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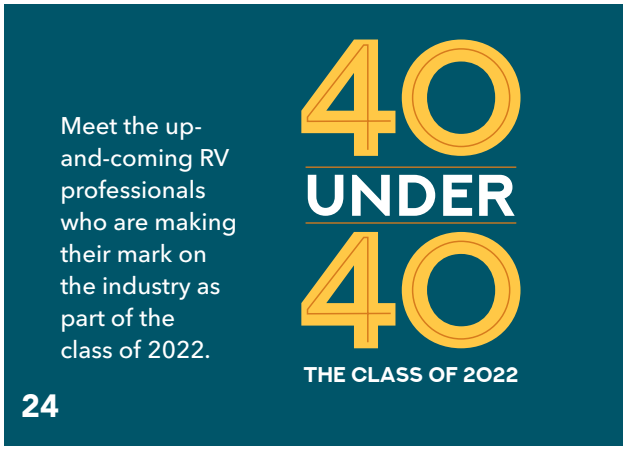
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Jonathan Ellis of Truma is just one of the 40 Under 40 *honorees we feature in this issue to celebrate the class of 2022. Turn to page 24 to meet these rising stars in the industry.*

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CERTIFIED AUDIENCE

RV Pro (USPS 024-712) is published monthly by Cahaba Media Group, 1900 28th Ave S, Ste 200, Birmingham, AL 35209-2642. Periodicals postage paid at Birmingham, AL and additional mailing offices. Free to qualified recipients within the United States and U.S. Possessions. Publisher reserves the right to determine qualifications. Annual Subscription Prices: U.S. – one year, $45; two years, $80; three years, $108. Canada – one year, $76; two years, $142, three years, $201 (U.S. Funds); All other countries – one year $98, two years $186, three years, $267 (U.S. funds). Customer Service, call 800-256-2785. POSTMASTER: Please send address changes to RV Pro , PO Box 271, Lincolnshire, IL 60069-9835.

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RV PRO



It's Nov. 13 as I write this column from my dining room that's decorated with red, white and green plaid, silver reindeer and fluffy white snowmen with scarves.

Yes, I've apparently become one of those people who decorates for the holidays before Thanksgiving.

Frankly, I wouldn't have it any other way this year. The holidays have always been full of hope and optimism for me. This year, I think those are two sentiments we all need to hold on to as we move into 2023.

There's no denying that 2022 was tougher for the RV industry than it has been in the previous two years. As many speakers and dealers at the RV Dealers Association Convention/Expo in November stated, dealers are back to having to sell again, rather than the units selling themselves and flying off the lot. OEMs were still dealing with some supply chain headaches, and everyone was scrambling to hire reliable employees.

Despite these challenges, what filled me with positivity at the Con/Expo in Vegas was the buzz in the air – everyone seemed fueled by the success of the past two years and poised to use that to fuel growth – in innovation, in more advanced technology for business solutions, and in the RV lifestyle itself. They wanted to keep the first-time buyers who had recently become their customers in the RVing family, and continue to bring new people into the fold.

That feeling of growth and optimism was never more evident the week of Nov. 7-11 than at RV PRO's 40 Under 40 event. Watching the young professionals from every segment of the industry collect their awards amid the cheers and applause of their peers, I got the feeling that the future of this industry is going to be more than just alright – it's going to be bright. Turn to pg. 24 to meet the 40 Under 40 class of 2022. And a synopsis of our celebration with 27 of the honorees in Vegas is on pg. 50.

I wish you and your family happy holidays, and I look forward to all that 2023 has to offer. Cheers!

As always, thanks for reading!

Jennifer King



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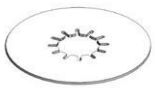
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Andrew Mock Is New Sr. VP of RV Sales for Lippert


Andrew Mock

LCI Industries, parent company of Lippert, announced that Andrew Mock has been promoted to senior vice president of RV sales, taking over for Andy Murray, chief sales officer, who has decided to leave the company to pursue more time with family and focus on missions work beginning Jan. 1.

Murray has served in many roles at Lippert since joining the company nearly 20 years ago. During his tenure, he created one of the most respected and highest performing sales teams in the industry, his company said, with Lippert's current annual North American RV and marine sales reaching more than $3.6 billion. In addition to his professional accomplishments, Murray's commitment to leadership and the community are equally impressive.

