medal of Honor in 2001 for their previously unheralded service."*

On July 26, 2001, President George W. Bush presented Congressional gold medals to the original Navajo code talkers who developed the code, and silver medals to honor the code talkers who served later in the program. MotorHome regrets the error.

Fit and Finish

I have exercised regularly for many years and wondered how I would keep up my routine on the road. Now, in my third year traveling eight months out of the year in our 25-foot Class B motorhome, I have kept up with my plan to keep fit. Our motorhome has a rack to carry our two 10-foot kayaks and two bikes. My husband and I also like to do mountain and canyon hiking, and we consider our aggressive games of table tennis exercise. In addition, I swim 30 minutes in the campground/resort pool whenever possible.

One exercise I especially want to share with other readers is jumping rope. I bought a \$3 jump rope at

Walmart. It is compact and easy to store, and the only other thing you need is a pair of sneakers. I recommend starting out jumping for 5 minutes and gradually increasing the time.

I have seen RVers doing various types of exercise, such as jumping on a small trampoline, yoga and resistance-band training, but I'd like to hear from other readers about how they keep fit on the road.

Debbie Robinson

Manasquan, New Jersey 

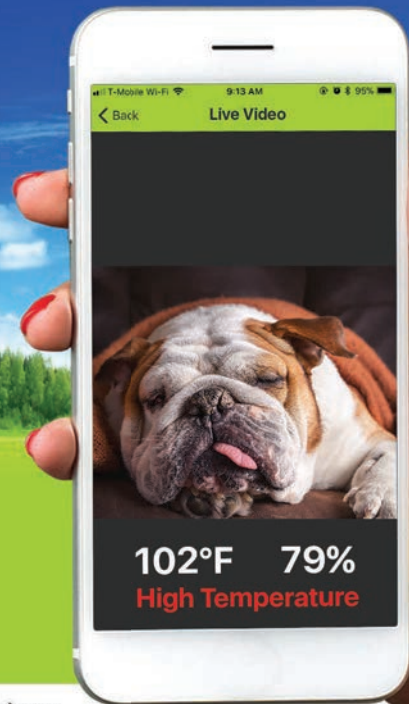
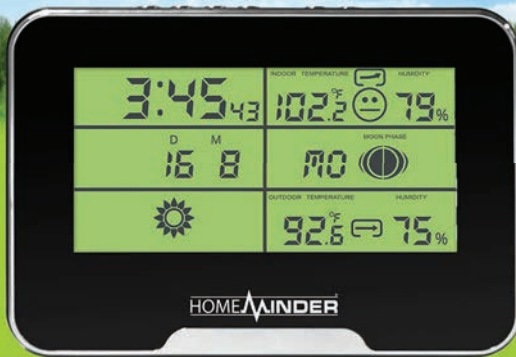
Question of the Month

How do you stay fit while traveling in your motorhome? What different types of exercises do you do while in the motorhome, and also while in camp?

Send your comments to:

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14 ROAD FOODIE | 16 WHEELS & GEAR | 18 CROSSROADS



Candy, Coasters and Cheer

Get your thrills at Pennsylvania's Hersheypark: The Sweetest Place on Earth

By Morey Edelman

Started in 1906 as a leisure park for the employees of Hershey Chocolate Co., Hersheypark in Hershey, Pennsylvania, is now one of the premier amusement parks in the United States. The park opened its first roller coaster in 1923, and now boasts 13, many of which are death-defying with twists, turns and upside-down loops. In addition to the coasters, there are more than 65 rides, including many that are tamer.

There's also The Boardwalk, one of the largest water amusement parks. Included is a tidal wave pool, a lazy river, water slides and the huge East Coast Waterworks (a seven-story water play structure with tipping buckets,

water play toys and six additional water slides of its own).

Time for more? Enjoy one of the many shows offered at the park. Our favorite was the quiz show "Are you smarter than a Hershey's Bar?"

If you're visiting for the day, there is plenty of parking available for any size motorhome. Stay for longer and camp at the Hersheypark Camping Resort, with 300 campsites including many with full hookups (water is available seasonally, mid-April through mid-October). There is also a shuttle that will transport visitors from the campground to the main gate of Hersheypark in about 10 minutes.

For more information on Hersheypark, call 717-534-3900 or go to www.hersheypark.com; for the Hersheypark Camping Resort, call 717-534-8999 or visit www.hersheyparkcampingresort.com



Hersheypark offers more than 65 ride choices, from family-friendly fare like a carousel to extreme coasters like the sooperdooperLooper. Hersheypark Camping Resort offers full-hookup sites, plus cabins, a camp store, playground and recreation center.

By Bobbie Hasselbring

Popping Good Fun

If there's a better camp food than popcorn, I don't know what it is. It's fun to munch around the campfire, or over board games, or during your favorite movie. Popcorn is not only fun, it's easy to make and good for you.

RVers aren't the first to love popcorn. Archaeologists have found funeral urns in Mexico from A.D. 300 decorated with a maize god with popped kernels on his headdress. In Peru, Spanish explorers in the 1600s noted Peruvian Indians ate a toasted corn confection they called *piscancalla*.

In North America, native peoples have a rich history of enjoying popped corn. In 1948, scientists discovered 5,600-year-old popped corn kernels in a cave in New Mexico. French explorers in the Great Lakes region found Iroquois Indians making popped corn. When colonists came to North America, they adopted popcorn, eating it as a snack and as a breakfast cereal. By the 1800s, popcorn was one of America's favorite snacks.

In 1885, Chicago's Charles Cretors invented the first commercial popcorn machine. This mobile popping device was taken into the streets, especially outside theaters, which began the movie popcorn craze. During the late 1890s, Louis Rueckheim invented Cracker Jack, made from popcorn, peanuts and molasses. During the Great Depression, popcorn proved an affordable snack. In Sioux City, Iowa, in 1914, Clويد H. Smith created JOLLY TIME popcorn, and, for the first time, popcorn was available in grocery stores.



Above: You can dress up popcorn with just a few ingredients. Bring butter and sugars to a boil, and pour over popcorn/nut mixture while stirring.

Today, Americans gobble more than 17 billion quarts of popped popcorn every year.

Plain popcorn is delicious, and good for you. It's low in calories yet high in fiber, the indigestible plant parts that keep you "regular." A cup of air-popped popcorn contains only 35 calories/cup; oil-popped corn 35 calories/cup. Add butter and it's still only about 80 calories/cup.

If you'd like to share a popcorn recipe, send an email to bjhasselbring@gmail.com.

CHUNKY CARAMEL POPCORN

This recipe, adapted from Land O'Lakes, dresses up caramel popcorn with nuts and drizzles of chocolate.

- 12 cups popped popcorn
- 2 cups cashews or macadamia nuts
- 1½ cups pecan halves
- 1 cup brown sugar, firmly packed
- ¾ cup butter
- ½ cup light corn syrup
- 1 teaspoon baking soda

Drizzle

- 1 cup dark chocolate chips
- 1½ teaspoons shortening
- ½ cup white baking chips

► Heat oven to 250 degrees Fahrenheit. Place popped corn, cashews (or macadamia nuts) and pecans in large roasting pan. Combine brown sugar, butter and corn syrup in 2-quart saucepan. Cook over medium heat 7-8 minutes or until mixture comes to a boil. Boil 2 minutes. Remove from heat and stir in baking soda. Pour butter mixture over popcorn and stir well. Bake 60 minutes, stirring every 15 minutes. Remove from oven and place on parchment paper. Cool completely (don't break into pieces).

Put chocolate chips and 1 teaspoon of shortening into a microwave-safe container. Microwave 30-45 seconds, then stir. Continue microwaving at 15-second intervals, stirring until melted and smooth, then drizzle over popcorn-nut mixture. Repeat the process with white baking chips and remaining ½ teaspoon shortening, microwaving on medium-high (70 percent power). Let stand 3-4 hours until set. Break into pieces.





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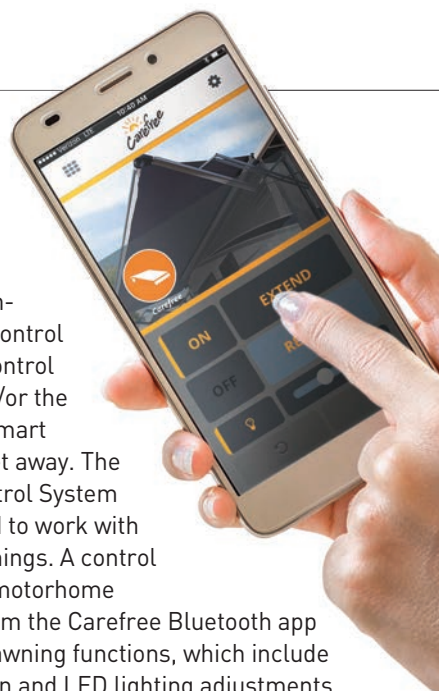
For motorhome owners, few things are better than portable, all-in-one convenience, especially when it comes to today's ever-changing technology. PDQ's TriplePlay provides a computer workstation, along with a media server and Wi-Fi hotspot (ideal for watching movies and streaming music) in a compact size (the CPU is 4.5 inches square and only 3/4-inch high) that's easy to store and transport. The system comes preloaded with Plex Multimedia server software, which allows instant access to all your media sources, including music, movies, photos and more. The TriplePlay also includes a full-function Windows 10 computer, a wireless keyboard and mouse, long-range internet and Wi-Fi hotspot/signal booster and Connectify Hotspot Max software. The computer has an HDMI port for connection to an HDTV and an SD card slot for accessing stored movies and music. Options include an infrared video camera with motion detection and a 2-, 4- or 8-TB external hard drive with USB-connected DVD/Blu-ray read/write. MSRP: \$649.

PDQConnect | 858-598-5001, <http://pdqconnect.com/shop>

Wireless and Carefree

Carefree of Colorado has rolled out its new Bluetooth-enabled Wireless Awning Control System, allowing awning control using a remote key fob and/or the Carefree Mobile app on a smart device from as far as 50 feet away. The BT12 Wireless Awning Control System upgrade has been designed to work with all 12-volt DC Carefree awnings. A control module located inside the motorhome receives remote signals from the Carefree Bluetooth app (or remote fob) to activate awning functions, which include awning extension, retraction and LED lighting adjustments (on/off/dim). Plus, when paired with the Bluetooth-enabled motion sensor, the system can even adjust the sensitivity of the wind sensor (via the Carefree app only). MSRP varies depending on functionality: \$89.99 for an upgrade kit with the key fob, but without the motion sensor; and \$99 for the upgrade kit with the motion sensor, but no key fob. The key fob is available separately for \$24.99.

Carefree of Colorado | www.carefreeofcolorado.com



Backup Plans

When driving a motorhome on the road or maneuvering in an RV park, a clear view of the surroundings is key. Rear View Safety has introduced the RVS-3710 Digital Quad View Monitor with built-in DVR capabilities. The monitor includes a GPS antenna to log the vehicle's position and speed, as well as a user-friendly touchscreen for menu navigation and changing options. The RVS-3710-DVR supports up to four 720p analog HD cameras, and the DVR can record all camera positions. Four trigger wires allow the operator to automatically view specific cameras based on user actions, such as when the vehicle is in reverse, while navigating tight campgrounds or while changing lanes on the highway. A power harness seamlessly connects the monitor to any 5-pin camera (sold separately). The monitor also features a USB 2.0 interface, making it easy to back up footage and for system upgrades, while an adjustable G-sensor safeguards important incident footage with override protection. MSRP: \$449.99.

Rear View Safety | 800-764-1028, www.rearviewsafety.com



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Dumping holding tanks may be one of the less glamorous aspects of the lifestyle, but it can be even more of a hassle if you have to paw through the contents of your rig's basement storage in search of the hose fittings. Camco's RV Sewer Fitting Organizer helps keep sewer fittings clean, organized and in one place. Constructed of durable polypropylene, the organizer has been designed to work with any bayonet-style fitting and Camco's 4-in-1 adapter (call for other adapter compatibility). The bayonet-style fitting twists onto the lugs located on the outside of the organizer, while the 4-in-1 adapter simply presses into it. The durable organizer holds two fittings, is easy to mount and installation hardware is included; only a Phillips-head screwdriver is needed. MSRP: \$6.99.

Camco | 800-334-2004, www.camco.net



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Beatrice, Nebraska

Home Sweet Homestead

Homestead National Monument of America, 4 miles west of Beatrice, Nebraska, is a unit of the National Park Service that commemorates the passage of the Homestead Act of 1862. The act allowed any qualified person to claim up to 160 acres of federally owned land. The requirements were that the landowner would live on, improve and cultivate the land for five years. Signed into law by President Abraham Lincoln, the act transferred 270 million acres, or about 10 percent of the area of the United States, from public to private ownership.

The Homestead National Monument of America Heritage Center, which sits on a site that includes some of the first acres successfully claimed under the Homestead Act, contains exhibits on immigration, agriculture, native tribes, the tallgrass prairie ecosystem and the federal land policy.

The day-use monument is open year-round, and admission is free. Public campgrounds are located nearby in Beatrice.

For more information, call 402-223-3514 or visit www.nps.gov/home — James and Dorothy Richardson



Photo: James Richardson

Shonto, Arizona

Navajo National Monument

If you're driving along U.S. Highway 160 in northeastern Arizona, there's a quiet stop where you can visit the lands of the area's Ancestral Puebloans and their homes. Navajo National Monument, which preserves three large Ancestral Puebloan cliff dwellings, is definitely worth a visit. The dwellings — built of stone, wood and clay — have been well-preserved.

Between mid-May and mid-September, take a ranger-led tour down to the Betatakin Cliff Dwelling (check for special tours during other months), then take a walk on one

of the three rim trails where you can view Betatakin. In addition to Betatakin, Keet Seel and Inscription House (the latter of which is closed to visitors) are also protected areas of the monument.

The monument has an excellent visitor center and museum, where prehistoric Puebloan artifacts are on display.

One of the monument's two campgrounds, Sunset View Campground, is open year-round on a first-come, first-served basis and has 31 free, dry-camping sites. RV size is limited to 28 feet or less. Water and restrooms are available, but there is no dump station.

For more information, call 928-672-2700 or visit www.nps.gov/nava — Morey Edelman

Photo: Morey Edelman



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Pages From the Past

Retracing *MotorHome's* May issues over the years

May is for flowers, for mothers and for fresh starts, and it stands on the sun-dappled front porch of still-warmer summertime. Those classically comforting feelings are why it's initially rather unexpected to read an editorial on the impending end of the world (to be brought about by overusing natural resources) in *MotorHome's* May 1974 issue ... until the author ever so slyly puts things in perspective after stating his case to the contrary (pointing out the trend toward more efficient vehicles): "So, the world is not ending, but changing for the better."

And it's hard to argue with such hope when confronted with the "Galloping Grandmas of Bellingham" in the May '75 issue. The humorous (and inspiring) feature focused on Edna Roddey and Leona Jones, a pair of adventurous women with a combined age of 130 who lived full-time in a 28-foot Cabana Class A.

The feel-good nostalgia continues in the May '84 issue with "Cellular

Phones: Revolution in Communications." The clever comparisons between George Orwell's classic 1984 and the cellular technology of the same calendar year was ahead of its time, most notably the ultimate (and partly correct) conclusion that "Within the next couple of years, cellular phones will probably be offered as standard or optional equipment by many motorhome manufacturers." The trend

may not have caught on at the manufacturer level, but the sentiment that cellphones would become a must-have among consumers has turned out to be spot on. Shortly after the prediction was made, the United States would bring home 174 total (83 gold) medals in the 1984 Summer Olympics, in Los Angeles, California.

Two years later, *MotorHome* tested the soon-to-be superstar Fleetwood Bounder, which helped popularize basement storage floorplans and improved livability features, all at an affordable price.

In May of '96, a blink-and-you-might-miss-it item appeared on the MH News page, pointing out "Ford to Offer 6.8-liter V-10 in Vans and Cutaways." It would prove to be a rather humble announcement for the introduction of the popular Triton engine that powers so many motorhomes on the road today.

The May 2008 issue featured a Walk-through on the Jayco Seneca HD, a Class C motorhome on a robust Chevrolet Kodiak chassis. The move by Jayco perhaps unofficially announced that the so-called "Super C" class of motorhomes had not only arrived, but was in fact here to stay.

This month's trip down memory lane concludes with "Six-figure Symphony," a May 2016 roundup of a dozen motorhomes that barely (if at all) crack the \$100,000 mark. Compare that to this month's "10 For the Road" offering on page 54, where we take a look at 10 motorhomes that come in at less than \$200,000. And though the doubling of sticker prices may seem shocking, we can assure you the new breed of motorhomes more than lives up to the additional cost. We'll chalk it up to inflation. **M**



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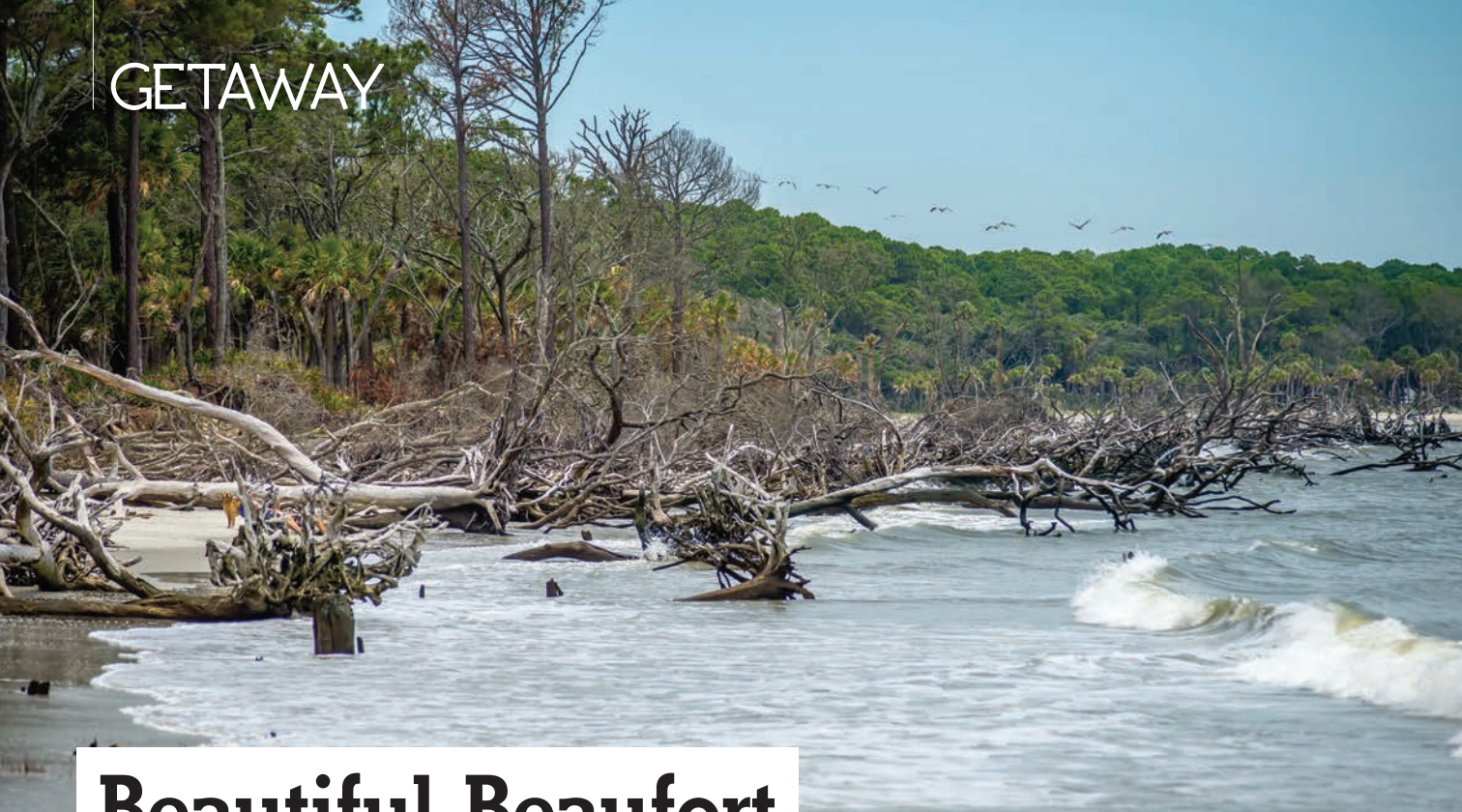
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Beautiful Beaufort

South Carolina's second-oldest city features a rich history and plenty of old South Charm

By Pam Windsor

Picturesque Beaufort, South Carolina, is often overshadowed by its bigger sister cities — Charleston to the north and Savannah, Georgia, to the south — but you'll be pleased to find the same "old Southern" charm as in those more well-known destinations. You'll drive along streets lined with moss-draped oak trees, past antebellum homes, historic churches, small shops and restaurants, and find yourself glancing up just in time to see the waterfront just ahead.