"I have known Andy as a colleague, friend, and trusted advisor for almost 20 years and the impact he has had on our teams, customers, and community is very meaningful," said Jason Lippert, CEO. "Although I am really sad to see him go, I couldn't ask him to stay knowing his strong calling to pursue such an admirable path. Andy will always be a significant part of the Lippert family and we wish him well in all of his future endeavors."

In his new role as senior vice president of RV Sales, Mock will be responsible for executing Lippert's overall RV sales strategy and will be the primary point of contact for all RV customers while running point on RV sales strategy. Mock has been with the company for almost 10 years and has accomplished much early in his career, the company said. He has built strong trusting relationships with the company's key customers over the last decade. He has also demonstrated his talent for innovation, as he has been instrumental in bringing many new products to market for Lippert over the years. Ryan Smith, group president of North America, will oversee Lippert's marine sales team and Andrew Pocock, senior vice president of Building and Transportation Products, will oversee the utility trailer market sales team in addition to his other markets.

Commenting on the sales team moves, "Our entire sales team's leadership has been the foundation for the exponential sales growth the company has seen in recent years," Lippert said. "They take very seriously their responsibility to take care of our customers' needs and to ensure they have the best possible experience. Our teams are resolved to be the best in the business and will continue to provide a high level of customer service just as we always have done. Under Andrew Mock's guidance, we are confident that the sales function will remain healthy and we look forward to continued growth in the years to come."

RVDA Names Top-Rated RV Makers/Brands in Dealer Satisfaction Index Survey

The RV Dealers Association is honoring 19 RV manufacturers/brands with Quality Circle Awards for achieving the highest scores in the association's 28th Annual Dealer Satisfaction Index (DSI) survey. These brands/manufacturers received at least 15 dealer responses and scored 4.25 or above on a 5-point scale in overall dealer satisfaction in the association's survey, which was conducted June through September.

The towable RV manufacturers/brands receiving awards are (in alphabetical order by manufacturer): Airstream; Alliance RV (Avenue, Paradigm, Valor); DRV (Mobile Suites, Full House); Dutchmen (Aspen Trail, Kodiak); East to West (Alta); Forest River (Flagstaff travel trailers, fifth wheels, and Shamrock expandables, Rockwood travel trailers, fifth wheels and Roo expandables, Sandpiper, Sierra, Cedar Creek, Riverstone); Grand Design RV (Imagine, Momentum, Reflection, Solitude, Transcend); Gulf Stream Coach (Vintage Cruiser, Vista Cruiser); Jayco; Keystone RV (Cougar, Montana, High Country, Raptor, Carbon); KZ RV (Durango, Durango Gold, Venom, V-Series); Starcraft, and Venture RV (SportTrek, Sonic, Status).

The motorized RV manufacturers/product categories receiving awards are (in alphabetical order): Airstream; Dynamax; Entegra; Gulf Stream Coach; Jayco; Leisure Travel Vans/Triple E; Pleasure-Way; Newmar and Winnebago (Class A's, B's and C's).

When rating their brands/manufacturers, RVDA asks dealers to express, confidentially, their level of satisfaction on four core issues:

- Reliability/quality
- Parts
- Warranty
- Sales

"The DSI results recognize top-rated manufacturers in several important areas of dealer and customer support, which is more important than ever as the industry works to reduce Repair Event Cycle Time," said RVDA Chairman of the Board Mike Pearo of Hilltop Camper and RV in Fridley, Minnesota. "Thanks to all the dealers who responded to the survey and congratulations to the manufacturers who earned Quality Circle Awards this year."

RVDA received DSI responses from 539 dealership locations in the U.S. and Canada that included 2,648 brand ratings, an average of five per dealer. A summary of the DSI survey aggregate results will appear in the November issue of RV Executive Today.

RV Women's Alliance Offers Mentorship Program

Providing a forum for successful mentoring relationships has been part of the RV Women's Alliance strategic plan since its founding. After a successful pilot program in 2022, the alliance is officially launching a full mentorship program for 2023.

"We consistently hear from members that they want education and networking to help them thrive in this industry," said Jessica Rider, RV Women's Alliances managing director. "One of the best ways for women to both learn and network is through a mentorship program. We had a very successful pilot program this year and look forward to helping more women connect with mentors."

The alliance ran a six-month pilot program with five sets of mentors and mentees from all different sectors of the RV industry. These women met once per month to discuss goals that mentees had set for themselves. Mentors worked with mentees to help them strategize and achieve their goals.

After the success of the pilot program, the RV Women's Alliance is expanding the program to include five pairings of mentors and mentees every quarter in 2023 for a total of 20 partnerships for the year.

"It's the best! I love my mentor and our weekly calls. We decided to talk more frequently than required but I don't feel like there could be a better match for me," said pilot program participant Marissa Ulrich with Patrick Industries. "We talk nearly every week for 30 to 60 minutes. We have covered plenty of topics and this really couldn't have come at a better time for me. I'm transitioning team members and adding to my roles and responsibilities, so to have an outside voice to run things by has been a blessing. We are very similar in personality so clicked right away. I am so grateful for this opportunity and hope to be involved on the other side down the line."

"We have set up a couple goals and will

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continue to stay in contact every couple weeks," added Shasta RV General Manager Meg Grierson, who mentored another member of the program. "She calls on my plant so I asked her to stop in anytime and to call or text about anything that might come up if she is not sure how to handle it. As most of us know I think the hardest obstacle in this industry is navigating relationships with our male counterparts, subordinates, or customers and sometimes just talking it out with someone who has been there really helps."

Michael Terlep Announces Retirement From Coachmen RV

After 38 years of service to Coachmen, more than 14 of which have been under Forest River, Michael Terlep has announced his planned retirement at the end of this year. Terlep has been president of Coachmen RV for the last 27 years.

Terlep started with Coachmen in 1984 after graduating from Purdue University. His first position was sales coordinator. Throughout his career at the company, he held several managerial and leadership positions.

Terlep said his decision to retire was a difficult one, as the better part of his life has been Coachmen and Forest River. The many valued relationships Terlep formed over his long career are his highlights, he said.

"Co-workers of present and past, dealers, customers, suppliers, industry associates … so many really good people and cherished relationships," Terlep said.

"Over the last 27 years as president of Coachmen, we have certainly faced some challenges and opportunities," he added. "The greatest opportunity that we were ever presented was becoming part of Forest River. Under Forest River, Coachmen regained its status of respect as a worthy competitor and trusted business partner."

As president of Coachmen, Terlep oversaw all Coachmen, Viking and Shasta Divisions, as well as the Forest River Park Model Division.

The company said it intends to keep the Coachmen leadership strong, as a clear succession plan is in place with Bob Dumm assuming the role of president of Coachmen RV effective Jan. 1. Dumm currently serves as the general manager of Coachmen's laminated trailer divisions and has been part of the Coachmen leadership team since 2009.

"There is no doubt in my mind that Bob Dumm is the right individual to succeed me in my capacity," Terlep said. "In many regards, I believe that the change will be good for Coachmen and the overall company."

Terlep said he intends to travel with his wife of 34 years, Sheila, and spend more time with his growing family. He added, "I simply want to take the opportunity to truly focus on being a better husband, a better parent, a better grandparent, a better friend and a better Catholic. Walking away from something I love will not be easy, however walking toward something that I love even more will make it easier."

Auto Retailer Lithia & Driveway Acquires Airstream Dealerships

Lithia & Driveway, reported to be the second-highest volume automotive retailer in the country, took its first step into the RV world with the acquisition of Airstream Adventures, the largest Airstream dealer group in the nation. Airstream Adventures is headquartered in Portland, Oregon, with locations throughout the Pacific Northwest and Northern California.

The acquisition includes Ultimate Airstreams, their custom Airstream upfitter, as well as all six Airstream Adventures stores in Oregon, Washington, Idaho and California, and marks Lithia & Driveway's entrance into the luxury RV market. Ted Davis, founder of Airstream Adventures, and team will join Lithia & Driveway.