Beaufort is the second-oldest city in South Carolina, although there's some debate that the Spanish, not the English, got there first. Still, this coastal community has played a significant role throughout America's history.

You can get a sense of some of that history through a variety of tours. Narrated walking tours, van tours and horse-drawn carriage tours are available throughout the Beaufort Historic District. A carriage tour fits well with the atmosphere, as riders move slowly past many of the town's older homes and structures. It's interesting to note that Beaufort has the highest concentration of antebellum homes in South Carolina. This area suffered less damage than other Southern cities because the Union occupied the town during much of the Civil War.

"There was a battle that took place here November 7, 1861, called the Battle of Port Royal," explained Nichole Myers with the Sea Island Carriage Co. "And, during that battle, the people of Beaufort left town. The Northerners called it 'The Great Skedaddle' of the South. When the Union troops got here, they found a ghost town, so they occupied it, and used many of the homes and churches as hospitals."

Union forces set up headquarters at what's known as the John Mark Verdier House. The home was once owned by a wealthy planter, and Marquis de Lafayette stayed here during his U.S. tour in 1825. Verdier has an interesting story. He started off as an apprentice in a mercantile store, worked his way up, eventually bought the store and then inherited land from his father. Verdier planted indigo, which did well until the Revolutionary War, when England no longer wanted it. Then he switched to Sea Island cotton, which brought him success until it was all wiped out by a hurricane in 1810.

"Until then, he was a very wealthy man," explained Sandy Patterson, head docent at the



Getting There ↻

Beaufort (pronounced BYOO-fert, and not to be confused with North Carolina's Beaufort) is on Port Royal Island. Take Interstate 95 to U.S. Highway 17, then U.S. Highway 21 south.

GETAWAY

BEAUFORT, SOUTH CAROLINA

home. “But, unfortunately, he over-extended himself. He ended up buying and speculating on too much property, and became property rich and cash poor. He ended up in debtor’s prison in Charleston.”

Verdier was able to keep the home in the family by transferring it to his son’s name. Today, this stately Federalist building downtown serves as a museum and is open for tours.

Beaufort has had its share of well-known movies shot here over the years. They include “The Great Santini,” “The Big Chill” and “Forrest Gump,” to name a few. Locals can point out some of the homes where people like Sally Field stayed while in town, as well as spots where scenes from some of those films were shot.

The late writer Pat Conroy, who wrote “The Great Santini,” moved to Beaufort with his family when he was 15 years old. Beaufort is home to a Marine Corps Air Station and Conroy’s father, a Marine Corps fighter pilot — the subject of “The Great Santini” — was stationed there. Conroy always considered Beaufort his hometown and was living there when he died in early 2016. He is remembered fondly by many who knew him well.

Nearby Parris Island is one of the world’s most visited military facilities.



Above: The Parish Church of St. Helena was established in 1712 as a colonial parish of the Church of England, and today is one of the oldest churches in the U.S. The original church was built on the present site in 1724. The church appears now as it did in 1842, after its final enlargement.

Some 20,000 Marine recruits come for basic training every year. They graduate at one of 35 graduation ceremonies throughout the year that are always held on Friday. Those events are open to the public. The Parris Island Museum is also free and open to the public. The museum covers local and regional history, as well as Marine Corps history.

“The museum showcases the long and rich legacy of the Marine Corps,” noted Captain Greg Carroll. “It stands as a magnificent monument to Marines

of the past, as well as a source of inspiration for Marines of the future.”

New exhibits highlight the history of recruit training and the instructors who make that training possible.

To gain access to Parris Island, visitors need only a valid U.S. government-issued photo ID card, proof of insurance and their vehicle registration.

An RV park on Parris Island is available for active duty, retired military and Department of Defense card holders. Call 843-228-7472 for reservations.

Clockwise, from right: A horse-drawn carriage tour is a great way for visitors to see many of the town’s older homes and structures. Some of the RV sites at Hunting Island State Park can accommodate motorhomes up to 40 feet in length. Beaufort offers beautiful coastal views of old Southern charm and architecture.



Photos: Pam Windsor

Photo: Beaufort Regional Chamber of Commerce



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Far left: You may recognize this iconic tree from its appearance in the film "Forrest Gump." In the movie, Forrest teaches Jenny to dangle from its limbs. Left: The Chapel of Eaves was constructed in 1740 for planters who lived too far away to attend regular services at The Parish Church of St. Helena.

Photos: Beaufort Regional Chamber of Commerce, Pam Windisor

Beaufort's The Parish Church of St. Helena was established in 1712 and is one of the oldest churches in the United States. The original church was built in 1724 and has expanded over the years. It was the parish church of Thomas Heyward Jr., one of the signers of the Declaration of Independence. When Union troops later took over the city, the second floor sanctuary was used as a hospital.

"There were many buildings in Beaufort used as hospitals," said church docent Sally Miller. She added that Confederate and Union soldiers are buried here, as well as many others who served in times of war. "There's someone buried here from every war the United States has ever fought in. There are also two British soldiers who died in the Revolutionary War and are buried right up near the front gate."

Regular parishioners are also buried here, one of them in an interesting brick mausoleum.

"It was built for a doctor who heard that sometimes people are buried alive," Miller said. "He was afraid that might happen to him, so he wanted to be buried with a pickaxe, a jug of water and a loaf of bread." And what happened after he died? "To my knowledge, he was never seen again."

The Beaufort National Cemetery was established by President Abraham Lincoln in 1863 as a final resting place for Union and Confederate soldiers. Today it is open for burials of members of all of the armed services. More than 14,000 people are buried here.

After the end of the Civil War, many former slaves headed to Beaufort and the surrounding Sea Islands to live.

The area has a rich African-American heritage and offers an opportunity to learn about the Gullah culture that still exists here. The Penn Center, a 50-acre historic campus on nearby St. Helena Island, was one of the country's first schools for formerly enslaved individuals.

Not far from Penn Center, you'll see the ruins of the Chapel of Eaves. While St. Helena was the parish church, this chapel was built in 1740 for planters who lived too far away to attend regular services. It was constructed with a material very common in this area at the time.

"They constructed a building material called tabby," explained Jennifer Rhodes with the Visitors Center. "It was made of crushed oysters, sand and limestone, and they used that to build many of the walls near the water and other things downtown."

During your visit make sure to try some of the famous Lowcountry dishes you may have heard about, from shrimp and grits to she-crab soup to Frogmore stew (also known as Lowcountry boil or Beaufort stew). Frogmore stew contains shrimp, sausage, corn, onion and potatoes, and is definitely worth sampling. Food is a highlight here, and local restaurants feature a number of those dishes. Beaufort also hosts two food festivals: A Taste of Beaufort (May 4-5), and the Beaufort Shrimp Festival (October 5-6).

Outdoor opportunities include boating, fishing, hiking, biking, birding and much more. Just 16 miles south of Beaufort, Hunting Island State Park has 5,000 acres that includes 3 miles of beach, natural wildlife areas, 102

partial-hookup campsites and the only South Carolina lighthouse that's open to the public.

Motorhome owner Judy Hendrich and her family have been coming to the park for years. She and her husband, Bill, travel from Maryville, Tennessee, at least twice a year, and are often joined by children and grandchildren. She comes for the water.

"I love the ocean. It's a huge beach and it's not crowded. You go out there and see maybe six or eight people at a time."

While the beach might not be crowded, the campground is often booked, so make reservations as far in advance as possible (there is a two-night minimum).

Another nearby campground, Tuck in the Wood, is located on St. Helena Island, not far from Beaufort or Hunting Island. It, too, offers a serene, natural setting, although there's no beach access. Other options for places to stay include Hilton Head, which is about 40 miles from Beaufort.

Beaufort offers a warm, welcoming, laid-back atmosphere that's great for a lengthy stay or as a stop for a few days on the way to somewhere else. **M**

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Hunting Island State Park

843-838-2011, <https://southcarolinaparks.com/hunting-island>

Parris Island Museum

843-228-2951, <http://parrislandmuseum.com>

Penn Center

843-838-2432, www.penncenter.com

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843-838-2267, www.tuckinthewood.com

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By Mary Zalmanek

CALIFORNIA'S WINE COUNTRY

Savoring vino and more in Sonoma and Napa counties

Sonoma and Napa counties are home to more than 800 wineries and numerous other attractions. After getting rave reviews from various sources, we put five wineries, two art collections and several outdoor activities on our must-do list. Even though my husband, Jim, and I experienced less than 1 percent of what the region has to offer, our weeklong visit was 100 percent fun. We used Napa Valley Expo RV Park as our home base for the first three days, then moved our motorhome to Bodega Bay RV Park for the rest of the week.

Our first stop was a guided tour at di Rosa, an art museum with nearly 2,000 works of contemporary art by 800 Northern California artists. Three galleries and a sculpture park are situated on 217 acres in the Carneros region of Napa Valley. di Rosa is a nonprofit public trust established by two devoted patrons of the arts, Rene and Veronica di Rosa. Our tour started in the Gatehouse Gallery, the only one visitors can tour

without a guide. The 125-year-old Residence Gallery originally housed a winery and was the home of the di Rosas from 1960 to 1996. In the Main Gallery, we enjoyed Rene's playful appreciation of art. Artist David Best transformed a 1967 Pontiac, once owned by Rene's mother, into Mother Tina's Car by covering it with a large horse-head sculpture, a saddle, a pair of table lamps and a bunch of small trinkets.



Getting There

Sonoma County is part of the San Francisco Bay Area, less than 30 miles north of San Francisco's Golden Gate Bridge, and is bordered by Marin, Napa, Lake and Mendocino counties and the Pacific Ocean.

The Napa Valley, about an hour from the San Francisco Bay Area, consists of the following towns: Calistoga, St. Helena, Rutherford/Oakville, Yountville, the city of Napa, American Canyon and the outdoor recreation area of Lake Berryessa.

While at di Rosa, we heard about Cornerstone Sonoma, a nearby marketplace featuring shopping, restaurants and gardens. After a quick and delicious lunch at Park 121 Café & Grill, we set off to explore the gardens, which consist of nine Cornerstone Gardens and Sunset magazine's five Sonoma Test Gardens. Landscape architects and designers created the Cornerstone Gardens to "celebrate the connection

The 16,000-square-foot French Normandy building at Ledson Winery and Vineyards in Kenwood is known as "The Castle."





between art, architecture and nature.” The Sunset Test Gardens cover a quarter acre and highlights a wide variety of plants and design.

The rest of our afternoon was devoted to wine tasting. Buena Vista Winery, in Sonoma, is California’s oldest premium winery, founded in 1857 by Count Agoston Haraszthy. In 1878 the property was purchased by a couple uninterested in wine making; new owners revived the winery in 1949, and have been making fine wines ever since. Jim and I shared a tasting. We especially liked the Sheriff of Buena Vista, a wine honoring not only Buena Vista’s founder, who served two years as sheriff of San Diego County, but also honors today’s sheriffs by donating a portion of the proceeds of every bottle sold to the National Sheriffs’ Association Education Foundation.

We ended our first day with

Above, from left: Buena Vista Winery is California’s oldest premium winery, founded in 1857. The wine and food pairing at Kendall-Jackson included three items served with red wines: pinot noir with duck breast, syrah with pork belly sliders and cabernet sauvignon with lamb tacos.

another shared tasting at Ledson Winery and Vineyards in Kenwood. We weren’t familiar with Ledson wines, but we were intrigued by the 16,000-square-foot French Normandy winery known as “The Castle.” There’s a good reason we’d never heard of this brand; Ledson wines are sold exclusively at the winery, on its website and at the Ledson Hotel in Sonoma. Before our tasting started, we noticed the vineyard rows behind The Castle were labeled with the names of the owners of each row. By reserving a row for a minimum of three years, members get four cases each year and their person-

alized labels on their bottles.

With all the good food and wine we were having, we figured we’d better start the next day with a hike. Bothe-Napa Valley State Park is at the north end of Napa Valley. We hiked along a creek through a redwood forest. We passed a quiet campground with 30 RV sites (no hookups, and maximum motorhome length is 31 feet).

Napa Valley had been producing wines for more than a century before it got the respect it deserved. In the Paris Tasting of 1976, a Stag’s Leap Wine Cellars Cabernet Sauvignon took top honors in a blind tasting

Below, from left: The Sunset Test Gardens’ Farm at Cornerstone Sonoma uses compost, fish emulsion and chemical-free fertilizers. The Napa Valley Distillery’s Tasting Salon in Oxbow Public Market reportedly has the largest collection of artisan cocktail bitters and syrups in the world.





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comparing California wines to the best wines of Bordeaux and Burgundy. At Stag's Leap Wine Cellars' new FAY Outlook and Visitor Center, we sipped wines while admiring the view of the vineyards and the mountains, known as Stag's Leap Palisades.

Not only does The Hess Collection Winery make some tasty wines, it also has an impressive art collection. Donald Hess began collecting art in 1966. Less than a quarter of this collection is displayed here; the rest can be found in museums around the world. As a collector, Hess has developed long-term relationships with 20 living artists. One of those featured artists is Leopoldo Maler, who encourages viewers to "apply their imagination to his pieces." I imagined *Homage* — an old Underwood standard typewriter with flames coming out of the top — symbolizing the inspiration for a red-hot novel. For Maler, it was a personal tribute to his uncle, a well-known Argentinian writer, who was assassinated for the inflammatory content of his political essays.

For dinner, we decided to check out the Oxbow Public Market in Napa, a 40,000-square-foot indoor marketplace with local and regional artisan food and wine vendors. After dining on delicious oysters at the Hog Island

Oyster Co. and indulging in chocolate from Anette's Chocolates, we browsed other shops. The Napa Valley Distillery's Tasting Salon reportedly has the largest collection of artisan cocktail bitters and syrups in the world. The complimentary bitters tasting was enlightening. I tried some delicious ones with fruity and ginger flavors; none of them were bitter at all.

After three short days in Napa — time flies when you're having fun — we moved to Bodega Bay RV Park. As soon as we were settled, we drove our dinghy vehicle to Bodega Head, a rocky promontory that forms the entrance to Bodega Harbor. We hiked the 1.8-mile Bodega Head Trail, stopping often to admire the stunning views of the Pacific Ocean. A small herd of deer watched us nonchalantly as they munched on grass.

As long-time Peanuts fans, we were delighted to learn of the Charles M. Schulz Museum in Santa Rosa. Not only did we enjoy reading some of the comic strips and learning about the development of Charlie Brown, Lucy, Snoopy and the gang, we were impressed by Schulz's many accomplishments and honors.

Peanuts first appeared in seven national newspapers on October 2, 1950; the last original strip was



The 17-by-22-foot Peanuts Tile Mural at the Charles M. Schulz Museum in Santa Rosa is composed of 3,588 Peanuts comic strips printed on 2-by-8-inch ceramic tiles.

printed February 13, 2000, the day after Schulz's death. At that time, Peanuts was in 2,600 newspapers in 75 countries in 21 languages. In addition to five awards from the National Cartoonists Society, he received an Emmy and a Congressional Gold Medal, Schulz was inducted into the United States Hockey Hall of Fame, has a star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame and is a recipient of the Silver Buffalo Award by the Boy Scouts of America. NASA astronauts honored Schulz by naming the Apollo 10 command module "Charlie Brown," and the lunar module, "Snoopy."

The museum sits across the street from Snoopy's Home Ice, an ice rink built by Schulz that has hosted the Senior World Hockey Tournament since 1975, and Snoopy's Gallery and Gift Shop, with its wide variety of Peanuts memorabilia.

Just 10 minutes from Santa Rosa is La Crema Estate at Saralee's Vineyard in the heart of the Russian River Valley. We were thrilled to discover that on the day of our visit, the vineyard was having a grand-opening party where wines were being paired with food.

Outside among the vines, we sipped chardonnay and ate Hog Island oysters on the half shell. In the multilevel tasting room, we enjoyed a generous assortment of red and white wines,



Mother Tina's Car, a 1967 Pontiac covered with a large horse head sculpture, a saddle, table lamps and a whole bunch of small trinkets, sits in the Main Gallery at di Rosa in Napa Valley.

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Clockwise, from above: Kendall-Jackson's Estate Gardens include seven areas. Paella is prepared at the grand opening for La Crema Estate at Saralee's Vineyard. David Luning and his band entertain at the Annual Old Grove Festival in Armstrong Redwoods State Natural Reserve.



and tasty food. On the deck, a happy crowd listened to live music, ate paella and drank pinot noir.

Our trip to California would not have been complete without spending time in a redwood forest. Armstrong Redwoods State Natural Reserve near Guerneville is a 30-minute drive from La Crema. The 805-acre grove is filled with *Sequoia sempervirens*, commonly called coastal redwood. These ancient trees are the tallest living things on earth. We followed the 1.5-mile Pioneer Nature Trail on our self-guided tour. We marveled at the Parson Jones Tree, the tallest one in the grove, standing more than 310 feet — longer than the length of a football field. The Colonel Armstrong Tree is the oldest one, estimated at more than 1,400 years old.

This was a day of serendipity. Earlier in the week, while I was



planning our visit to Armstrong Redwoods, I discovered that the Annual Old Grove Festival was scheduled for the evening of our visit. We were lucky enough to get tickets for the event that soon sold out. The concert is held in the historic Redwood Forest Theater each September. This amphitheater was built in the 1930s. The festival is sponsored by Stewards of the Coast and Redwoods, an organization that provides support for state parks in the Russian River area.

Our last wine tasting was at Kendall-

SONOMA AND NAPA FIRE UPDATE

The world watched in horror as wildfires raced through Napa and Sonoma counties in October 2017. As of early 2018, all of the places we visited are open for business, including di Rosa Center for Contemporary Art, which was closed for three months while its artwork underwent a professional cleaning to remove smoke damage. The fires burned predominantly in the forested hillsides, beyond where most visitors travel. Wineries are still welcoming tourists and pouring wines. Napa and Sonoma are just as beautiful as ever.




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CALIFORNIA'S WINE COUNTRY

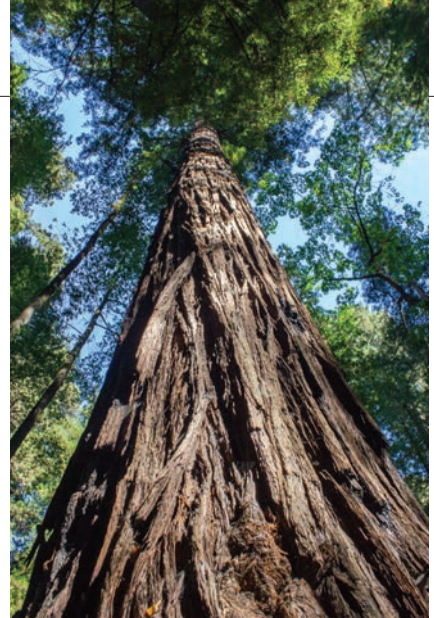
Jackson Wine Estate and Gardens, maker of my favorite chardonnay, in Fulton. We did a wine and food pairing. The first two courses were served with white wines: sauvignon blanc with fried green tomatoes garnished with oyster leaf (yes, a green leaf that tastes like an oyster!) and chardonnay with polenta, cheese and garden vegetables. Since I generally favor white wines, I assumed the best came first.

The next three courses were served with red wines: pinot noir with duck breast, syrah with pork belly sliders and cabernet sauvignon with lamb tacos. When I tasted the syrah, I thought I'd found a new favorite wine. It was perfect with the pork belly. The lamb tacos were even better, and I figured it, too, would be best with the syrah. That was when I gained a new appreciation for pairing wine and food. The syrah was still good, but not as good as with the food the chef had paired with it.