"We are delighted to welcome the Airstream Adventures stores and its founder, Ted Davis, to our growing Lithia & Driveway family," said Bryan DeBoer, Lithia & Driveway president and CEO. "Ted and his high performing team have done an exceptional job building the nation's largest exclusive dealer group. We are committed to becoming a steward of the iconic Airstream brand, ensuring that consumers will continue to create memories and adventures that last for generations."

Both companies have been around for decades and share a storied brand legacy, heritage and history in Oregon and the greater Pacific Northwest, with Airstream celebrating 90-plus years and Lithia's family-owned business of 75-plus years.

"Lithia & Driveway's expertise in the automotive retail environment as the nation's largest automotive retailer will provide Airstream Adventures access to the industry's best practices allowing us to earn guests for life," Davis said. "In addition to our shared core values, Lithia & Driveway, and Airstream Adventures, both being home-grown Oregon companies, make for perfect cultural synergies."

Performance Brokerage Services brokered the deal.

THOR and Harbinger Motors Partner to Move EVs Forward

THOR Industries announced that it has entered into a strategic partnership with Harbinger Motors, a best-in-class commercial electric vehicle (EV) company delivering proprietary, industry-leading EV technology targeted to the medium-duty chassis platforms utilized in the RV industry.

THOR said it is committed to enhancing the RV experience through a holistic, global eMobility innovation strategy, which it unveiled in early 2022. Creating a superior electrified experience requires a comprehensive electrified RV ecosystem that drives a best-in-class experience for THOR owners. Powered by its proprietary technology, Harbinger Motors is a recognized leader in the medium-duty motorized EV space with the talent, experience and demonstrated performance to help accelerate THOR's electrification of RVs, including larger RVs like Class A motorhomes.

"THOR is excited to partner with Harbinger Motors to enhance the electrified RV experience for our consumers. Identifying the right partners is key to our electrification strategy. Harbinger's proprietary technology and their focus on medium-duty solutions makes them a great partner for THOR. This partnership is about more than a best-in-class EV chassis, it's focused on developing an electrified RV ecosystem as we execute on THOR's defined eMobility strategy," said Todd Woelfer, THOR chief operating officer. "Harbinger is aligned with the THOR family of operating companies and our global innovation team to position us to help deliver the RV experience today's owners seek and tomorrow's RVers dream – from design and safety to comfort and technology."

Added John Harris, Harbinger's CEO: "We are extremely excited about the strategic partnership with THOR Industries. The combination of our proprietary solution and the global RV industry leader creates an exciting opportunity to offer a best-in-class electrified RV lineup.

"This partnership validates the uniqueness of our technology platform and how our EV Ecosystem view will benefit THOR's RV consumers. Harbinger and THOR share a passion for maximizing the electrified experience of RVers and our partnership will bring leading solutions to the market with both speed and scale." RVP

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Adventure vans are designed for highly active, adventurous consumers.

Outside the Hub: PURPOSE BUILT VANS

Get to know **two adventure van companies** that operate in Missouri and Alabama.

BY JASON R. SAKURAI

Adventure vans have become a ubiquitous part of overlanding – self-reliant travel to remote destinations where the journey is the goal. Using these off-highway capable vans as transport, trips to places not easily accessed or navigable are now possible.

The growth of adventure vans has gained momentum and there are now builders in nearly every state in the United States and most Canadian provinces. While Class B vans are targeted toward retirees, adventure vans are coveted by young families and active Gen Xers and millennials.

We talked with two leading adventure van builders, Vandoit and Storyteller Overland, to find out how dealers can become more knowledgeable about these vehicles and their legions of devotees.

How did you start your company, and when did you build your first van?

Brent Kline, CEO, Vandoit, Blue Springs, Missouri: Ours is a third generation business started in 1947 in Manly, Iowa, by my grandfather Woody Kline as Kline Automotive. He and my father, Fritz, were involved in manufacturing and distribution of RVs and the first tiny homes. Upon taking over the business in 2009, I shifted the focus to utility and multi-use conversions. In 2016, we put renewed emphasis on adventure vans that are multi-use, marine grade, versatile, functional off-grid and bulletproof. We accomplished all of that while utilizing a modular system to remain multi-use.

Jeffrey Hunter, founder, chairman and CEO, Storyteller Overland, Birmingham, Alabama: We launched Storyteller Overland in November 2018. As a company, we are celebrating our fourth year in business. We started with a small team of automotive and industrial designers, manufacturing specialists, community builders and outdoor lifestyle enthusiasts. Our goal was to create the highest quality, most innovative, turnkey adventure van solutions that simplified the buying process, exceeded expectations for quality and craftsmanship, streamlined accessibility for warranty and aftersales care, and elevated the overall ownership experience for our customers and community.

From inception until now, how many vans have you built and what improvements in the building process have you learned over time?

Kline: From 1947 to the present would be too difficult to count, but since 2009 when I took over, we have sold over 3,000 vans used for various utility purposes and at various conversion levels.

Hunter: To date, we have built over 1,300 MODE adventure vans. In the process we have been inspired by the individual stories and interconnected relationships that have evolved among MODE owners in a short period of time.

How do you go about marketing your company and its products? Do you go to events, use social media or advertising, rely on word of mouth or a combination of all of these?

Kline: Because of our long history in the automotive industry, and specifically the multi-use van business, and our reputation, stability and know-how, customers trust us. This made word of mouth our greatest marketing tool. We also spread that message via social media along with a handful of events per year such as Overland Expo West, Adventure Van Expo, or local bicycle races in which we participate.

Hunter: We are an outdoor and adventure lifestyle brand. We believe you have to be present and engaged in the community so you can better understand the values and share the experiences of your customers and community. So, we are passionate about getting out in the wild and spending time with our customers at meetups, expos, community events and trailheads. For us, it's not about the transaction, it's about the positive, long-term relationships and experiences we cultivate with our customers over time.

Are the Adventure Van Expo series the best events to attract new owners, or do you find there are others such as Overland Expo that bring in more interested prospects? Are there RV events locally or regionally that you have used?



A gathering around Storyteller Overland's display at an event in Hood River, Oregon.

Kline: We haven't found any event that stands above others from a marketing perspective. Because word of mouth concerning our brand is so strong, we've reduced the number of events we attend per year. Vanlife events in which we participate are tied to active, adventurous consumers.

Ford's Transit platform, on which we build exclusively, is made near our factory in Kansas City. As a Ford Qualified Vehicle Modifier (QVM), we often attend local or national events at their request.

Hunter: We love being active and engaged in the vanlife, overland, and adventure travel communities, so we take part in as many of these types of gatherings as we can.

The Recreational Vehicle Industry Association (RVIA) says it represents 98% of all RVs made in the U.S. Are you an RVIA member? If so, what are the advantages to being a member in the association?

Kline: We are an RVIA member and a certified RV manufacturer. This is a tough designation to obtain and maintain, especially in conjunction with Ford's QVM designation.

We believe the RVIA is of the utmost importance from a safety and quality perspective. If all the nuts and bolts are not installed with the proper torque, safety is jeopardized and this is just the start. Van modifiers are working with AC and DC electric, 12 V to 110 V, solar and lithium power, tying it together at multiple locations, all intended to work together while being subjected to severe vibrations while traveling on or off the highway.

The RVIA's standards program is the greatest member benefit and also a benefit to consumers because of safety and quality. The Standards Department maintains a full-time team of inspectors that monitors adherence to standards adopted by the board of directors for RV construction. The team conducts more than 2,000 unannounced inspections of member company RV manufacturing plants annually, walking assembly stations along the production line, spot checking RV units for compliance with over 500 safety-related requirements and talking to line employees. At Vandoit, we recognize Ford's investment into quality, engineering and safety. We choose not to compromise their engineering, but rather to complement it through QVM and RVIA certification.

Hunter: We see tremendous value in being an active RVIA member. RVIA standards are a direct benefit to the industry and the customers that they ultimately serve. We are excited to see conversations around forward-thinking innovation, higher standards of quality, and elevated expectations for consumer experiences being prioritized

by the RVIA and member companies.

Adventure vans that you build differ from what most Class B manufacturers assemble. Why do you think they are unable to provide a more customized product?