Since my knowledge of pairing food and wine is "red goes with beef and pork; white goes with chicken and fish," I hoped to gain some insight from this experience. When Executive Chef Justin Wangler came by our table, I asked him about this. He said it takes practice, balancing flavors and textures. When he and his team put a new item on the menu, they try it with several different wines to find the optimal combination. I also found some excellent food and wine pairing tips on its website (www.kj.com/blog/food-pairings).

After lunch, our server, Savannah De La Cruz, gave us a tour of the demonstration vineyards and gardens. She is the Tasting Room Lead, and has an impressive knowledge of wines. We tasted grapes right off the vine, comparing zinfandel, cabernet sauvignon and mourvèdre grapes. The Estate Gardens include seven distinct areas. Some grow the specialty produce featured in our farm-to-table meal, while others are meant to be educational or simply to inspire visitors with their beauty.

We'd driven through the town of Sebastopol, population 7,500, several



Armstrong Redwoods State Natural Reserve is filled with *Sequoia sempervirens*, commonly called coastal redwood.

times. On our last day in the area, we finally had time to stop. Several fanciful metal sculptures scattered around town caught our attention. They were created by "urban folk artists" Patrick Amiot and Brigitte Laurent. Amiot sculpts "junk art" out of objects destined for a landfill, and Laurent paints them to create the finished product. For about a block on either side of the artists' home on Florence Avenue, front yards are adorned with cartoonish likenesses of things like a used-car salesman, fast-food workers in a taco truck, firemen in a fire truck, and Godzilla carrying a car and a windmill. My personal favorite was two campers roasting marshmallows next to their RV, which was aptly named Happy Trails Camping.

Our week in Napa and Sonoma was indeed filled with happy trails. They led us to vineyards, museums and redwood forests. Cheers! **M**

For More Information

Bodega Bay RV Park
707-875-3701, www.bodegabayrvpark.com

Napa Valley Expo RV Park
707-253-4900, www.napavalleyexpo.com

Sonoma County Tourism
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Enjoy the View

Winnebago's Sprinter-based Class C with a European-inspired interior focuses on fuel-efficient wandering without giving up creature comforts **By Kevin Livingston**

As the popularity in Mercedes-Benz Sprinter-based Class C motorhomes continues to soar, companies like Winnebago look for ways to stand out from the crowd. The View, a nameplate that surfaced early in Winnebago's journey into building on the Sprinter chassis, has just the right amount of luxury, blended in a compact body that offers plenty of functional livability and modern styling. Add European interior cabinetry courtesy of Tecnoform, an Italian design firm turning heads in the RV industry stateside, and the View 24J plies the field with an agile motorhome that is easy to maneuver through the country with great confidence, and turns in great mileage figures to boot.

Immediately upon entry, the View 24J bathes the senses with earthy-looking browns and beiges gracing the interior walls, arranged in a clean, comfortable and space-conscious way. At first glance, the 24J may seem a bit on the cramped side, but the interior is actually quite roomy thanks to the centrally located streetside slideout. Designers built in decent spacing

throughout for everything essential, like cooking, sleeping or just simply stretching out one's legs on the bigger-than-most, thickly padded, plus-sized dinette. In fact, the dinette is so substantial, it's nearly impossible to lose focus of its presence. This dinette is nothing like the cookie cutter mini-booths used by many manufacturers that aren't very useful for grown adults.

Besides the sheer size, the slightly darker than khaki colored dinette, wrapped in a plush and pliable leather-like material, rests right at home in the single slideout. The U-shaped dinette is a perfect place to snooze, relax and even get a little work done on a computer, when necessary. And don't discount the dinette as a bed for full-sized adults; there's more than enough room at 42-by-82 inches for two 6-foot-tall people to slumber in style. And to make it even better, flip-up footrests convert the couch into dual recliners. About the only downside of this dinette is the two cushions that are placed over the table for sleeping. In the bed position, they are a little difficult to keep from sliding around, but ultimately, it's a very nice dinette.

ABOVE: The Winnebago View 24J looks right at home in a luxury RV park. Full-body paint and aluminum wheels help provide an upscale look.

BELOW: European-style cabinetry adds to the modern look inside the View. Galley is surprisingly roomy and surrounded by generous drawers and cabinets. Bed is tucked in between the passenger-side wall and corner bathroom. The super comfortable U-shaped dinette doubles as a bed, while the flip-up footrests convert the couch into dual recliner-type seats, resulting in a great spot to enjoy the living room TV.



Also, affixed alongside the dinette is a healthy-size, lower-level wardrobe closet, doubling as the cabinet structure housing the convection microwave.

While on the topic of cabinets, there's no shortage of storage space inside the 24J. Attractively executed and uniquely shaped and designed, the glossy-finished, curved cabinetry is scattered liberally throughout the interior. This theme carries over to the kitchen as well, which is fitted with a curvaceous counter and cabinet combination. Although the laminate kitchen counter is a little on the small side, it is equipped with ideal components, such as the stainless-steel double-basin sink topped off with a tall, curved matching stainless faucet/sprayer and a pair of sink covers to aid in providing additional counterspace. Sharing the kitchen counter area is a rightly sized two-burner stove with glass cover, which takes advantage of the decorative, but effective, backlit splash guard secured to the adjoining refrig-

erator cabinet on the right. Hanging over the counter is not only more curvy cabinet landscaping, but a place for the living room TV, which is on an articulating arm — and clearly visible from the dinette. Below the cabinet is LED kitchen lighting that provides sun-like illumination for cooking and prepping. As for the refrigerator, it's perfectly positioned within arm's reach of the kitchen counter. Rather than rely on LP-gas, this smallish, double-door refrigerator is compressor-driven, powered by the inverter when hookups are not available. Two Group 24 12-volt batteries are provided to feed the inverter, which could be problematic when camping in primitive locations. But the 3,600-watt Onan Micro Quiet LP-gas generator can help in this department, and adding an aftermarket solar-panel battery charging system would likewise be a functional, and considerably quieter, option.

Right above the refrigerator is a home for the electronic information

center along with necessary switches and controls, including those for the LP-gas tank valve and slideout.

Approaching the rear, the View has a divided design, displaying the bedroom on the right and the split bathroom on the left. It's a common configuration, positioning the sink outside the bathroom door, making room for the toilet and shower behind the privacy door. It's obviously a good method for making the most of the available space, but there are a few compromises. The 50-by-80-inch bed is not quite in queen-size territory, but is still big enough for two adults who are not averse to cuddling. The rounded corner at the foot of the bed makes for better access to the sink and bathroom, but the shape cuts off some legroom for the sleeper against the bathroom wall. Also, the person against the outside wall has to climb over the other person to get out of bed. It takes a little acclimation, but is not a deal breaker, especially since the mattress is so

The lavatory sink is located just outside the door to the bathroom. The compressor-driven refrigerator is across from the wardrobe cabinet that houses the convection microwave on top. European suspension system under rear mattress offers exceptional support and comfort.



Specifications

Chassis

Model	Mercedes-Benz Sprinter 3500
Engine	3.0-liter V-6 turbodiesel
SAE hp	188 @ 3,800 rpm
Torque	325 lb-ft @ 1,400-2,400 rpm
Transmission	5-speed automatic
Axle Ratio	3.92:1
Tires	LT215/85R16
Wheelbase	170"
Brakes	Disc
Suspension (F/R)	Struts/Leaf springs
Fuel Capacity	26.4 gal
Fuel Economy	18.17 mpg
Warranty	3 years, 36,000 miles chassis/ 5 years, 100,000 miles engine

Coach

Exterior Length	25' 8"
Exterior Width	7' 6"
Exterior Height with A/C	11' 1"
Interior Width	7' 3"
Interior Height	6' 8"
Construction	Aluminum frame with steel support, laminated walls, block foam insulation, fiberglass roof
Freshwater Capacity	32 gal
Black-water Capacity	34 gal
Gray-water Capacity	40 gal
Water-heater Capacity	6 gal
LP-gas Capacity	13 gal
Air Conditioner (1)	15,000 Btu
Furnace	20,000 Btu
Refrigerator	5 cubic-foot
Converter	45 amp
Inverter	1,000 watts
Batteries	(1) 12-volt chassis, (2) 12-volt house
AC Generator	3.6 kW LP-gas
MSRP	\$131,605
MSRP as Tested	\$150,037
Warranty	1 year/15,000 miles basic; 3 years/36,000 miles limited structure; 10 years limited roof skin

Wet Weight

(water and water heater, fuel, LP-gas tank full; no supplies or passengers)

Front Axle	3,340 lbs
Rear Axle	6,520 lbs
Total	9,860 lbs

Chassis Ratings

GAWR, F/R	4,410/7,720 lbs
GVWR/GCWR	11,030/15,250 lbs
ROCCC	1,170 lbs (deduct weight of passengers for net cargo capacity)

GAWR	Gross Axle Weight Rating
GVWR	Gross Vehicle Weight Rating
GCWR	Gross Combination Weight Rating
ROCCC	Realistic Occupant and Cargo Carrying Capacity (Full Water, No Passengers)



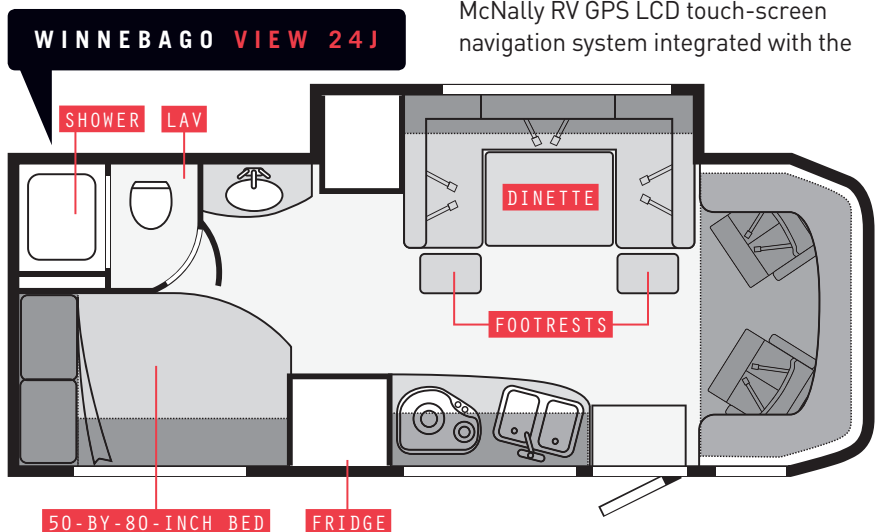
Cabover area is utilized for additional sleeping positions. Center section can be removed and placed on front portion of cushion to open cockpit headroom. Ladder is stored to the side when not in use. Sprinter cab is all business, featuring ergonomic controls and instrumentation.

comfortable. Underneath the mattress is a relatively new-to-RVs European suspension system comprised of several small gray plastic pyramids that flex. Although, it may make you a little leery at first, it works shockingly well and provides the right amount of support for a great night's sleep. Keeping with the theme, the bedroom has a bounty of convex overhead cabinets, coupled to a nighttime shelf, two blue LED reading lights and a USB-outfitted 120-volt AC outlet. A 24-inch HDTV is mounted at the foot of the bed.

Opposite the bed sits the aforementioned small closet-sized lavatory with its sink, medicine cabinet and mirror placed just outside the bathroom wall. Nothing special here, but completely functional, using a stainless sink resting inside the small pedestal with lots of LED lighting. Opening the convex-shaped door reveals a standard porcelain toilet and the shower enclosure featuring a space-saving

Nautilus retractable door. This was the one area aboard the View that is on the confined side of things, but is expected in a compact motorhome. Even though it's understood that space to put all the creature comforts into perfect positioning is at a premium, a bit more elbow room in the bathroom would be welcome, considering some special-ops-style, preplanned movements are required to pull off a successful, unharmed restroom mission. This bathroom might not be the best option for those people towering over 6 feet tall and with a larger girth.

On the opposite end of the motorhome, the cockpit is all business. Above the driver and co-pilot seats, you'll find a traditional cabover bed, complete with lots of legroom, plenty of supportive padding, blue LED reading lights and an associated removable ladder. The seats are color-coordinated with the dinette and can be swiveled to enhance the living area. Dashboard accouterments include a 9-inch Rand McNally RV GPS LCD touch-screen navigation system integrated with the



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stereo and rearview camera. Nighttime privacy is provided by sliding pleated window blinds that have been installed for all cab windows, allowing for a total visual block out. Although the design is clever, especially for the side windows, the mechanisms are finicky to operate and could use a better latching system for the front windshield shades. It's a great effort and even though it took some patience at times, these shades are light years ahead of using curtains on a track.

Embellishing the high-quality fit and finish is the clean-looking soft vinyl ceiling, trimmed using a variety of switched LED lighting fixtures and a powered, extra-wide skylight/roof vent with both a sliding screen and pleated shade. The remainder of the onboard creature comforts come by way of a 15,000-Btu air-conditioner with heat pump, a 20,000-Btu furnace and a 6-gallon LP-gas/120-volt AC water heater. Holding tanks are adequately sized with a 34-gallon

black- and a 40-gallon gray-water holding tank.

Mounting the body to the Sprinter chassis has been perfected by Winnebago engineers, who take pride in the level of craftsmanship and safety features. The View, like other Winnebago products, is treated to the manufacturer's legendary foundation of specially extruded structural aluminum, known as SuperStructure. The Thermo-panel side walls are crafted by bonding layers of fiberglass, high-density block foam insulation and welded aluminum support structures. The aluminum support structures also contain embedded steel substructures, added to ensure solid attachment points for cabinetry and appliances. And the walls are fastened to the frame utilizing interlocking joints, which are also found in the floor and roof. The View takes advantage of a crowned, one-piece fiberglass roof, backed by a 10 year parts and labor warranty — no vulnerable rubber



Space around the toilet is limited and a bit tight for larger users. Nautilus door opens up the available space inside shower enclosure.

here. All this adds up to a long-lasting structure with far less potential for shakes and rattles when driving.

As with any standard Sprinter-based motorhome, the drivetrain employs a 188-hp, 3.0-liter six-cylinder turbodiesel engine mated to a five-speed automatic transmis-

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sion. Use of this modest-horsepower, higher-torque setup allows for the fully outfitted View to boast 18 mpg fuel economy while still maintaining more than enough oomph to fly up the freeways at legal speeds. Hill climbs were taken at better-than-expected speeds, and towing a dinghy resulted in no adverse performance issues, other than the typical slowdowns on grades.

Secured to the frame is the rear-mounted, two-point electric stabilizing system, which was appreciated. It's always great to have a powered stabilizing system, but in this case, being able to locate and operate the switches for electric use or to manually crank in an override situation was a real treasure hunt. Tucked in and out of sight in the rear are the switches, which were finally located using two pairs of eyes. Keep in mind, this system is designed to stabilize, and is not intended for leveling.

Besides the usual list of goodies included from Mercedes-Benz, the

addition of Alcoa forged aluminum wheels complement the full-body paint beautifully. The optional full paint package displays a classy color combination in black, gray, gold and white hues, forming flowing, soft and subtle graphics and lines. A surprising number of exterior storage compartments, not always common on smaller motorhomes, are standard equipment. For such a compact Class C, there's enough storage to support extra-long weekends or even longer trips (keeping weight ratings and the rig's modest Realistic Occupant and Cargo Carrying Capacity in mind). One door leads to the utility center, accessing items like drain valves, city water and the 30-amp electrical connection with ease. Outside speakers and the LED-lit powered patio awning round out the exterior features.

Aside from a few areas that could use some refinement, the Winnebago View 24J makes for a roomy enough motorhome for a family with a child or two, who relishes getting away

WHAT'S HOT

Fuel economy, main bed support system, comfortable convertible dinette, Tecnoform cabinetry, full-body paint, fiberglass roof

WHAT'S NOT

Small bathroom, main bed position, stabilizing jack switches, small battery bank for refrigerator, finicky windshield shade



from the crowds, but doesn't want to give up the amenities needed to enjoy RV resort living. Eye-opening fuel economy is just icing on the cake. **M**

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a whole RV protective device, which is less than your insurance deductible, can save you from costly repairs and significant downtime while the RV is being repaired.

Protect What You Value Most is a vision that Surge Guard® has developed with a dedication to provide the highest level of protection for the RV community and the substantial investment owners have in their RV. In the pursuit of this vision, for the first time, Surge Guard® has developed the technology to provide protection from electrical issues from the source power AND now inside of the RV.

NEW Portable: Full Electrical Protection

Surge Guard® models 34930 30-amp (2450 Joules) and 34950 50-amp (4200 Joules) provide full electrical protection that now includes protection for faults inside of the RV. With an easy to read LCD display, these models provide a textual information display that does not require code interpretation. Real time voltage and amp draw are continuously displayed on the LCD screen. Power is automatically disconnected if the following conditions are present: low/high voltage, open ground, open neutral, reverse polarity, and overheating of plugs. The incoming power is constantly monitored, allowing for automatic reset when acceptable power is restored. The 34950 50-amp now includes exclusive Patent Pending Load Side Open Neutral Protection, which protects the RV from an open neutral condition inside of the RV. This protection is not needed on 30-amp systems. Both the 34930 30-amp and 34950 50-amp include Elevated Ground Line Voltage Protection, which provides protection from current coming back through on the ground line from inside of the RV.

In addition to the new full protection 34930 30-amp and 34950 50-amp, Surge Guard offers other product types to suit each RV owner's individual needs. The following is a breakdown of the other Surge Guard product families designed to provide the most trusted protection in the RV industry.



Surge Protection with Diagnostics

Surge Guard® models 44260 30-amp and 44270 50-amp provide trusted surge protection with easy-to-read wiring diagnostics. LED indicators provide a read out of the incoming power condition to alert you to open ground, open neutral, and reverse polarity. There is also a surge protection status light to indicate if the product is still protecting against a surge. The 44260 30-amp provides 2100 Joules of surge protection while the 44270 50-amp provides 4200 Joules.

Surge Protection with Enhanced Diagnostics

Surge Guard® models 44280 30-amp and 44290 50-amp provide the same trusted surge protection (2100/4200 Joules) as models 44260 and 44270 above, while upgrading the diagnostic capabilities. In addition to open ground, open neutral, reverse polarity, and surge status indication, this product also indicates reverse ground/line and overheating plug indication. The integrated receptacle also contains stronger brass inserts.



Hardwire: Full Electrical Protection

Providing the same features and benefits as the portable Surge Guard® models 34930 30-amp/34950 50-amp, the hardwire Surge Guard® models 35530 30-amp and 35550 50-amp provide full electrical protection with the convenience of being wired directly into the coach. The hardwire Surge Guard® models will automatically monitor the incoming power and disconnect when a fault is present. These UL listed devices are installed out of the elements without the need to carry in and out of your coach to plug in. An optional LCD display, part number 40300, is available to provide an easy to read display that can be located anywhere inside of your coach. The 40300 display includes 50' of data cable.



Overvoltage Protection Device

Another new product to the Surge Guard® family is the 44300 Overvoltage Protection Device. This product provides an individual 15-amp outlet with overvoltage and surge protection. It can be used on any outlet inside of your RV or in your home to protect electronic equipment from dangerous overvoltage and a small surge. The 44300 will disconnect current flow when voltage is at or above 138 volts and provides 314 Joules of surge suppression.

Surge Guard now offers a Limited Lifetime Warranty with Connected Equipment Coverage on all of the above products. For more information on this and other Southwire RV products, please visit rvpower.southwire.com.

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By Bruce W. Smith

CLEARING THE FOG

Laminated glass is a practical solution for fixing clouded dual-pane windows that impair drivers' vision from the cockpit

A cataract, defined as the clouding of the lense in the eye, is one of the leading causes of blindness in the world, and is a common malady among those older than 40 years of age. Aging has a similar effect on the dual-pane windows in motorhomes, causing a white fog to slowly build up between the glass to the point where the only view is one of looking through a white cloud.

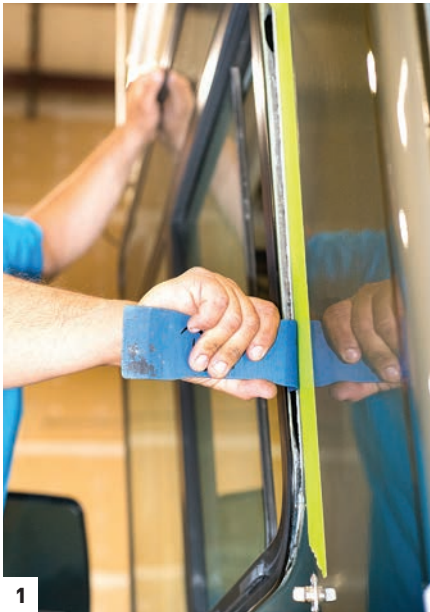
Fogged windows along the sides and rear of a motorhome are a nuisance that can be tolerated until it interferes with the vision of the driver and becomes a serious safety issue. This malady is more prevalent in older motorhomes that have been exposed for a long time to sun and/or have a

broken seal. All dual-pane windows are subject to the same problem.

RV Glass Solutions in Coburg, Oregon, specializes in rectifying dual-pane motorhome windows that have failed. According to the company, fogging isn't caused by the age of the RV, but rather the failure of the parts

between the window panes. Either the desiccant-filled rubber spacer between the two panes of tempered glass — which is what absorbs moisture being pulled into the air space from changes in temperature and elevation — becomes over-saturated, or the secondary sealer on the outside of that rubber spacer fails from all the vibration and movement of the motorhome, allowing moisture to saturate the spacer and work its way into the air gap.

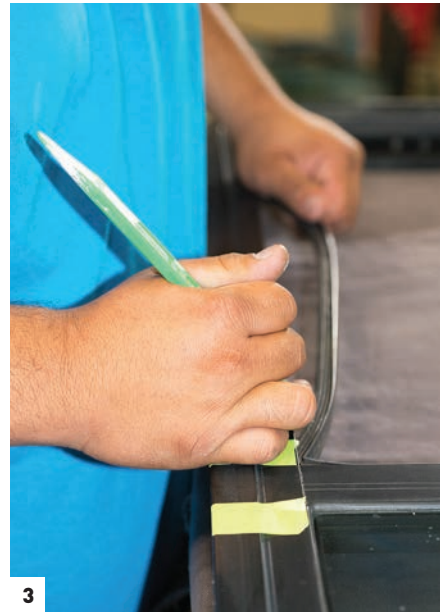
Regardless of which part quits doing its job first, moisture builds up



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on the glass pane's interior surfaces, resulting in the fogging effect. If left unchecked for a long enough period of time, the calcium deposits left by the water vapor will eventually etch the glass, rendering it unrepairable and permanently clouded over.

[1] The area around the driver's window was masked before special plastic pry tools were used to slide the assembly out from the opening. [2] Flange-type motorhome windows like this one have a clamp ring on the inside of the motorhome that screws to the window assembly, sandwiching it tight to the body. Removal of the window unit only takes a few minutes. Note the "fogged" window panes. [3] Masking tape marks the exact location of the divider for the slider window so when the new glass is installed all the parts fit exactly as they should. Care was taken in removing the rubber glass moldings, which would be reused, as they were still like-new.

Multiple Solutions

Fortunately, there are several solutions for restoring clear vision. The compromised window assembly can be removed in its entirety and replaced if the original window manufacturer is still in business — and is still making the assembly. It's also the most expensive option, with

three-piece units likely costing more than \$1,000.

A much better alternative is to remove the window assembly, then completely disassemble it so the individual panes of tempered glass can be cleaned (or replaced if they are etched) and resealed using new desiccant-embedded rubber spacers

coated with the secondary external sealer. Cleaning and resealing of the OE tempered dual-pane glass is one of RV Glass Solutions' specialties, and the company uses a proprietary process which it keeps close to the vest, so it wouldn't let us show readers the secrets to its success.

The downside is, like all



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[4] The metal screws that attach the cross pieces to the outer framework were removed, then a spreader was used to carefully separate the frame from the glass panes. Extra care was taken to avoid bending any of the aluminum components in the process. [5] Dual-pane RV windows fog internally because either the desiccant embedded in the special spacer between the panes gets saturated over time, or because the secondary (exterior) sealant is compromised, allowing water from the outside to oversaturate the desiccant.

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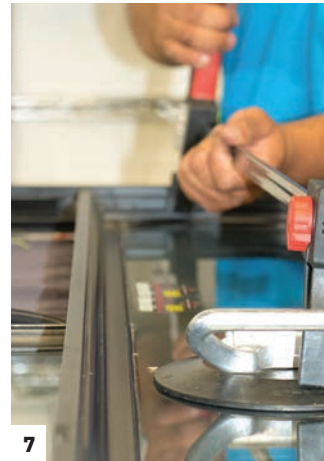
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INSTALLATION: LAMINATED GLASS



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[6] Laminated glass (right) has a thin layer of vinyl material between two thick sheets of glass, while standard dual-pane RV glass (left) has two thin sheets of tempered glass separated by an air gap. Laminated glass will never fog like the dual-pane on the left, but will not provide the same insulating properties as dual-pane glass. [7] RV Glass Solutions uses a variety of tools to remove the different panes of glass from the window assembly. [8] The window frame is set aside and then the individual dual panes will be removed and discarded, each being replaced by laminated glass.

dual-pane RV windows, no matter how successful the glass cleaning/ replacement/resealing process is, the same fogging issue may rear its ugly head again. (RV Glass Solutions provides a two-year warranty on its dual-pane repairs.)

A third alternative, the one many motorhome owners choose, is to replace the dual-pane windows with a single piece of thick, laminated glass. The laminated glass RV Glass Solutions uses is the same found in the automotive industry, where a thin layer of either polyvinyl butyral (PVB) or ethylene-vinyl acetate (EVA) is sandwiched between two thicker sheets of glass bonded together by heat under high pressure to form one single piece.

Laminated safety glass has several advantages over dual-pane

glass, according to the company, one of which is it doesn't shatter when broken because the plastic interlayer holds it together, adding a level of safety and security in the event of an accident or vandalism. The major downside to using laminated glass is the loss of the insulation factor provided by the dual-pane windows, which will limit the effectiveness of the windows in hot and cold weather. According to Colorado Energy, single glass, including a laminated window without an air gap, has an R-value of .91, whereas a dual-pane window with a ¼-inch air gap has an R-value of 1.69.

But the primary reason to ditch dual-pane glass for laminated is it will never fog. Hence, the reason RV Glass Solutions gives a lifetime warranty to the original owner when



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it replaces OEM dual-pane windows with laminated glass.

Cost Factors

The cost for either repairing non-flush-mounted windows with tempered OEM dual-pane, or replacing them with laminated glass, varies from installer to installer. At RV Glass Solutions, which is under the corporate umbrella of Coach Glass, one of the major suppliers of windshields to a number of motorhome builders, pricing for such work is very simple: \$325 for a single-window assembly; \$430 for assemblies with two windows; and \$535 for units that have three windows.

The company has a vast reference

file of RV window drawings and specifications to program computerized glass cutting machines on-site to ensure each piece is a perfect fit. It also has an abundant supply of laminated glass sheets on-site in auto green, light gray, dark gray and bronze tints, which covers 90 percent of the RV market, according to RV Glass Solutions.

Pricing on replacing damaged (etched) OE tempered dual-pane glass with like glass is more complicated. New tempered glass prices vary widely depending on a number of factors, including pricing differences in thickness and color. Sometimes the price is nearly the same as using laminated glass, sometimes it can be

[9] Attention to small details is critical, and one tactic used in dual-pane window reinstallation is punching weep holes in the OE rubber seals around each pane to keep water from sitting against the edge of the glass (which can affect the integrity of the spacer over time). Note that laminated glass isn't affected by water the way dual-pane glass is. [10] The rubber gasket is installed around the pane of laminated glass, precisely cut to fit in its new home, before sliding it into the multi-panel window frame. [11] Reassembling the window unit is like putting together a puzzle, where each piece has to go back in the exact same location and in a very specific order. [12] There are a number of little tricks employed during the installation of the laminated glass, including using thin plastic tape to hold the molding to the glass as it's being pushed into the frame, and then cutting the tape with a razor so the tape can be pulled out.



11



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INSTALLATION: LAMINATED GLASS



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[13] One of the last steps in the rebuild process is installing a new weather seal around the window assembly. This is the primary seal between the motorhome wall and the window frame.

[14] The new window assembly is held in place as the inner frame from inside the motorhome is attached. Laminated glass weighs more than the OE dual-pane glass it replaces, so the new window assembly is heavier than before.

considerably higher. It all depends on the installer's glass cost.

Making Time

From a time standpoint, repairing or replacing RV window glass takes about the same amount of labor regardless of the type of glass used. RV Glass Solutions says it takes a tech about three hours to R&R one of the larger multi-window units such as the three-pane "pilot window" commonly found in motorhome cockpits, and each of the techs can typically make two or three of those types of window repair/replacements a day at the massive Coburg facility.

Smaller single- and dual-pane windows take less time. Most of the motorhomes that come to RV Glass Solutions' service centers (located in Oregon, Arizona, Florida and Indiana) are by appointment. They do accept drop-ins during the slower times of the year, but recommend making an appointment, especially during summer.

The payoff is obvious after the driver slides behind the wheel and can see clearly through the side windows — much the same as when vision is restored after cataracts are removed. **M**

RV Glass Solutions

888-777-6778, www.rvglassexperts.com

[15] The area around the window frame is taped off before laying down a bead of silicone sealant. This gives a fine, sharp edge where the sealant is — and a better-than-factory finish. [16] After the fogged OE driver's-side dual-pane window was replaced with laminated glass, the motorhome was taken for a drive to test clarity.



15



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homework ahead of time to determine exactly what you want — and what you're willing to pay for — may seem like an overwhelming task. But we're here to help. We've selected a handful of new motorhomes that are equipped with all the comforts of home, at various price points, without eclipsing the \$200,000 mark. You'll be pleasantly surprised at what that will get you, without completely draining your bank account.



ABOVE: The Leisure Travel Vans Unity is offered in five different configurations on the fuel-efficient Mercedes-Benz Sprinter chassis.

AIRSTREAM INTERSTATE GRAND TOUR EXT

For those of us who prefer the journey as well as the destination, Airstream's Interstate Grand Tour EXT is fun to drive, and is outfitted with all the comforts of home, and more. Built on the Mercedes-Benz Sprinter chassis, the Interstate Grand Tour EXT is powered by a 3.0L V-6 turbodiesel capable of pumping out 188 hp and 325 lb-ft of torque, and rider comfort is enhanced by the optional air-ride suspension. Standard safety features include lane-keeping, blind-spot and collision-prevention assist systems. Inside, the Grand Tour has been designed for enjoyable trips for two, with either a power lounge or dual-twin-bed option for additional flexibility. The surprisingly large galley features Corian countertops and backsplashes, while residential-style cabinetry is thoughtfully placed throughout. Additional appointments include dual LED TVs and a Blu-ray player, on-demand water heater, side- and rear screen doors, solar panels and a power awning.

Chassis	Mercedes-Benz Sprinter 3500 Extended	Exterior height with A/C	9' 8"
Engine	3.0L V-6 turbodiesel	Wheelbase	170"
Fuel cap	24.5 gal	Freshwater cap	26 gal
GVWR	11,030 lbs	Black-/gray-water cap	14 gal/ 27 gal
Exterior length	24' 4.5"	LP-gas cap	14.55 gal
Exterior width	6' 7.7"	Base MSRP	\$165,878

Airstream Inc., 877-596-6111, www.airstream.com



COACHMEN ORION

Built on the Ford Transit T350 chassis, the Coachmen Orion T21TB has been designed with maneuverability in mind. The Orion is one of the few fully equipped Class C motorhomes less than 24 feet long on the market, which helps make the transition to driving a motorhome much less intimidating. But don't let its compact size fool you; the Orion can easily sleep a family of five with room to spare. The T21TB features dual 32-by-74-inch opposing sofa beds that can be used separately or combined for a single RV king-sized sleeper, while the cabover bunk area and dinette are just the right size for the kiddos. Perhaps most impressive on the T21TB floorplan is the bathroom, which runs the entire width of the rear, offering a surprising amount of space in a motorhome that doesn't have any slideouts. Also appreciated is the flip-up extension in the galley to help increase meal-prep space. Outside, the front and rear fiberglass caps help with aesthetics, and the optional exterior entertainment center means you can watch the big game under the stars.



Chassis	Ford Transit T350
Engine	3.7L V-6
Fuel cap	25 gal
GVWR	10,360 lbs
Exterior length	23' 9"
Exterior width	7' 7"
Exterior height with A/C	10' 6"
Wheelbase	156"
Freshwater cap	37 gal
Black-/gray-water cap	32 gal/ 32 gal
LP-gas cap	9.5 gal
Base MSRP	\$75,182

Coachmen RV
574-825-8776, www.coachmenrv.com





DOLPHIN MOTOR COACH NATIONAL TRAVELLER

When designing the National Traveller, Dolphin Motor Coach (formerly Grand Coach) took cues from Euro-style Class B motorhomes. The 7-foot 4-inch interior ceiling height adds a spacious feel, and the ultraleather soft-touch ceiling and walls are all luxury. The aircraft-style upper storage compartments feature hidden hinges, and the cabinets are constructed with full high-gloss hardwood. The well-equipped kitchen features solid-surface counters, an induction cooktop, a water-filtration system and a remote-controlled power fan. A porcelain toilet and tempered glass shower door highlight the lav. The rear of the Traveller houses a removable dinette table and sofa bed, while the cab is equipped with custom dash and door wood trim, and ultraleather swivel seats. Tech appointments include a multiplex wiring system, in-dash GPS with DVD player, backup cameras and a wireless router. Outside, the power awning with LED lighting and outside entertainment area add to the enjoyment of the outdoors.



Chassis	RAM ProMaster 3500
Engine	3.6L V-6
Fuel cap	24 gal
GVWR	9,350 lbs
Exterior length	20' 10.5"
Exterior width	6' 8.7"
Exterior height with A/C	9' 9"
Wheelbase	159"
Freshwater cap	20 gal
Black-/gray-water cap	8.5 gal/ 27 gal
LP-gas cap	10.1 gal
MSRP	\$139,000

Dolphin Motor Coach
 574-264-3951, www.dolphinmotorcoach.com

ENTEGR A ESTEEM 31L

The all-new Entegra Coach Esteem is available in three floorplans, and combines quality construction with luxurious appointments. The Esteem 31L features a one-piece seamless front cap with a 30-by-82-inch automotive-bonded window in the bunk over the cab, plus a one-piece fiberglass roof and optional full-body paint. Inside, the 84-inch-high padded vinyl ceiling helps open up the interior. The galley features a recessed stainless-steel three-burner range; an oven; an 8-cubic foot, flush-mount, double-door refrigerator with stainless-steel finish; and a solid-surface countertop with matching sink covers. The bedroom is outfitted with a spacious, illuminated wardrobe, a queen-size bed, an overhead fan and a 24-inch LED TV. The amidships lav features a recessed stainless-steel sink, shower with a decorative surround and a skylight, and is situated across the aisle from the bunk-bed area for the little ones. Buyers can opt for the E-Z Drive Elite package, which includes a computer-balanced driveshaft, standard front and rear stabilizer bars, Hellwig helper springs, Bilstein shock absorbers and rubber isolation mounts.

Chassis	Ford E-450
Engine	Triton 6.8L V-10
Fuel cap	55 gal
GVWR	14,500 lbs
Exterior length	32' 6"
Exterior width	8' 4"
Exterior height with A/C	11' 6"
Wheelbase	223"
Freshwater cap	47 gal
Black-/gray-water cap	32 gal/ 41 gal
LP-gas cap	13 gal
Base MSRP	\$128,625

Entegra Coach, 800-517-9137, www.entegracoach.com



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JAYCO MELBOURNE PRESTIGE 24KP

The new diesel Melbourne Prestige 24KP Class C is built on a Mercedes-Benz Sprinter chassis and features a one-piece seamless front cap with 30-by-82-inch automotive-bonded panoramic window. Available in two full-body paint schemes, the Melbourne Prestige also features a 14-foot awning, plenty of pass-through storage, aluminum skirt-hung baggage doors, an electric entrance step and exterior quick-connect grill. Inside, the curved cabinetry and marine-inspired interior work with the soft-touch vinyl ceiling for a feeling of elegance. The Melbourne Prestige 24KP features a queen bed in its own separate bedroom space, which also includes a wardrobe and nightstand. The rest of the family can enjoy the overhead bunk and convertible dinette to get a good view of the 32-inch LED TV in the living area. The Melbourne Prestige is also outfitted with a whole-coach water-filtration system, and the 6-cubic-foot refrigerator is a good fit for this size motorhome.



Chassis	Mercedes-Benz Sprinter 3500 Extended
Engine	3.0L V-6 turbodiesel
Fuel cap	26.4 gal
GVWR	11,030 lbs
Exterior length	25' 2"
Exterior width	8'
Exterior height with A/C	10' 11"
Wheelbase	170"
Freshwater cap	43 gal
Black-/gray-water cap	31 gal/ 31 gal
LP-gas cap	9.8 gal
Base MSRP	\$136,463

Jayco Inc.
 574-825-5861, www.jayco.com

FLEETWOOD BOUNDER 36F

Sometimes, one product rollout a year isn't enough. Fleetwood's Bounder 36F is actually a 2018.5 model, and the manufacturer apparently used the extra time to add even more amenities into an already impressive list of standards. The 36F utilizes a driver's-side full-wall slideout to open up the free-flowing interior, which is highlighted by the Euro-top king bed in the bedroom and the amidships bunk beds that can convert into a wardrobe and seating area. Oh, and there are two full bathrooms: one in the rear (en suite to the bedroom), running the full width

of the interior; and one across from the bunk area, which will no doubt be primarily commandeered by the little ones. A drop-down bed over the cab offers additional sleeping space. To help feed the crew, the galley features a residential-sized refrigerator, a three-burner cooktop with oven and plenty of solid-surface counter prep space. The 36F is equipped with the

Technology Package (\$3,100), which includes a Bluetooth speaker and porch LED, upgraded Kenwood stereo, cellphone booster and Wi-Fi extender, solar panel and collision avoidance camera system.

Chassis	Ford F-53
Engine	Triton 6.8L V-10
Fuel cap	80 gal
GVWR	26,000 lbs
Exterior length	38' 9"
Exterior width	8' 6"
Exterior height with A/C	12' 10"
Wheelbase	242"
Freshwater cap	100 gal
Black-/gray-water cap	50 gal/ 90 gal
LP-gas cap	25 gal
Base MSRP	\$187,550

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RENEGADE VILLAGIO 25FWS

Renegade RV motorhomes are known for their rugged construction, and the new Villagio 25FWS is no different. The side walls, roof and floor construction feature Azdel composite panels, while the roof is covered with one-piece fiberglass. Aluminum exterior compartments are lightweight and strong, and feature insulated compartment doors with positive locking latches. What is different about the Villagio is its elegant interior appointments, such as the solid hardwood cabinetry throughout, including upper cabinet doors with a stylish radius design. The countertops are solid-surface, plus the galley features a large stonecast kitchen sink and a residential-quality satin nickel high-rise faucet with pull-out sprayer. The cabinets feature soft-closing drawer hardware, and satin nickel contemporary door and drawer pulls. The 25FWS floorplan is a spacious full-wall slide floorplan featuring a large U-shaped dinette lounge, pull-out pantry, queen bed and an innovative sliding wardrobe cassette that offers storage and flexibility. There is an option for a large sofa bed with a pedestal dining table in lieu of the standard dinette/lounge. Three exterior paint options are available, and the power lateral arm awning outside features integrated LED lighting in the lead rail.



Chassis	Mercedes-Benz Sprinter 3500 Extended
Engine	3.0L V-6 turbodiesel
Fuel cap	26.4 gal
GVWR	11,030 lbs
Exterior length	24' 11"
Exterior width	7' 8.25"
Exterior height with A/C	10' 11"
Wheelbase	170"
Freshwater cap	34 gal
Black-/gray-water cap	29 gal/ 29 gal
LP-gas cap	13.2 gal
Base MSRP	\$122,978

Renegade RV
 574-966-0210, www.renegaderv.com



**LEISURE TRAVEL VANS
 UNITY U24MB**

The Leisure Travel Vans Unity is available in five unique floorplans to suit your lifestyle. The Unity U24MB shown here is the Unity's flagship floorplan. The star, of course, is the RV queen-size Murphy bed, which flips up for daylight hours, resulting in an impressive amount of floor space for a 25-foot motorhome. The Unity Murphy Bed can also be outfitted with the all-new Leisure Lounge Plus, which allows for six completely different seating and dining configurations to further utilize the interior space. Another impressive usage of space is the pop-up 39-inch LED TV, which rises from its cabinet at the push of a button. The Unity is outfitted with handcrafted curved European cabinetry and French-seamed

upholstery throughout, plus the seats in the cockpit swivel for additional seating options. The 27-square-foot corner dry bathroom features a large stand-up shower and separate washbasin. The Unity comes standard with a Truma AquaGo water-heating system and Becker Map Pilot GPS navigation system.