Kline: Because it's unorthodox and expensive to produce a high-quality, versatile and bulletproof van that changes based on customer needs. In fairness to Class B RV-makers, they can't be all things to all people, and neither can an adventure van company. Some customers want wood cabinets and items which impart the look and feel of home. Our customers are highly active in many different types of activities and it's mostly about the functionality and versatility.

Hunter: Our design language and build logic incorporate the types of premium quality, custom-crafted materials that people desire from bespoke builders and custom upfitters, while still adhering to best practices of higher volume manufacturing. This yields higher quality vehicles with greater standardization and consistency, which ultimately provides improved experiences and simplified serviceability for our customers.

RV dealers are more apt to sell Class B vans from established manufacturers. Will this change over time, or do you already have RV dealers that sell your vans? What do you think prompts them to sell adventure vans, versus units from manufacturers that may not be adventure ready?

Kline: The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) is a partner with RVIA from a safety, quality and certification perspective. New car dealers and RV dealers have too much to lose and will only distribute vans with RVIA, NHTSA and QVM designations. Many are reluctant to sell vans converted without them for potential quality and liability reasons. Likewise, we are particular about which dealers we would allow to sell our vans. We have been asked by hundreds of dealers who want to sell our products and have tried a few, but had to cancel the relationship with most dealers due to staffing, procedures and quality practices which don't live up to our expectations. We are always open to working with any dealer who won't compromise our best practices.

Dealers want to sell our vans because of the quality and safety designations along with our stability and reputation. Because of their marine-grade modularity and versatility, functionality and adventure readiness, our vans are prepared for any adventure any time, even if it's the family going to a weekend soccer tournament.

Hunter: As large as it is, and as many people as it serves, on many levels the RV industry was built on lowered expectations for far too long. But as new customers come in with assumptions for an automotive-level product, purchasing and ownership experience, the industry will be forced to innovate and improve on every level. From design to engineering, form to function, feature sets, pricing, value, serviceability and more, this is healthy. We've found dealers that want to be able to provide customers with innovative products that help to create exceptional ownership experiences and are backed by passionate, fully engaged companies who stand behind their products and brand. We are striving to constantly inspire confidence and deliver value, and we feel that like-minded companies who share this approach will thrive in the season of change sweeping across our industry. RVP

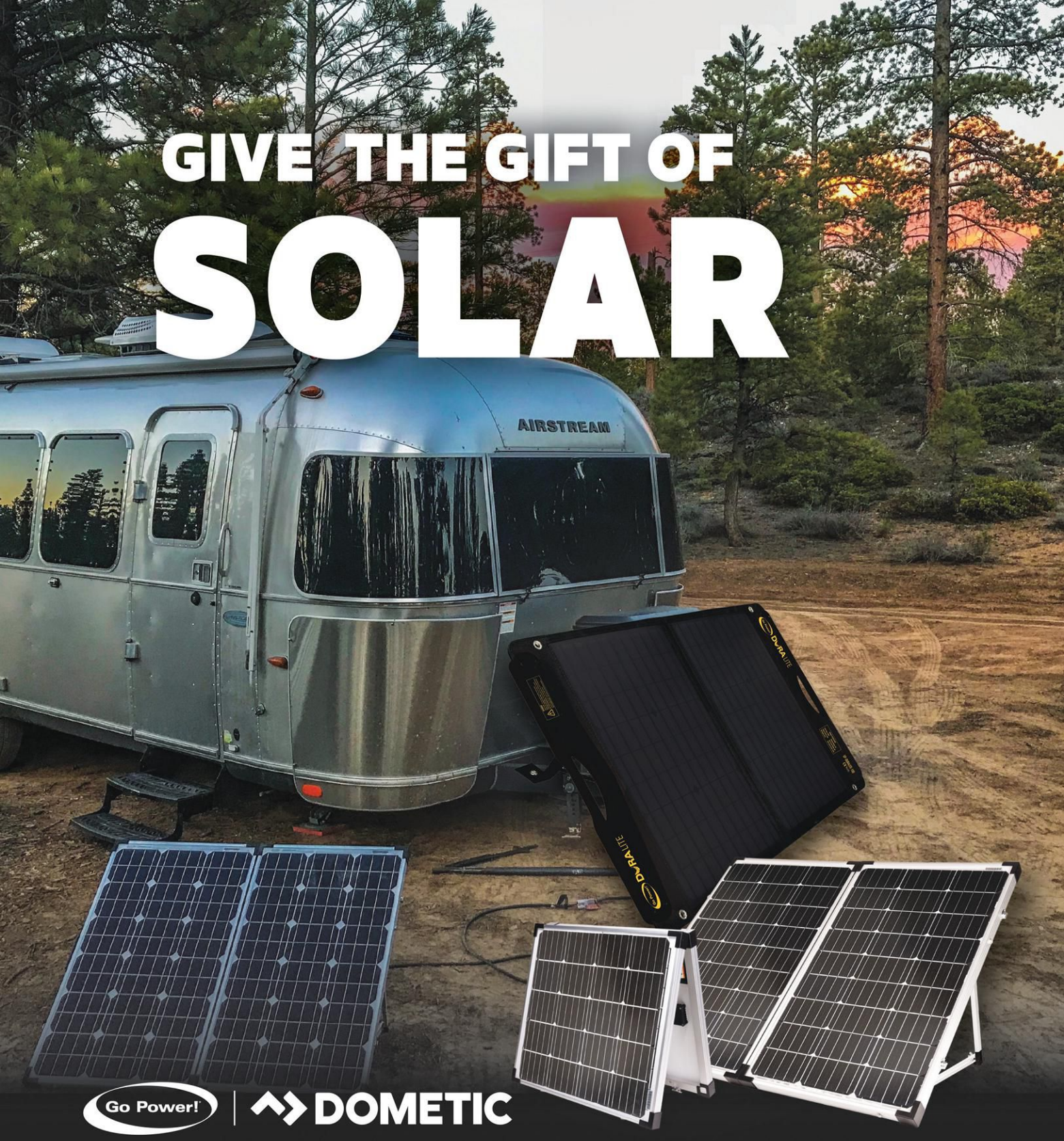
Appealing to Women & Younger Generations