Chassis	Mercedes-Benz Sprinter 3500 Extended
Engine	3.0L V-6 turbodiesel
Fuel cap	26.4 gal
GVWR	11,030 lbs
Exterior length	25' 1"
Exterior width	7' 10.5"
Exterior height with A/C	10' 6"
Wheelbase	170"
Freshwater cap	24 gal
Black-/gray-water cap	29 gal/ 37 gal
LP-gas cap	15 gal
Base MSRP	\$132,795

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THOR MIRAMAR 35.2

The Miramar 35.2 Class A features an open floorplan with plenty of seating, perfect for entertaining friends and family. The living area boasts no less than three separate areas for lounging: two 68-inch theater seats, a 68-inch sofa bed and a 78-inch Dream Dinette, all of which provide great spots for viewing the retractable 50-inch LED TV. Galley appointments include solid-surface countertops and sink covers, a residential refrigerator, pantry and dual-burner electric induction cooktop. The rear king bed is equipped with an inclining bed mechanism, ensuring a great view of the 32-inch LED TV in the bedroom. Other electronic gadgetry includes a 10-inch touch-screen dash radio with GPS, multiplex wiring control, solar-power prewiring and a power patio awning with integrated LED lighting. The Miramar 35.2 is also prepped for a washer/dryer combo, and a power-charging center for electronics ensures everybody's phones will always be powered up.



Chassis	Ford F-53
Engine	Triton 6.8L V-10
Fuel cap	80 gal
GVWR	22,000 lbs
Exterior length	37'
Exterior width	8' 5"
Exterior height with A/C	12' 11"
Wheelbase	242"
Freshwater cap	100 gal
Black-/gray-water cap	40 gal/ 40 gal (front)/ 30 gal (rear)
LP-gas cap	25 gal
Base MSRP	\$172,875

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TIFFIN ALLEGRO 36 LA

Longevity is often a sign of success, and considering the Tiffin Allegro has been in production for 45 years, it's clear the motorhome's respected reputation is well earned. And it begins in the construction process: the Allegro has a one-piece molded fiberglass roof, tubular aluminum skeleton, fiberglass front and rear caps and a tinted one-piece windshield. The 36 LA employs a free-flowing floorplan with a large rear bathroom and half bath amidships. The living area comes standard with a large sofa bed and booth dinette; options include an L-shaped sofa and dinette with workstation. An optional electric fireplace is a nice touch below the living-area TV, and the half bath is in the ideal location for kids and guests. The large rear bath is located off the master bedroom, and includes space for an optional washer/dryer combo. The bedroom area is equipped with dual nightstands, a TV and cabinet, and a wardrobe with drawers below. Appreciated add-ons include a whole-coach water-filtration system, LED patio and door light, lighted basement storage and a black-tank flush system.



Chassis	Ford F-53
Engine	Triton 6.8L V-10
Fuel cap	80 gal
GVWR	24,000 lbs
Exterior length	37' 6"
Exterior width	8' 5"
Exterior height with A/C	12' 10"
Wheelbase	252"
Freshwater cap	70 gal
Black-/gray-water cap	50 gal/ 66 gal
LP-gas cap	24 gal
Base MSRP	\$164,974

Tiffin Motorhomes

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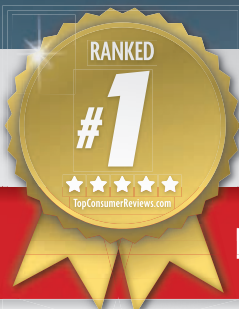


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By E. Don Smith

SHINE ON

Restoring that showroom sparkle to a motorhome's aluminum wheels

Motorhome tires are a popular subject of conversation, but what about the wheels on which they ride? While some models do come with steel wheels covered by beauty/trim rings, the vast majority of motorhomes come from the factory with beautiful aluminum wheels.

Aluminum wheels offer many advantages over steel wheels. They are lower in weight, they are straighter, they hold air better due to being one piece and, of course, they have a more attractive appearance. Another advantage compared to a steel wheel with a beauty liner is that the aluminum wheel is completely silent as it rolls down

the road. A steel wheel with a liner is subject to rattling when the fit between the liner and the wheel is not perfect. It is also easier to check and adjust the air pressure on a one-piece aluminum wheel because there isn't a metal liner with a sharp edge that can slice your fingers as you reach for the valve stems.

Like many other components on

a motorhome, a wheel comes with a duty rating, and the load rating and maximum pressure rating of a wheel are just as important as the ratings of the tires. Usually that information is stamped on the wheel; if you are not familiar with this data, take a few moments to locate these specifications. If you are purchasing new wheels, you need to know details such as the bolt-circle dimensions, stud-hole diameter and backspacing, etc.

When aluminum wheels are new and shiny they look great, but like the rest of the components on a

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A common practice is to install higher load range or larger tires on an axle due to an overloaded condition. Before you decide to pursue this option, there are a few things to consider. Each tire manufacturer has a load inflation chart for its tires that allows you to determine the maximum load each tire can carry at each pressure range. In addition to the load chart, there is also a published acceptable wheel width that is suitable for that specific tire. For example, a popular motorhome tire size is 275/80R22.5. One manufacturer states that this tire is suitable for use on 7.5-inch to 8.25-inch wide wheels, and its maximum pressure is 110 psi. However, if you move up to a 295/80R22.5 tire, the approved wheel width moves up to 8.25 inches to 9 inches, and the maximum pressure rating is 120 psi. This means that if a motorhome has 7.5-inch wide wheels, they are not suitable for the larger 295/80R22.5 tire, and the options for overcoming an overloaded wheel position may be limited to moving up to a heavier load range G to H (at least in this example). Keep in mind that tires with higher load ratings may not circumvent axle weight limitations.

Each tire company has its own construction methods and sizes, so look carefully at various brands, along with their specifications, before deciding which to purchase. Each manufacturer rates its own tires, and even within the same size tire these ratings can vary among brands, so it is critical that you understand this information or consult a tire professional at a commercial dealer when purchasing tires.



[Above, left] The factory stamping shows the maximum weight, size and inflation pressure limits for this particular wheel. These figures should never be exceeded. Installing larger tires and/or tires with higher load ranges does not mean the rim can be overloaded. When buying new tires, ensure they are properly sized for the motorhome's rims. **[Above, right]** This wheel is stamped AccuRide. According to the manufacturer's website, it's an uncoated wheel that's safe for traditional polishing with products made for aluminum wheels.

motorhome they need maintenance and cleaning. Before attempting to clean the wheels, it is important to determine if the wheels are coated or uncoated. Most wheels installed on motorhomes are uncoated, which means they need to be cleaned and polished to look their best. However, there are wheels that come from the factory with a coating to protect them from oxidation. This clear coating is made to be washed only with a mild detergent and a sponge. Do not use any abrasive cleaners or polishes on coated wheels. Wheel manufacturers call their coated and uncoated wheels by different

names: for example, Alcoa calls its coated wheels Dura-Bright, while the AccuRide brand of wheels calls its coated rims Accu-Shield. If you can find the stamp on the motorhome's wheels with the brand, size, pressure and weight ratings, you can simply search that name on the internet to determine if the wheels are coated or not.

If you can't find the data stamp on the wheels, don't fear because there is an easy way to tell. Using a clean white paper towel, take a small amount of aluminum wheel polish and rub it very lightly on a clean wheel for a few seconds. If the towel

[Below, left] When it's time to polish motorhome wheels, a good supply of VIVA-brand paper towels comes in handy. They are very soft and mimic the behavior of microfiber towels, without the additional expense. Also pictured are some of the products we used for cleaning and polishing uncoated wheels. Make sure to match the product to the task at hand for best results. **[Below, right]** This wheel has buildup, which comes from hard water left standing on the surface. The buildup is calcium and other minerals that require a special cleaner, such as Zephyr Pro-50 Eliminator, to safely remove.

turns black, then it is an uncoated wheel and it is safe to polish normally. If it doesn't turn black, that means the wheel is coated and you should only use mild soaps and a sponge, like those used for cleaning





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the motorhome's exterior. If using an automotive wheel cleaner, make sure it is safe for use on coated wheels; such cleaners include Griot's Garage Wheel Cleaner, or Simple Green All Wheel & Tire Cleaner from Camping World.

If the wheels are of the uncoated variety, prepare for a little more work but, overall, the process is very rewarding and will result in wheels that look as if they are on a show vehicle. In preparation for polishing the wheels, a large number of polishing cloths will be needed. Some people prefer microfiber towels, but they will likely get ruined during polishing, and that can get expensive. Instead, purchase a few rolls of VIVA-brand paper towels. Unlike traditional paper towels, these are soft and lint-free.

In addition to the paper towels there are a few supplies you will need, such as a wheel cleaning spray to remove the scale and hard-water deposits, aluminum polish, a buffer wheel and a drill (cordless is best). After polishing many wheels over the years we're confident that the products presented in this article are some of the very best on the market. If you have ever attempted a project using inferior products or tools you know how difficult that can be; using high-quality products will save time and effort, and provide the best results. Here's how it's done:

[1] Spray the cool (never hot) surface with wheel cleaner and allow it to sit a minute or two. Then clean with a sponge or very soft bristle brush made specifically for wheels. [2] If scale buildup is present, use Pro-50 to remove stubborn water deposits. Simply spray on and allow it to sit, then wipe with a sponge or towel and rinse off. [3] A soft wheel brush is great for getting into the wheel vent slots to clean them. [4] Any soft cloth or sponge is suitable for cleaning the wheel. If wheels are coated, just spray them with cleaner and wipe. They should not be polished. [5] After the wheel is clean and dry, apply wheel polish to a paper towel and spread a small amount on the area to be polished. [6] Spread the product out over the entire wheel if polishing by hand. Continue to rub until the towel is covered in black. This step is only for uncoated aluminum wheels. If a standard aluminum polish doesn't do the job, a more aggressive polish, such as Griot's Garage Heavy-Duty Metal Polish, can be used.



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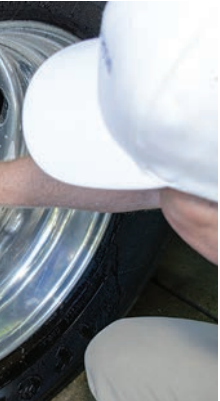
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[7] After rubbing the paper towel around the rim for a few minutes it should look like this. Allow the polish to dry to a haze before removing it. [8] The best way to polish a large motorhome wheel is with a cordless drill and a foam-polishing tip, like this one from Meguiar's. It comes with an attachment that allows installation on a drill, which makes the polishing step very easy. [9] Use the drill and the foam tip to polish the entire wheel. This greatly speeds up the process and tempers a lot of the manual work. It is also a good idea to wear gloves to shield skin from the polish and the black residue that will form during polishing. [10] Once an area of the wheel has been polished and the surface allowed to dry, paper towels or a microfiber towel are used to wipe away excess polish. Turn the towel frequently to keep a fresh, clean surface against the wheel. [11] For even more brilliance, repeat the process. We found that a microfiber towel is better in the final stages, but of course the towel is basically ruined after using it for polishing aluminum. Each wheel should take between 10-25 minutes, depending on its initial condition. [12] Polishing the wheels provides great satisfaction that the job was done right, and really helps the motorhome's exterior look good. **M**

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By Bill Gehr

KEEP THE WATER FLOWING

Maintenance duties for a demand pump are simple to do, and pay off with trouble-free operation and independence from city-water hookups

Water pumps are found in every self-contained motorhome, and although they are designed to provide freedom from hookups, many people use them infrequently because they stay in full-hookup RV parks. But the fact remains that a demand water pump is integral to self-containment, and even if it is only used while on the road, maintenance is required to ensure it will work properly when called into action.

Regular maintenance is often overlooked, following the axiom “out of sight, out of mind.” But an annual maintenance check, and making corrections when needed, will ensure the ol’ pump will keep the water system flowing. While maintenance procedures often seem ominous, keeping tabs on a demand water pump is rather simple, and

can be achieved by most Saturday mechanics. Following are a some guidelines and tips for proper maintenance and inspection.

Annual Inspection

It’s important to remove and clean the filter on the intake side of the water pump. Most water pumps arrive from the manufacturer with

an attached filter to keep debris in the water tank from getting into the internal valves of the pump. The majority of these filters can be removed and separated in order to clean the screen. If you do not have a filter, purchase the appropriate model filter to fit your motorhome’s water pump. Inline filters are also available, if there is no room to fit the appropriate filter assembly directly on the pump.

Sanitizing the freshwater system, including the water pump, is one of the most commonly overlooked maintenance items. Some motorhomes sit for long



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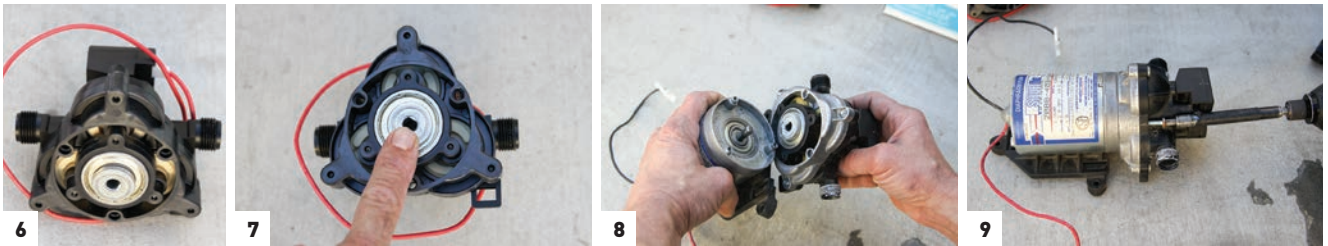


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[1] RV manufacturers used the SHURflo 2088 Series water pump extensively. [2] A latching relay may be necessary when a higher-flow pump is installed and factory wiring is not adequate for the load. These devices are available in several different models with varying amperage ratings. [3] Accumulator tanks work well for controlling short cycling; they come in several models and sizes, and are easy to mount and hookup to the pump. [4] Replacement head assemblies come complete with machine screws and wire connectors. [5] Diaphragm kits, which are relatively inexpensive, can be used to repair a pump with low, or a complete lack of, water pressure.



[6] Replacement head assemblies are fitted with the positive wire to ensure that the electrical connections won't fail. [7, 8] The motor shaft and the replacement head are D-shaped to ensure that the motor always has a positive drive when spinning at high rpm. [9] Using a cordless drill/driver can facilitate disassembling a water pump, but should not be used when reassembling, in order to avoid over torquing the screws.

periods of time allowing algae to accumulate in the water system; a buildup of algae in the water pump can damage the internal valves. Household bleach is commonly used for disinfecting water systems; however, a better solution is to use Purogene, which does not leave an aftertaste that lingers if the bleach is not flushed properly. Purogene is available at www.rvwaterfilterstore.com. Follow the manufacturer's specified method for sanitizing the freshwater system.

Winterizing

Be sure to use a nontoxic antifreeze specifically designed for RV water systems; these will be safe for water pumps. There are service technicians who will winterize the motorhome using compressed air. The drawback to this method is the possibility of leaving a small amount of water in the pump that can freeze and result in a damaged valve assembly.

Troubleshooting

Even a simple diagnosis can save a weekend camping trip, so when

the water isn't flowing up to sniff always start by looking for a loose hose clamp or a kink in a hose. These simple checks might seem elementary, but they can help sort out the obvious first. Once they have been performed, it's time to move on to more involved diagnoses. Listed below are some of the more common issues that you can expect to run into from time to time, and how to solve them before calling for expert advice.

The water pump runs, but doesn't supply pressure to the system.

Be sure that there is ample water in the freshwater tank. After locating the water pump (for the above-mentioned check on the connections and hoses), make sure that the intake filter assembly is free of debris, which can restrict water flow. Confirm that any bypass valves used for winterizing have been returned to the normal position. When these valves are in a bypass position, water pumps may be unable to pull water from the storage tank.

Check battery voltage. Even though the motorhome may be

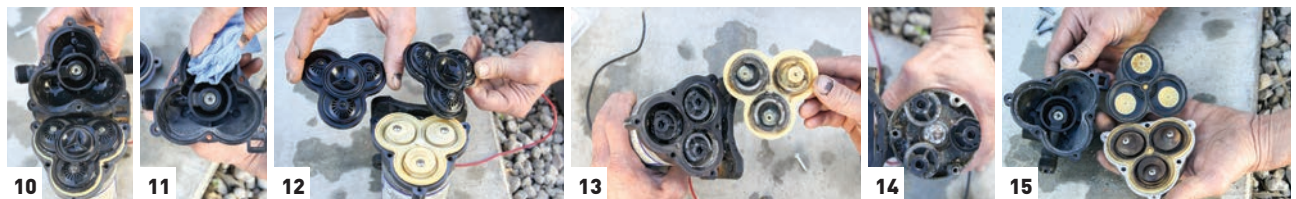
plugged into shorepower, it's not uncommon for problems to arise that may prevent the batteries from charging. Look for corrosion on the battery terminals that can contribute to diminishing voltage to the water pump, especially when there's a long run of lighter-gauge wire between the batteries, the switch and the water pump. Minimum voltage should be roughly 11 volts DC at the pump, but voltage that low usually indicates a problem with the charging system or battery integrity.

Confirm that the water heater is filled, especially after winterization; this check is often overlooked when trying to pressurize the system with the water pump. After winterization, and before leaving home, attach a hose to the city water inlet and pressurize the system. It's best to flush the water system of any residual antifreeze.

The freshwater tank fills and overflows when hooked to city water.

Most water pumps have a built-in check valve to prevent city water from entering the freshwater tank unless the valves are directed to do so. It's not uncommon for the check valves to fail, as they are especially vulnerable to excess water pressure. Be sure to use an appropriate water pressure regulator, with no more than 50 psi measured at the city-water faucet. Certain model water pumps have replacement

[10, 11] After removing the cap to the pressure switch, it's important that all debris and water deposits are cleaned out before reassembly. [12] A new valve assembly will solve this water pump's contamination issues. It doesn't take a lot of debris to stop the pumping process. [13-15] During the disassembly of this water pump it became obvious why the water pump struggled to pressurize the system.



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check valves available, and there are a number of after-market inline check valves that can be installed, as well.

The water pump won't shut off.

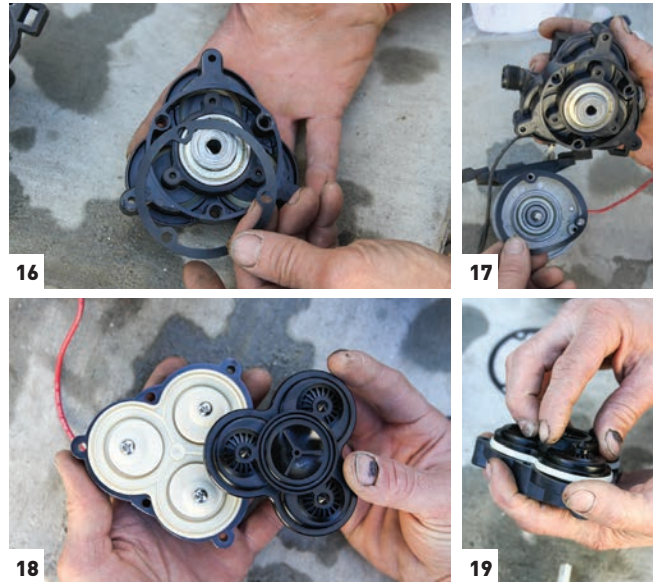
It's possible that air bubbles have formed in the water-delivery system. Check the intake hose and fittings from the water tank to the pump. Search for loose hose clamps, a kink in a hose to the pump, or a filter screen that's partially clogged and restricting inadequate water supply or bubbles (which almost always come from the intake side of the pump). Check that the water filter is tightly screwed to the pump housing, as the plastic threads on both the filter and pump can be damaged by over-tightening or being cross-threaded at the factory (an all-too-common occurrence). Damaged threads will allow air bubbles in that don't permit the pump to build outlet pressure and shut off. Special thread sealant may be required to repair damaged threads.

You hear the water pump cycling intermittently when not using the system.

Check for the obvious problems, such as a dripping faucet. Do not overlook the toilet, as the valve here can become defective and slowly fill the bowl over a period of time, causing intermittent cycling of the pump. Be sure that the water heater is full and that the air gap at the top of the tank is correct. Restoring the air gap can be accomplished simply by draining the hot-water tank, closing the drain valve and running the hot-water faucets (start with the faucet farthest from the hot-water tank first) until the sputtering is gone. It is not uncommon for the pressure to bleed from the intake to the discharge side of the pump through the internal valves, which would also cause intermittent cycling; it's also possible that there's a leak in the lines or fittings.

The pump runs, but will not prime.

Check for air leaks on the intake side between the water tank and the pump; make sure the O-ring in the filter strainer is not cracked or missing. Check hose clamps for integrity and, lastly, determine if the internal valve assembly is defective.

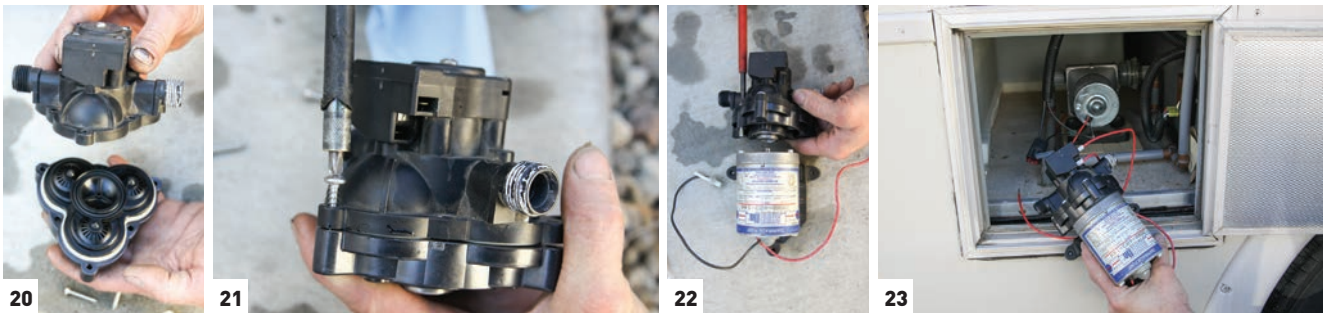


[16, 17] It's critical to keep the seal between the head and the motor assembly in its proper place when updating the pump with a new head. [18] The valve assembly and the diaphragm kit must be installed correctly to ensure proper function. [19] Seating the valve and diaphragm into place can be a little tricky; it's best to work one edge into place at a time, and to do so very carefully.

Basic Repairs

Basic repairs can be accomplished with a little knowledge and minimal tools. Two of the more common water pumps found in motorhomes are the SHURflo 2088 Series and the newer replacement model, 4008 Series. Below are some simple troubleshooting tips that apply to these pumps; the steps usually apply to other pumps used in motorhomes. Performing these tests just might save you a trip to the RV repair center.

- ▶ If the water pump does not run, start the troubleshooting process by checking the fuse, typically marked in the fuse block. Using a multimeter or a simple 12-volt-DC test light, check for power on both sides of the fuse. Next, move to the water pump and test for voltage across the negative wire and the red positive wire leading to the pressure switch. If there is power to the positive side, check for power on the



[20] Double-check the valve and diaphragm assemblies for proper seating before reinstalling the head. [21, 22] Always use the proper screwdriver and tip to prevent over-torquing the screws during installation of plastic parts. [23] The 4008 Series SHURflo Revolution water pump is a direct replacement for the older 2088 Series, updating the system in an older motorhome.

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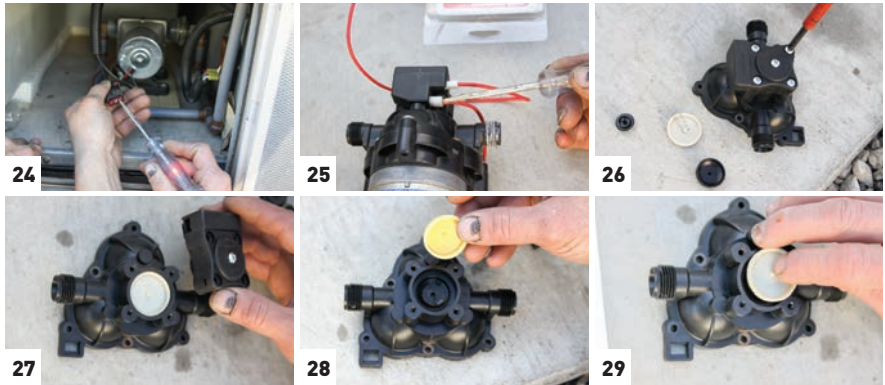
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other side of the pressure switch. If there are 12 volts DC present on both wires, the motor is defective, provided there is an adequate ground. At this point, it's more cost-effective to replace the water pump. If power is only present on one side of the pressure switch, it will need to be replaced.

- ▶ There may be slight differences between models, but in many cases, the pressure switch and the diaphragm can be removed by taking out two screws.
- ▶ If the pump runs but does not pressurize the water, remove the hose and strainer from the intake side of the water pump. Run the pump and put your thumb over the intake fitting and check for suction. If suction is present, the problem will typically be between the pump and the tank. If there is no suction, replace the head assembly or the valve assembly, both of which are available at Camping World, through www.amazon.com or at many RV dealers.
- ▶ Replacing the head on a water pump is quite simple. The 4008 Series has six bolts, and the 2088 Series head is held in place by three bolts that protrude into the body of the motor assembly. Most motorhome demand water pumps have similar features. Remove the screws and carefully pry the head assembly away



[24, 25] A simple 12-volt DC test light, available at most auto parts stores, can be invaluable when tracking down possible power problems at the water pump. [26, 27] Care must be taken when removing the cap for the pressure switch assembly because the sequence of the spring position may get away from you unexpectedly. [28, 29] The position of the diaphragm in the pressure switch kit is critical; if the wrong side is up, it won't function. Take a picture of the position before replacing rather than relying on memory.

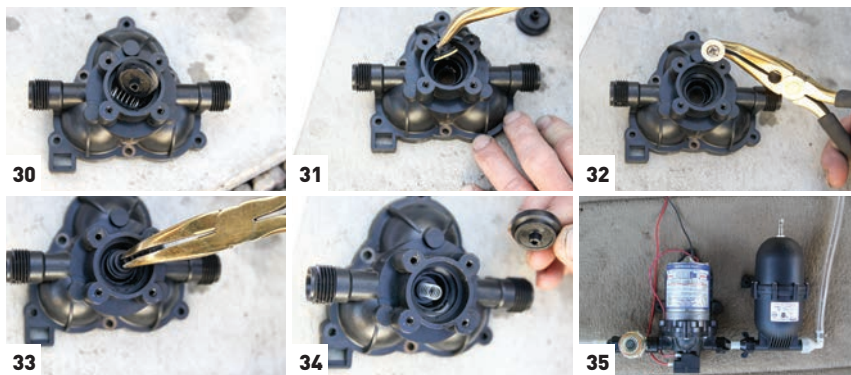
from the motor assembly. The motor shaft has a flat side, which is lined up with the corresponding flat side in the head assembly.

- ▶ Pump problems can also be traced to low battery voltage when running under a load. Start by checking for proper voltage at the fuse. It can be no lower than 11 volts DC, under load, at the fuse. If the voltage is not adequate at the water pump (lower than at the fuse), install a water-pump latching relay designed specifically for water pumps. The latching relay utilizes a dedicated power source (larger-gauge wire) and the original wire to trip the relay internally. It is not uncommon for manufacturers

to run inadequate-gauge wire over a long length, resulting in a voltage drop. Installing a latching relay will usually be necessary when installing a high-flow water pump.

- ▶ If the water pump runs intermittently, check for voltage on both sides of the pressure switch. If the voltage cuts out between the two red pressure switch wires, replace the pressure switch assembly. If the voltage fluctuates at the pressure switch, the problem can be traced to the fuse or the battery. If the motor has continuous power but continues to be intermittent, replace the pump.
- ▶ A common issue is a hammering sound when the pump is running. In many cases, this annoying trait can be traced to water lines that are too close to each other and are affected by the pulsing of water pressure from the pump. To fix, insulate the pipes with foam (normally used for water pipes and available at home centers) and tie them together to prevent the hammering noise. This is also good for insulating exposed pipes in cold weather. When the pump pulsates, the lines vibrate and, if they're close enough to a wall, the sound can reverberate through the entire motorhome.
- ▶ PEX (hard water lines) connected directly to the pump can also cause the hammering noise. Flexible hoses (usually 18 inches

[30] When rebuilding the pressure switch assembly, it's important to keep track of where the spring and the seals need to be installed so they are in the proper order. [31-33] A small, curved pair of needle-nose pliers will make it much easier when removing and replacing the check valve parts. [34] Be sure that the spring is seated properly and the lower check valve seal is in place before assembling the remaining parts. If the spring is not seated properly, the check valve will be ineffective. [35] This is the most basic configuration of an accumulator tank and the water pump. However, the tank can be installed anywhere in the system with the same results.



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By Ed Bolduc

HIGH ROLLERS

Upgrading to MCD Innovations window shades enhances privacy and improves climate-control efficiency

Over the years, motorhome window coverings have come in a variety of choices: curtains, Venetian blinds, pleated shades and Roman shades. In the past few years, roller shades have gained wide acceptance as the window covering of choice in motorhomes for their ease of operation, reliability and visual appeal.

In the world of RV roller shades, perhaps no brand is more recognizable than MCD Innovations. Founded in 2003, MCD produces roller shades that are used by many motorhome manufacturers, and are available in manual and motorized formats. The manual shades use a speed reducer to slow the shades while retracting quietly. An auto-stop mechanism limits how high the shade will retract so it can be accessed easily at the bottom of the valance. MCD's motorized shades contain a 12-volt DC motor located inside the shade's roller

tube that's controlled by a switch or a remote control. The tubular motors are quiet, and the upper and lower stop limits are programmable.

MCD's American Solo Shades are a single-shade unit using Clearview Solar Screen (day) or a 100 percent light-blocking (night) material. The day shade is a finely woven black mesh fabric that provides UV protection and reduces solar heat transfer. Night shades are available in several colors of vinyl or decorator fabrics. American Duo Shades have a day and night shade in one unit; both can be

operated manually or with a motor, or one shade can function manually, while the other is motorized.

If your window coverings are worn, broken or just plain unsightly, MCD can custom build roller shades to fit. The first step is to determine whether you will self-install the shades or have them professionally hung at MCD's manufacturing facility in McKinney, Texas, or by one of its certified dealers. The McKinney facility has 12 RV spaces with electrical hookups where customers can park overnight while their shades are updated. Upon arrival, technicians take all the necessary measurements and quote a price. The shades are custom-built and installed — the entire process usually takes about five days to complete.



[1] The length of the shade assembly determines the number of mounting clips needed. [2] Shade assemblies are easily removed by prying off the mounting clip tab with a flat-tip screwdriver. [3] The learning keys are metallic, with a black button, or covered with red or clear plastic.

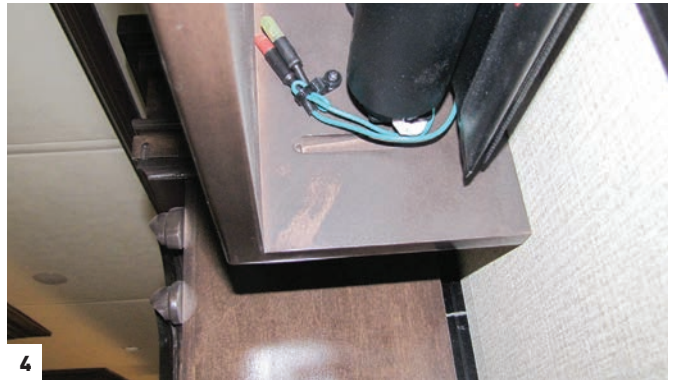
[4] Cable ties are often used to keep the Learning Keys from hanging below the valance. [5] Clearview Solar Screen fabric day shades can easily be seen through from the interior yet still provide privacy. [6] Sway shades offer full coverage of raked cockpit windows.

Installing roller shades in the living area isn't difficult for someone who's handy. However, due to the complexity of windshield shades, MCD recommends having them installed by trained technicians. Owners who want to self-install a windshield shade should call MCD's technicians and discuss what's involved. Careful measurements will need to be taken before placing an order. MCD's order form, found on its website, provides detailed measuring instructions.

Installation begins by removing the valances, the existing shades and the mounting brackets. The mounting clips can then be installed, either to the top of the valance, the bottom of a cabinet or to the ceiling at a distance of about 3/8-inch from the window frame. Be sure to mount the outermost clips no more than 2 inches from the end of the shade. Verify that the shade will not hit any obstructions when operated.

If the shades are motorized, a 12-volt DC power source must be added. The shade motors will require power and ground wires, and can be controlled by adding a generic switch or with a dedicated MCD remote control. If you're not experienced with wiring, it's best to have it done by a trained technician.

The shade is attached to the clips by inserting the edge of the mounting rail closest to the window into the clip first, and rotating the shade assembly upward until



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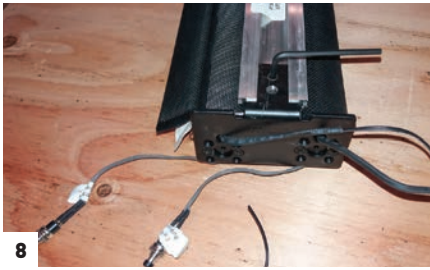
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the front edge of the mounting rail locks into place. Reattach the valance and the installation is complete. Motorized shades will need to be programmed.

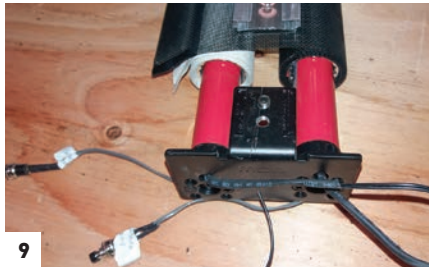
Programming the shades isn't difficult. MCD provides excellent instructions in the owner's manual or on its website in the Technical Information area. The shades can be programmed to individual channels for single shade operation or multiple shades can be programmed to the same channel allowing them to be raised and lowered at the same time by pushing one button. The 14- and 15-channel remotes include "all day" and "all night" buttons that raise and lower the respective shades at the same time. The two-channel remotes can also control multiple shades on each channel.

Motorized shades in the cockpit area contain a safety feature that limits the shades from being lowered too far when the motorhome's ignition is on, preventing the shades

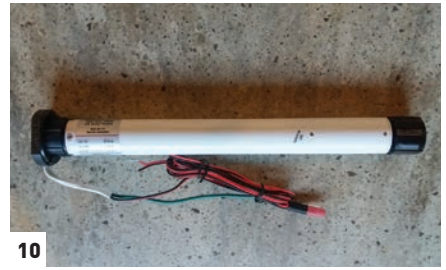
[7] Wiring for powered shades can be tucked inside the valance.



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from blocking the driver's vision. These dual-range motors need to be programmed once with the ignition on and then with it off. The lower limit for "ignition on" should be set above the driver's eye level so the shade can be used as a sun visor while driving.

Whether new MCD shades were just added or they were installed at the factory, maintenance and repairs are not difficult. The AutoStop mechanism and spring tension on American Series manual shades made since July 2009 can be easily adjusted. Depending on the model, adjustments are made by rotating a dial at the end of the roller tube or by pushing in and turning an adjustment slot with a flat blade screwdriver. The adjustment slots are located at each end of the shade, and the shade may need to be removed before adjusting. Spring tension adjusters can be either a black slot or dial. AutoStop adjusters incorporate a white or gray slot or a black dial with small white marks.

MCD manual shades come with the AutoStop and spring tension properly set. Shades with dial adjusters may need to be reset over time. All new American Roller Shades are fitted with slotted provisions that should not need readjustment.

Although failures are uncommon, a spring assembly or AutoStop mechanism can be replaced by removing the shade and pulling the shade material down slightly to lock it in place. After the bracket setscrew is loosened and the bracket can be slid out of the mounting track, the faulty mechanism can be removed from the roller tube using a pair of pliers, if necessary. The slots in the new component are aligned with the keys in the tube and then slid in. All that's

[8] An Allen wrench is used to loosen the bracket setscrew. [9] The brackets slide off the mounting track. Two screws hold the motors to the bracket. [10] A white-bodied motor is standard in new American Roller Shades, and features low-voltage protection that eliminates the chance of losing its programming.

left to do is to reinstall the bracket and shade to complete the repair.

Replacing a motor in a powered shade also only takes a few minutes. But in this case, the setscrew on the bracket is loosened but not pulled out of the mounting track. Once the two screws that hold the motor to the bracket are removed, the bracket is pulled slightly out of the mounting track, providing enough room to remove the motor from the bracket. Installation is the opposite of removal.

It's important to order the correct motor if the shade is remote-controlled. The red-bodied motors will only communicate with the older 2-channel and 14-channel remotes. The new 2-channel and 15-channel remotes require a white-bodied motor.

MCD also manufactures specialty shades for the screen door and cockpit windows. The screen door pull-up shade comes with a Clearview solar screen, or a light-blocking night shade, and mounts to the interior of the door at the bottom of the window. These shades are available only in manual operation and come in several styles to cover most window shapes.

Sway shades are a specially designed manual or motorized shade for windows that are wider on the bottom than the top. A conventional shade that pulls straight down would leave the bottom forward corner of the

window uncovered. The Sway shade fabric moves forward as it is lowered. The forward edge of the shade is cut at an angle to match the window. The result is complete coverage and privacy.

To remove dust from Clearview day shades, vacuum using a soft brush attachment. Stains and stubborn dust can be removed with water and a soft bristled brush or sponge. Hard-to-remove spots might require the use of a mild soap solution. Vinyl night shades should be cleaned with a microfiber cloth or color-free paper towel and water. Mildly soiled fabric night shades should be cleaned with a wet sponge. MCD recommends Woolite Pet Stain & Odor Remover + Oxygen to remove tough stains, followed by Scotchgard upholstery spray after cleaning. Be sure to let the shades thoroughly dry before rolling them up.

The MSRP for American Roller



11



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[11] The new 15-channel remote (left) is smaller than the 14-channel unit (right) and has an LCD display. [12] The faceplate of the remote is removed to change the batteries.

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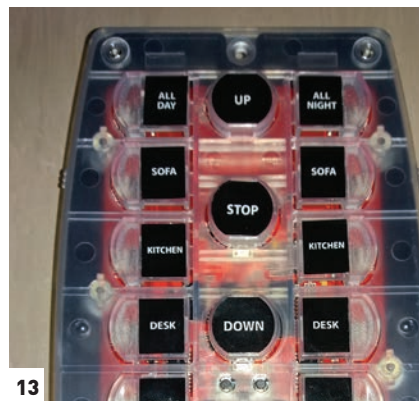
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INSTALLATION: MCD WINDOW SHADES



13



14

[13] Programming buttons and batteries can be found by removing the front cover on the remote. [14] The manual shade adjustments are in the center of the brackets. The gray color shows this is the AutoStop adjustment.

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Shades varies by length and whether the shades are motorized or manual. American Duo manual shade assemblies vary in price from \$150 to \$370, while American Solo manual shade assemblies are \$75 to \$185. Motorized shades controlled by a switch add \$115 per shade to the manual price, while remote-controlled shades add \$165 per shade. A 15-channel remote is \$165 and a 2-channel remote is \$35. Screen door shades sell for \$90. American Duo windshield shades, up to 98 inches wide with a maximum drop of 65 inches, have a price of \$795, while the American Solos retail for \$395.

Although upgrading isn't inexpensive, MCD American Roller Shades offer reliability, increased privacy, heat reduction and ease of maintenance, which all adds up to make a strong case for this type of interior improvement. **M**

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LIFE LESSONS

A FORMER TEACHER AND A CORRECTIONAL OFFICER FIND TRUE JOY IN RETIREMENT WITH THEIR 1990 NEWELL COACH

This article is one in our continuing series looking at motorhomes that have stood the test of time and can still make dreams come true. Each has earned the right to be called "the classic ride."

Laura Jenkins can remember the exact moment she decided to retire and buy a motorhome.

It was snowing and sleeting, and the math teacher's northern Virginia school district had elected to open on time. She was inching along in treacherous conditions when she lost control of her car and skidded off the highway.

"I thought, 'That's it. I'm tired of this,'" Laura says. "I went home and

told my husband, Ted, it was time to make a plan."

That was more than three years ago and a thousand miles from where we are sitting, nestled between palm trees in Florida's Fort De Soto Park and admiring the Jenkinses' classic 1990 Newell motorhome. Laura's plan included taking early retirement, selling the couple's suburban house and splitting their time between



Above: Ted and Laura Jenkins enjoy the relaxed pace of the RV lifestyle with their two canine traveling companions.

their Smith Mountain Lake, Virginia, vacation home and warmer climates in a yet-to-be-purchased RV. Ted wasn't so sure. He loved his job as a correctional officer, and he wasn't quite sold on the concept of retirement, but Laura's perseverance won out. Nine months later, they purchased their first motorhome.

Choosing the right motorhome to be used as a second home is a very





personal decision. For the Jenkinses, safety and durability were at the top of their list, leading them to look at older bus-style motorhomes by manufacturers like Blue Bird, Prevost and Newell. All three produced custom diesel pushers with heavy-duty steel and aluminum construction, air-ride suspensions and a reputation for quality. They soon found that even a used Prevost was more than they wanted to budget, and that Blue Birds were becoming popular with collectors, making them hard to find.

They concentrated their efforts on locating a used Newell in good condition, and after six months of online research and hours spent on the Newell Gurus website (www.newellgurus.com), they found a listing for a 38-foot coach in Oklahoma that seemed to fit their needs. They drove out to take a look and were impressed with the unit's overall condition, inside and out. And despite the fact that the coach had been through four owners, it came with complete service records and manuals — three binders full.

"We have paperwork on everything that has ever been done," Ted says. "If they got a new light bulb, it's in there."

Above: The white upholstery, cabinetry and window treatments create a bright, modern interior. Flooring in the Newell was updated with elegant custom granite tile flooring in the galley, hallway and bathroom. Solid-surface countertops and updated hardware enhance the look.

They were also thrilled to find that one of the previous owners was actually Tom McCloud, the founder of the Newell Gurus website. McCloud and his wife had completed an interior renovation years before, which was now one of the coach's main selling points. Despite being 25 years old, the living quarters of the 1990 Newell looked showroom new. The white cabinetry and ultraleather upholstery gave the motorhome 21st century appeal, accentuated by new carpet, window treatments, and beautiful custom granite tile flooring in the galley, hallway and bathroom. Solid-surface countertops and new plumbing and light fixtures enhanced the updated look. Appliances included a residential apartment-sized Whirlpool refrigerator, two-burner gas stove and microwave convection oven, all in excellent condition. And, of course, there was the shower — roomy, with a stainless floor and glass door, it is one of Laura's favorite amenities.

The exterior of the coach had been

well-maintained, and the couple liked the maroon-and-silver full-body paint scheme. They were also impressed with the ample basement storage. While the Newell had high miles — with an odometer reading of 169,000 — it is pushed by a Detroit Diesel Silver 8V92, an engine known for its power and longevity. In fact, there were just a few negatives; the coach needed a new air conditioner and generator, and the tires were due for replacement. Still, with a \$32,000 price tag, the decision to buy was an easy one. The harder part, according to Ted, was learning to drive the coach on the way home to Virginia.

"I almost took it off a cliff," he says ruefully.

It turns out that quirky handling wasn't a result of Ted's inexperience but of an error in repairs done on the unit's air-suspension system. It's something they might not have discovered if they hadn't decided about two years into their ownership to take the motorhome back to Newell

Photos: Eric Eichenmuller

RIDING HIGH

Support is important in any used motorhome purchase, and Newell has one of the best reputations for customer service in the industry. This is one reason that used Newells are in high demand. You won't find pricing guides on NADA, but a search of the current market shows that classics like this 1990 in good condition are rare and average between \$50,000-\$65,000. Late 1990s models are more common and start in the low \$100,000s.

► Newells like this one prove that quality workmanship stands the test of time.



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The Classic Ride



Above, from left: The curved vanity and mirrored cabinets help open up space in the bathroom. The roomy shower — with its unique stainless-steel basin and glass door — quickly became one of Laura's favorite amenities in the Newell.

Coach for a complete checkup. The couple determined that, given the age of their coach, they needed the advice of experts to insure optimal performance and longevity.

"We asked them to go through it top to bottom, and fix anything they found," Ted explains.

Thanks to the manufacturer's knowledgeable service professionals, what they found was that the coach was riding 6 inches too high. The staff resolved the issue, and now the motorhome is "A pleasure to drive — like a race car." Some buyers of used motorhomes might shy away from presenting their RV to a service center with a blank check, but Laura and Ted are quick to point out that the extensive and detailed maintenance done by Newell, which cost about \$8,000, has provided true peace of mind.

"It was worth every penny," Laura says. "We only wish we had done it from the start."

In addition to the cost of factory maintenance, the Jenkinse have made some modifications of their own. The first was installation of a new Power Tech Ultimate II 12-kW AC generator, which provides enough power to run all of their systems, if necessary. More recently, they replaced one of the motorhome's

aging rooftop air conditioning units and an exhaust fan. Along with new tires, these have been the couple's main expenses in owning their Newell thus far — a cost far less than the asking price of many of the newer Class A motorhomes they saw when they first began their search.

While they do occasionally go to RV shows and look longingly at "out-of-the-box" buses with multiple slideouts, they have found their Newell has just the right amount of space for the two of them and their two canine traveling companions. In fact, their coach doubles as an office and classroom — Laura has continued to teach virtual math courses while traveling, and she is even pursuing an online M.B.A. — all without the risk of an icy commute.

Wherever we go, we meet people who dream of climbing behind the wheel and taking off for parts unknown. For those who are still undecided about making the leap, Ted says the answer is quite simple.

"Life is short — let's travel."

Finding high-quality used motorhomes, like this 38-foot Newell, makes the RV lifestyle attainable to just about everyone, and that's one more reason that this 28-year-old coach is a true classic ride. **M**



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HOME ADVANTAGE

The Good Sam Club's home-security partner gets a powerful reboot

The original SimpliSafe home-security system was the first of its kind: a professionally monitored system that anyone could set up in minutes without drilling or wiring. It was a hit. Today, SimpliSafe is reportedly the fastest-growing home-security company in the country and protects more than two million Americans.

For 2018, SimpliSafe redesigned its security system from top to bottom, including an attractive new look and compact sensors that are so unobtrusive they can cover an entire house without being noticed. This third-generation system is said to run five times faster than the previous version and has a 50 percent louder alarm siren.

To prepare for a variety of worst-case scenarios, the new system adds safeguards that include a SmashSafe feature that can dispatch police even if an intruder breaks the base unit, keypad or siren. Because the new setup has both cellular and wireless connections, it works even if the home's landline is disabled or Wi-Fi is down. A backup battery keeps the base unit running during power outages.

Despite the upgraded components and added features, SimpliSafe hardware is priced the same as before, and the company continues to offer Good Sam Club members two free months of professional monitoring service with the purchase of a new system.

▶ To learn more about the newly upgraded SimpliSafe home-security system and the exclusive Good Sam Club deal for 60 days of free 24/7 monitoring, visit www.simplisafe/motorhome.



SimpliSafe's newly redesigned components include sensors that detect motion, broken glass, and door and window entry, a base unit, wireless keypad and key fob, 105-decibel siren and a panic button. Optional hazard sensors monitor smoke, water and temperature.



Membership Benefits

The Good Sam Club is on a mission to add new membership benefits, including expanding the lineup of Camping World discounts:

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NEW: 15 percent off propane every day

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- ▶ 10 percent off in-store purchases
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▶ Read about all of the Good Sam Club benefits at www.goodsam.com/club.

As part of the **GOOD SAM PERKS** program, members can take advantage of online access to exclusive coupons on movies and other entertainment, dining, shopping, travel and camping.



▶ To find deals and get coupons, go to www.goodsam.com/perks.



▶ **SAVE THE DATES** Camping World SuperCenters are hosting Good Sam Double Discount Days from April 26 through 29. Members can stock up, doubling the standard Good Sam Club discount on hundreds of items. Members also receive a free gift when they spend \$50 or more, while supplies last. www.campingworld.com/stores

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No, Kitty!

Like many RVers, I use a CPAP machine. And, also like many RVers, I travel with pets, currently a 4-year-old dog and a kitten. Apparently, the kitten became enamored with the hose on my CPAP machine and made tiny holes in a 4-inch-long section, making the hose unusable. Unable to get a replacement because I was traveling, I developed a method to temporarily fix the air leaks until I could get a new hose. First, I wrapped the damaged area in plastic wrap. Next, I covered the plastic wrap with vinyl electrical tape, making sure to extend the tape over the ends of the plastic wrap to get a good seal. The plastic wrap molds to the ribs of the hose, and the vinyl tape prevents air leakage.

Libby Miller | Proberta, California

Editor's note: We need to stress this is only a temporary fix. Should your CPAP tubing get damaged, we recommend you replace it as soon as possible.



Pump It

Adding oil to an Onan generator at the end of an oil change can be excruciatingly slow. The process involves adding an ounce at a time with a frustrating pause in between. Holding the bottle is awkward due to poor access, and pouring the oil in directly from the bottle leads to small spills. I solved the problem by using a gear lube pump, which I normally use to add oil to the lower unit of my boat's outboard motor. I bought it at Walmart for about \$5. Place one end in the oil bottle, and the other in the oil port on the generator. Then slowly work the plunger to add oil in the recommended amounts. Note: Some oil bottles have different size caps and won't accept the screw-on cap of the gear lube pump.

Ken Dwiggin | Reno, Nevada

Chain Gang

I know that a lock box is sold to attach a surge protector to a motorhome's power cable (and have read other solutions in *MotorHome* magazine), but I think a dedicated thief would just take the power cable with it. Being a cheapskate engineer, I figured I could improve on the situation. What I came up with is a pair of long hasp locks and a 3-foot length of chain. Place the first lock around the small length of cord at the top of the surge protector, near the plug. Then plug in, wrap the loose end of chain around the pedestal snugly, secure the second hasp lock to the chain and you are all set.

Howard Potvin | Crestline, California

Mean Green

We had a large area of water stains on our motorhome's ceiling carpet due to torrential rains in Florida last winter. I have tried a number of products to remove the stains, and finally found that a handheld upholstery/carpet cleaner, such as the Bissell Little Green Portable Carpet Cleaner, works beautifully. I use carpet cleaner solution in the machine and spray a little Spot Hero stain remover from ServiceMaster, then brush the area lightly and the stains are gone. I made sure to let the cleaning machine remove as much water as possible to prevent additional staining, and then dried the area with a hair dryer.

Nanci Dixon | Minnetonka, Minnesota



Have an Idea?

Quick Tips is looking for submissions. Please send your DIY ideas to: *MotorHome* Quick Tips, 2750 Park View Ct., Ste. 240, Oxnard, CA 93036, or email letters@motorhomemagazine.com. Be sure to include any photos, illustrations or drawings. If your tip is selected for publication, you will receive \$35. All payments require an FEIN or SSN.

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Unmask!

Frustrated after he found leftover masking tape from a paint job that he felt led to the failure of his motorhome's refrigerator, a reader turned to Hot Line for help. He wrote:



“A nearby fire damaged paint and warped plastic parts on my 2003 Monaco Signature Series motorhome. In March 2017, I took it to the body shop of Mid-State RV in Byron, Georgia, to be painted and to have the plastic parts replaced. On our first RV outing after the repair, the refrigerator worked well the first day and then malfunctioned, so we took the motorhome to a repair shop. The technician pulled out the refrigerator and turned it upside down, and told us he found masking tape from the paint job on the inside of the refrigerator access door that was blocking airflow, causing the malfunction. The repair cost \$285, but the technician said that the refrigerator could go out at any time.

I contacted Mid-State RV and requested reimbursement for \$285. Mid-State RV declined to pay, indicating that the fire caused the problem [not the masking tape]. My insurance company also will not pay because it says the refrigerator worked and then malfunctioned due to restricted airflow. I think Mid-State should pay for the repair [and a new unit] if the refrigerator quits again in the next year.

J. Murray Edwards | McDonough, Georgia

Edwards covered all the bases by sending invoices and photos, for which we commend him. We received a copy of Mid-State RV's response.

We are glad your refrigerator is operating after the service technician “burped” it by turning the unit upside-down. This does not always work if the refrigerator has more than one blockage. It is my firm belief that the heat [from the fire] caused your refrigerator to malfunction. When these ammonia systems get too hot, blockages occur. If the failure occurred shortly after turning it on, then any tape that covered the airflow did not cause the overheating.

However, after review, I have determined that Mid-State RV did not perform the quality-control step of testing the refrigerator and verifying it was operational. Furthermore, no one can verify that the tape was removed. Therefore, I agree to reimburse you \$285 and to replace the cooling unit of your refrigerator if it fails

before May 10, as long as the work is performed within 30 days of failure after we have had a chance to diagnose the unit here at our dealership.

**Tina Pickard, Director of Operations,
Mid-State RV | Byron, Georgia**

Don't Let Your Guard Down

After a repair on his motorhome led to another problem, a reader asked the company to reimburse him for the additional expense. When the company refused, the reader turned to Hot Line.

“On March 1, 2017, I had our 2009 Tiffin Allegro Bus towed to Empire Truck Sales in Pensacola, Florida, for a coolant leak. Technicians found the

bottom radiator hose was leaking, and they had to remove the rock guard to access the hose to make the repair. When we arrived in Orlando on April 3, 2017, I noticed the rock guard was hanging down. Apparently, Empire used screws instead of bolts to refasten the rock guard, and some of the screws had sheared off. I called Empire and told Dan Nynas, the service director, I needed to get it fixed [right away] because we were leaving Orlando. Nynas told me Empire would pay for the repair and asked me to send the bill to his service manager. On April 12, 2017, I sent an email with photos and the bill for \$268.32. The following week, I sent another email asking for the status of my request, at which time he told me he had sent it to the corporate office for payment. I again called Nynas on July 7, 2017, and he didn't know where the paperwork was because the service manager didn't work there anymore. I sent the paperwork again on July 8, 2017, but have not heard back.

John Grover | Lakewood, Colorado

Staff turnover is difficult on everybody, and when it's part of an involved process such as this, it can be even more of a headache. We felt Empire needed to follow through on its promise, so we passed along Grover's complaint. We later heard back from Grover directly.

“Hot Line is a great consumer advocate. I submitted a complaint with Empire Truck Sales to you in August 2017 and finally received payment in November 2017.

— J.G. M

Take Action Contact Hot Line for Help

Hot Line assists in mediating conflicts between consumers and RV dealers and manufacturers, accessories suppliers and service providers. After exhausting all other resources, send typed letters to *MotorHome* Hot Line, 2750 Park View Court, Suite 240, Oxnard, CA 93036 and enclose copies of appropriate bills and correspondence, plus a self-addressed, stamped envelope. Selected letters will be edited and published unless otherwise requested.

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Questions & Answers



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Customer Rating **★★★★★**

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MODEL: 647583

ITEM 69227/62116/62584/68048 shown

16761048

LIMIT 4 - Coupon valid through 8/10/18*

U.S. GENERAL SUPER COUPON

30", 5 DRAWER TOOL CARTS

- 8100 cu. in. of storage
- 700 lb. capacity
- Weights 139 lbs.

Customer Rating **★★★★★**

YOUR CHOICE OF COLOR **\$169.99**

ITEM 64031

COMPARE TO \$199.99

COMPARE TO \$1,150 SAVE \$980

MODEL: 168CS3AP80

FABRICATED NEW COLORS

ITEM 64060 64061 64059 shown

16761158

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KRAUSE & BECKER SUPER COUPON

AIRLESS PAINT SPRAYER KIT

Customer Rating **★★★★★**

NOW \$169.99

COMPARE TO \$299 SAVE \$129

MODEL: 262800

ITEM 62915 60600 shown

16761890

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WARRIOR SUPER COUPON

29 PIECE TITANIUM DRILL BIT SET

Customer Rating **★★★★★**

NOW \$99.99

COMPARE TO \$60 SAVE 93%

MODEL: DWV399

ITEM 62281 61637 shown

16763143

LIMIT 4 - Coupon valid through 8/10/18*

Lynxx SUPER COUPON

40 VOLT LITHIUM CORDLESS BRUSHLESS BLOWER

Customer Rating **★★★★★**

NOW \$119.99

COMPARE TO \$199 SAVE \$79

MODEL: DDBL7908

ITEM 63284

16764443

LIMIT 4 - Coupon valid through 8/10/18*

PREDATOR SUPER COUPON

6.5 HP (212 CC) OHV HORIZONTAL SHAFT GAS ENGINE

Customer Rating **★★★★★**

NOW \$99.99

COMPARE TO \$329.99 SAVE \$230

MODEL: EG30MT2032

ITEM 60363/69730

ITEM 69727 shown, CALIFORNIA ONLY

16782942

LIMIT 4 - Coupon valid through 8/10/18*

PORTLAND SUPER COUPON

1750 PSI ELECTRIC PRESSURE WASHER

Customer Rating **★★★★★**

NOW \$179.99

COMPARE TO \$399.99 SAVE \$99

MODEL: 2600

ITEM 63255/63254 shown

16786166

LIMIT 4 - Coupon valid through 8/10/18*

HaulMaster SUPER COUPON

72" x 80" MOVING BLANKET

Customer Rating **★★★★★**

NOW \$5.99

COMPARE TO \$19.99 SAVE 70%

MODEL: 7280

ITEM 69505/62418/66537 shown

16766645

LIMIT 4 - Coupon valid through 8/10/18*

PITTSBURGH SUPER COUPON

225 PIECE MECHANIC'S TOOL SET

LIFETIME WARRANTY

Customer Rating **★★★★★**

NOW \$99.99

COMPARE TO \$199 SAVE \$99

MODEL: 86756

ITEM 64367 62664 shown

16803336

LIMIT 4 - Coupon valid through 8/10/18*

HERCULES BEATS DEWALT SUPER COUPON

20 VOLT LITHIUM CORDLESS 1/2" COMPACT DRILL/DRIVER KIT

- 576 in. lbs. of torque
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- Weights 3.6 lbs.

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MODEL: DCD7802

ITEM 63381

16804945

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ITEM 69265/62344/93897 shown

16806473

LIMIT 4 - Coupon valid through 8/10/18*

HERCULES BEATS DEWALT SUPER COUPON

3 PIECE DECORATIVE SOLAR LED LIGHTS

Customer Rating **★★★★★**

NOW \$7.99

COMPARE TO \$11.99 SAVE 33%

ITEM 69561/69462 shown

16812068

LIMIT 7 - Coupon valid through 8/10/18*

HaulMaster SUPER COUPON

4 PIECE, 1" x 15 FT. RATCHETING TIE DOWNS

- 400 lb. working load

Customer Rating **★★★★★**

NOW \$6.99

COMPARE TO \$12.99 SAVE 82%

MODEL: 13079

ITEM 63057/63056/63094 90984/60405/63150/61524 shown

16821083

LIMIT 4 - Coupon valid through 8/10/18*

CENTECH SUPER COUPON

AUTOMATIC BATTERY FLOAT CHARGER

Customer Rating **★★★★★**

NOW \$4.99

COMPARE TO \$9.99 SAVE 50%

ITEM 69955/64284 69594/42292 shown

16822857

LIMIT 4 - Coupon valid through 8/10/18*

FISCHER SUPER COUPON

HEAVY DUTY MULTI-VEHICLE 750 LB. HIGH LIFT JACK

- 750 lb. H-frame capacity
- 500 lb. saddle capacity
- Huge 23" max. lift height

Customer Rating **★★★★★**

NOW \$179.99

COMPARE TO \$425.75 SAVE \$245

MODEL: PRO

ITEM 63298

16823073

LIMIT 4 - Coupon valid through 8/10/18*

HERCULES BEATS DEWALT SUPER COUPON

4-1/2", 7 AMP ANGLE GRINDER

Customer Rating **★★★★★**

NOW \$34.99

COMPARE TO \$59 SAVE 40%

MODEL: DWE401

ITEM 63052 62556 shown

16828913

LIMIT 4 - Coupon valid through 8/10/18*

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10" PNEUMATIC TIRE

Customer Rating **★★★★★**

NOW \$3.99

COMPARE TO \$10 SAVE 60%

MODEL: FR1055

ITEM 693365/62388/62409/62698/30900 shown

16831267

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60" HARDWOOD WORKBENCH WITH 4 DRAWERS

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MODEL: HW223

ITEM 93454/69054/63395/62603 shown

16831472

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13 PIECE, 1/2" DRIVE DEEP IMPACT SOCKET SETS

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NOW \$24.99

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By Ken Freund

Engine Stalls When Brakes Applied

Q I have a problem with my Itasca 2005 Horizon 36RD diesel pusher on a Freightliner chassis with a 350 Cat engine. The ABS light stays on when the engine is running, and when I apply the brake pedal, the engine quits. It happened two weeks after the motorhome was parked at a campsite. I cannot drive the motorhome because if I put my foot on the brake, the engine stalls, so I cannot put it in gear. Can you help?

Andre Lacombe | Montreal, Quebec, Canada

A Freightliner confirmed that there is no direct electrical connection between the brakes and anything that would cause the engine to quit. My first suspicion was that a rodent had chewed through the wiring, which is quite common when motorhomes sit idle even for a few days. This could cause some sort of cross



path in the wiring once the insulation is chewed away in a harness. After a follow-up conversation with Lacombe, it was determined that faulty ground connections at the battery were causing cross feeds in the electrical system, and correcting them solved the problem. The lesson here is to always check and clean all of the battery connections, and when chasing weird symptoms, look for faulty ground connections.

Cranky Cranking

Q I have a 2001 Jayco Class C on a Ford E-450 chassis. Last summer, upon trying to leave my campsite, it wouldn't start. After running the battery down, and [the Jayco] failing to start, I remembered I could start it off the generator battery. It started right up and ran as usual. Getting ready to store the coach for the winter, I encountered the same problem. It doesn't seem to be getting gas, but as soon as I start the generator, the engine starts right up and runs well from then on. Is the fuel pump going bad? It runs fine after it starts, and Ford technicians can't find any problems. I'm afraid I'm going to be stranded.

James Kissell | Newark, Ohio

A Intermittent problems like this can be a nightmare. You'll have to devise a test strategy to catch the faulty component "in the act," so to speak. When a gas engine cranks over normally, but shows no sign of starting, the problem is either no

spark or no fuel. Fuel pumps more frequently quit intermittently like this, so I would look at the fuel system before the ignition. Running the genset increases the available voltage and might bring the pump (or other failing electrical component) back to life temporarily. The fact that it is 17 years old adds to the likelihood of a failing pump (or relay). Start with a fuel-pump pressure test and leave the gauge on the engine, with the doghouse off, for a long test drive. Test it when hot and under a full load on a long hill. Sometimes you can get a recalcitrant pump working again temporarily by banging on the bottom of the tank.

Dinghy Disconnect

Q We purchased a 2017 Chevy Colorado 4x4 to tow behind our motorhome. The owner's manual says the last thing to do when hooking up is to disconnect the battery in the Colorado. No one has been able to tell me why I am disconnecting the battery.

Michael Charter | Jericho, Vermont

A This is to prevent the battery from becoming discharged during towing. To make it less inconvenient, you can install a battery disconnect switch so that you won't need any tools when hooking up or unhitching the dinghy vehicle. These are readily available in many RV shops and auto parts stores.

'Chirping' Sound

Q About two years ago I purchased a 2004 Winnebago Minnie 31C Class C motorhome with a Ford V-10 engine. The motorhome was in good shape, with only 14,000 miles on the odometer. I put new tires on and changed the fluids before taking our first trip in the motorhome. There is a noticeable chirping sound that seems to be coming from the engine compartment. As the travel speed increases the chirping sound also becomes faster, until being inaudible at 45 mph and above. I replaced the serpentine belt, thinking that might be where the chirping sound was coming

from, but it made no difference. We have traveled about 3,000 miles since then and the engine seems to run fine, so my only concern is that the chirping sound may be an indication of future problems. Where do you think this sound is coming from, and will it likely lead to a breakdown as we travel this year?

Alan Brown | Nevada, Iowa

A About the only thing more difficult than finding a chirping sound that occurs while driving is finding it remotely by email when you can't hear it or test drive the motorhome. Besides belt noise, I've even heard sounds like this from the wind going through grilles, etc. Also, sometimes a front brake will make a sort of chirping sound. Often, wind, engine and tire noise will drown out these sounds at highway speeds, which may explain why you don't hear it.

You need to devise a strategy to determine where it's coming from

before you can fix it. Find a traffic-free straight-and-level road that you can drive on. When the noise occurs, try putting the transmission in neutral and see what happens. While in neutral, try revving the engine and note if that changes it. Does it vary with vehicle speed or engine speed? Try applying the brakes and listen for a change in sound. Have an observer stand at the side of the road and listen for the location of the sound as you drive past. If necessary, try switching the engine off (only do this where it's safe and at lower speeds; power steering assist and the brake booster may not work). If the noise goes away with the engine off, it indicates the engine is the source. Remove the engine doghouse and test drive with an assistant to listen for where it's coming from. I think these techniques will lead to the source of the sound. The fact that the engine runs normally, and there's no check-engine light, reinforces that this is not a serious condition.

Descending Steep Grades — Comment

This is in regard to the January question about "Descending Steep Grades." I think the use of a tow/haul feature of the transmission should have been addressed in the response, but I hope Kenneth Barnes was able to read the response to the following question in that section about "Shifting Gears." Barnes' 2017 Thor Windsport with the V-10 surely has the tow/haul transmission, and he will find it helpful to learn to use it.

I had a 2015 Thor Vegas on the Ford E-350 chassis with the V-10 and a five-speed automatic transmission, and now I own a 2018 Forest River on the Ford E-450 chassis, which has a six-speed automatic transmission. Both of these units have the tow/haul feature. I use the tow/haul in the mountains of Colorado and coming down off the Mogollon Rim in Arizona, towing a dinghy, and the tow/haul

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feature is a life- (and brake-), saver. I hardly have to use brakes at all on the down grades, and if the unit starts going a bit faster than I like, I lightly brake so that it doesn't downshift to the next lower gear.

Gene Shannon

Colorado Springs, Colorado

Thanks for taking the time to write, Gene. When I wrote the reply, I guess you could say I assumed that when Barnes spoke of downshifting, he was also using the tow/haul feature. However, this may not be the case, so thank you for pointing that out. This is an important safety feature as well as a convenience that drivers should use.

Steering Looseness — Tip

I just read the "Steering Looseness" discussion in the February issue. Scott Hay said that he has a Monaco La Palma Class A motorhome and can feel something loose in the steering sector.

I have a Monaco Cayman and had a similar experience. My steering would move about 1½ inches either side of center (3 inches overall) before motion at the wheels could be felt. Driving down the freeway was a constant white-knuckle battle moving the wheel back and forth to compensate for wind and passing trucks.

The solution was to change out the steering box from the original Sheppard M100 to a TRW steering box, and to add a Safe-T-Plus steering stabilizer. The work was done at Henderson's Line-Up Brake and RV in Grants Pass, Oregon. The change made a huge difference in how the coach handles; now, it tracks straight. Wind and passing trucks only require light pressure on the steering wheel to hold the coach in line. I strongly recommend Henderson's RV. Great people who know what they are doing when it comes to motorhome suspensions. Also note that the steering wheel shaft has several universal

joints that should be greased periodically. They may be the cause of the rattle experienced by Hay.

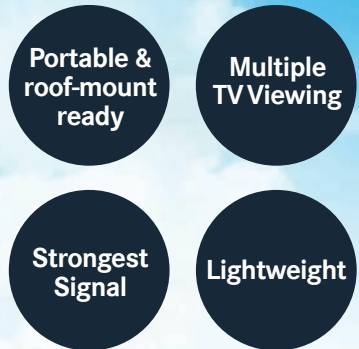
John Kaehms | Lafayette, California

That's a lot of steering free play. It must have been a harrowing ride before the modifications! Sometimes it's possible to adjust some of the free play out of the steering box. To locate play or looseness, have an assistant move the steering wheel back and forth (vehicle parked, engine off, wheels chocked) just to the limits of the free play. Looking underneath, the movement can be observed and determined if the looseness is in the steering box, steering column joints, tie rod ends, etc.

Hydraulic Pump Failure

On a recent trip to the southeastern part of the country, the hydraulic pump that powers the power steering and the fan on our 2001 Newmar Dutch Star on a Spartan chassis with the Cummins

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350 ISC motor failed. The breakdown happened in Spartanburg, South Carolina. We were towed to Cummins Atlantic in Spartanburg. The problem was diagnosed promptly, but the fix would not be. The pump is made by Casappa S.p.A., which has a factory in Batavia, Illinois; however, this particular pump is built by its facility in Italy and is proprietary to Spartan chassis (which means there are none sitting on a shelf anywhere). It gets better! They were on backorder for eight weeks. I contacted Spartan to confirm what the Cummins facility had told us. We were told that there were eight pumps ordered and we were seven on the list. That means there were eight vehicles down waiting for the same part.

We spent the next two weeks trying to get the old pump rebuilt, but after several unsuccessful attempts, the repair facility was able to get us together enough so we could get to a campground and wait for the pump to arrive. Sure enough, we got a call that the pump had arrived and that it was being shipped overnight to Cummins Atlantic. The shop got us in and out on the same day.

If your motorhome's pump hasn't failed yet, it will. It has an aluminum housing with steel insides, and a friend of mine who rebuilt pumps for a living said that is a combination meant to fail. If there are more than 100,000 miles on your rig, you may want to order one and keep it for a rainy day. The Casappa part No. is PLP20.20-07S1. The Spartan part No. is 1441-FF1-001.
Tom Ranly | Benson, Arizona

Thanks for sharing your story. I'm glad you finally got it fixed. Many diesel owners don't realize how essential the hydraulic pump is and take it for granted until it fails. As a former truck center service manager, I can tell you from experience that unfortunately many parts problems like this don't become evident through the supply chain until someone is stuck needing one. I'm a bit surprised your pump couldn't be rebuilt, or a used one found from a salvage yard to get you going at least temporarily.

Fuel Starvation — Tip

In regard to Dan Knowlton's "Fuel Starvation?" question in the January issue, I had the same problem on my 1988 P-30 Chevy chassis. After trying a couple of new fuel pumps, fuel filters, fuel lines, etc., I discovered that the design of the fuel tank was such that the filler tube entered lower on the side of the tank, creating a vacuum space in the area above the filler tube as fuel was used. I also discovered that the vent tube had sagged over time, creating a sort of P-trap that filled with fuel when I filled the tank to capacity, not allowing a proper venting of the tank and creating a partial vacuum until the fuel level had gone down past the fill tube. Knowlton had mentioned his motorhome's engine ran OK with a half-tank of fuel. I corrected the vent tube problem and the old Chevy runs like a top. I hope this helps Knowlton with his rig.

Ron Williams | Las Vegas, Nevada

Improper venting can certainly cause symptoms similar to a failing fuel pump, and sagging lines filled with fuel can block the venting. This must have been frustrating, to say the least! Your solution totally makes sense, and I'll pass it along to our readers. Thanks for sharing your experience, Ron.

Multimedia Unit Problem — Solution?

In the "Multimedia Unit Problem" in the February issue, Joe Mendygral had a question concerning his Jensen multimedia receiver. He reported that the sound cuts out intermittently while driving. I also have a Jensen multimedia receiver and had the same symptoms. In my case, the GPS was turned on at the same time as the radio. In the system setup there is a parameter for setting the volume level for the GPS. Because I did not have the volume for the GPS set high enough, every time the GPS attempted to provide driving instructions, the radio cut out (as it should) and all I heard was silence. When I changed the parameter for the GPS volume

to be louder, the radio cut out was replaced with GPS driving instructions. That would explain why the problem occurs only when the motorhome is moving. Check your multimedia setup parameters for volume.

Joe Jama | Camp Hill, Pennsylvania

Thanks for sharing your tip, Joe. I heard from several readers, including Pierre Vachon, who stated, "... with this system for some reason, the navigation volume on the GPS goes to zero from time to time. So when you would be getting voice guidance from the unit the music is muted. It took me a while to realize what the problem was. I still don't know why this happens because sometimes the voice guidance works fine, but sometimes it's zero volume and that's when there is a gap in the music." Hopefully this gives owners enough information to coexist with these quirky systems.

Carpenter Ant Comment

A year ago we had a carpenter ant infestation in our RV. The ants ignored regular ant traps. Eventually, I discovered that sprinkling boric-acid powder did the trick. It took about a week to get rid of all of the ants, but as I understand it, the ants track the particles back to the queen, so you kill the colony. Boric-acid powder isn't as easy to get as it was in the past. Pharmacies occasionally carry it, and it's relatively inexpensive, too.

Roger Marble | Ravenna, Ohio

Thanks for sharing your solution, Roger. Carpenter ants can be particularly nasty and aggressive, and powdered boric acid is an inexpensive and effective deterrent. I've used it to get rid of ants and yellow jackets, and it works great.

Lifting Windshield Wipers

Q We have a 2006 Damon Daybreak with pantograph-style windshield wiper arms. At highway speeds (50 mph or greater) the wiper comes away from the windshield and only

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clears the upper and lower section of the blade path. This leaves the center portion with a smear. I have not been able to correct this problem, nor have I found anyone who can help.

Richard Pozzebon

Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario, Canada

A Since this is the only complaint I've ever had about wiper blades lifting at speed, I don't think it's universal across that brand and suggest that you check the force that the wiper arm springs exert (by pulling out on them) compared to known good ones on another motorhome. Replace the arms that have weak springs. Another item that may help is SUREWIPE wiper springs (800-923-2317, <http://surewipe.com>). These springs are available in three sizes and supplement the springs in the arms.

'Summerizing' a Motorhome

Q Every year we see articles about winterizing an RV, but we never hear about "summerizing." Snowbirds who park their RVs year-round in places like Florida and return to them in the winter months have told me that before you leave in May and return home, you should do certain things, such as placing trays of cat litter inside the motorhome to prevent black mold from forming. What are your thoughts?

James Recco | Albion, New York

A Summerizing isn't quite as complex as winterizing because you don't have to worry about freezing weather bursting pipes and water tanks. Kitty litter is one way of absorbing some of the moisture inside, but there are other types of drying agents that are far more effective. DampRid (<https://damprid.com>) offers a number of affordable products to help avoid mold and mildew resulting from excessive moisture in the interior.

I also recommend allowing a little ventilation all the time by keeping a vent slightly open (with a screen to keep critters out and a roof-vent cover such as MaxxAir or Fan-Tastic Vent, available from Camping World (www.camping

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All systems should be operated and tested. Batteries should be checked, and terminals cleaned and tested. Another important task is taking care of the freshwater system. After the motorhome has been in storage, the tank should be drained and refilled, while adding ¼ cup of bleach for each 15 gallons of water. Then a box of baking soda can be added to freshen up the water's smell and taste. Water should be run through all the plumbing, the pump should be activated, and the campground water pressure should be tested on the coach. **M**

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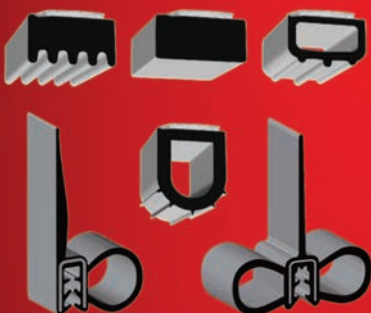


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(continued from page 80)

long and similar to water hoses) must be used to connect the PEX lines to the pump inlet and outlet barbs. Kits for this specific purpose are available at RV supply stores.

▶ Replacing the water pump head assembly may stop the pulsing action, if it's been determined that there are no other restrictions in the water line.

▶ If the pump is bolted directly to a wood floor, its vibrations can reverberate through the floor structure. Consider mounting the pump on a secondary piece of wood and mount the wood to the floor via foam rubber blocks and contact adhesive, but not with screws, which will also transmit vibrations.

▶ Various restrictions in the water lines, such as a kinked line or calcium buildup in the fixtures, can cause the water pump to short cycle when the showerhead or a faucet is wide open, as can a misadjusted pressure switch. Follow the manufacturer's instructions exactly to adjust the pressure switch. Accumulator tanks, specifically designed for RVs, can be installed near the water pump to help mitigate short cycling, which could also be caused by inadequate water-line sizing. Make sure the pump is designed to be used with an accumulator tank.

▶ If low water pressure at the shower head is experienced, the problems can be attributed to restrictions in the line, an inadequately sized water pump for the system, a worn valve assembly, low voltage, a defective vacuum breaker at the shower diverter, or simple debris blocking the shower head or faucet filter screen, which is easy to check and clean. A high-flow pump will often restore proper water pressure.

As one of the lifeblood systems in any self-contained motorhome, keeping the water flowing at good pressure enhances the experience — and curtails the stress of a poorly functioning demand pump. **M**

Source

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Look! Up in the Sky!

No longer relegated to old-timey superhero movies, this exclamation takes on new life every July at Oshkosh, Wisconsin's EAA AirVenture

By Alan Rider

If there's anything the years have taught me, it's that life is a matter of perspective. This is particularly true of motorhome travel. With the elevated height of our coaches and the wide expanse of windshield before us, we just naturally have a better perspective on the world passing by than most travelers.

As much as I like the view from behind the steering wheel, however, I can tell you I'd trade it in a heartbeat for a seat even higher off the ground. And I know whereof I speak: from unpowered paragliders, sailplanes and hot air balloons to blimps, helicopters and fighter-trainers, you name it and I've flown in it. In other words, I'm a flying geek.

Which is why a humble event in Oshkosh, Wisconsin, has been on my to-do list for quite some time. I'm talking, of course, about the festival of recreational aviation known as the EAA AirVenture (800-564-6322, www.eaa.org/en/airventure), which takes place this year from July 23-29.

Now, for those of you who have managed to remain blissfully unaware of the event, allow me to paint you a picture. From its humble roots in 1953, the Experimental Aircraft Association (EAA) event has grown to attract as many as 12,000 planes and more than 500,000 spectators from 80 countries over the course of its weeklong run.

In fact, AirVenture is said to be the largest general aviation event in the world. During its annual operation,

the control tower at this usually sleepy airport 90 miles north of Milwaukee launches and lands more planes per day than the world's busiest commercial airline hubs.

The festival's inbound aircraft run the gamut from the tiniest single-person ultralights to massive military transports like the U.S. Air Force's C-5 Galaxy, an aircraft that can swallow five full-size helicopters. It's this broad spectrum of flying machines that gives the event its tag line: "If it flies, you'll see it at Oshkosh."

Because of the sponsoring organization's bent toward homebuilt aircraft, which are required by the Federal Aviation Administration to be clearly labeled "experimental," you'll find row after row of planes put together by the same folks who flew them into the event. The variety is enough to boggle the mind.

Equally staggering is the number of historic warbirds that have been lovingly restored to flyable condition. In many cases, there are so many otherwise remarkable planes — say, the relatively rare World War II-era P-51 Mustang — gathered in one place, you run the risk of becoming blasé about aircraft you'd ordinarily be drooling over.

While all that's well and good, this event is about airplanes, and airplanes are meant to fly. And fly they do, in the form of everything from old-fashioned barnstorming-style shows complete with wing-walkers, to performances by some of the world's best aerobatic pilots. There are even oddities like an aerobatic helicopter and nighttime air shows complete with planes lit up by LED lights. And don't forget the remote-controlled drones!

There are flyovers by the aforementioned historic warbirds in attendance, as well as special guest appearances from the latest military hardware ranging from the flying wing-like B-2 Spirit Stealth Bomber to the cutting-edge F-35 fighter. Military precision flying teams like the U.S. Navy's Blue Angels also put on quite a show.

Now, I admit I may have just gone on a bit. But don't take my word for the wonders of EAA's AirVenture: Go experience it for yourself. After all, that's why we're all out here, looking for the next big thing along The Road Ahead. **M**

“... Don't take my word for the wonders of EAA's AirVenture: Go experience it for yourself.”

It's a Plane! ☺

From left: Visitors to EAA's AirVenture are treated to close-up looks at legends like the famed B-1. The Canadian Harvard Aerobatic Team (CHAT) delights the crowd below.



Photos: courtesy EAA AirVenture



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