Susan Carpenter, president of the RV Women's Alliance and past-president of the RV Aftermarket Association, noted, "Adventure vans are a hot trend right now and the market has skyrocketed. The younger generation wants to experience the outdoors, but not like their parents. They want adventures of their own, and to get away to places not everyone can go.

"A big uptick in the market has been women going RVing by themselves. This sense of freedom combined with the security of Class B vans is perfect."

As for the aftermarket, noted Carpenter, "In the past, we created products for traditional RVs. With adventure vans trending and off-roading gaining momentum, the challenge is to find items that the next generation of RVers wants. Solar is huge for going off-grid and working remotely. Lack of campgrounds is driving the need to bring your electronics along, and we need to be in sync with technology. Keep your eye on adventure vans because even though the market is relatively small, they're gaining momentum and with that you'll discover new products you can sell."





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Sweep It Away!

A simple, yet effective, design helps RV owners tackle dirt and grime.

BY JENNIFER KING

The likelihood that any RV owner wants to think about cleaning while enjoying their vacation or getting away to spend time outdoors is probably close to nil. Nevertheless, just like residential homes, our homes on wheels need to be cleaned now and then. Thankfully there are some innovative solutions to help accomplish this with minimal effort.

Sweepovac is one such company that helps RV owners stay tidy on the road. The company's KickVac and BIG Kick can be tucked away under cabinets and suck away anything swept to it. Both products have attachments so users can clean carpets or upholstery and hard-to-reach spots. RV PRO spoke with owner Henry Fingleton of Ireland about his company and his cleaning solutions.

Tell us about your company: How did it get started and where are you located?

Fingleton: In 2010, I got the idea for a space-saving vacuum that could combine a kick pan and a plug-in vacuum in a single unit. All our competitors depend on installing a



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kick pan, then installing a separate vacuum unit and then plumbing and wiring these together. We spent three years developing the product and getting our patent so that we eventually launched in 2014. We are located in Ireland in a beautiful rural area in County Laois about an hour west of Dublin. The motivation for the BIG Kick really was that almost everyone uses a vacuum to clean their RV. Regardless of whether they have carpet floors or hard floors, they still need to vacuum. It could be cleaning out drawers, the cab floor, behind the sofa when a box of cereal gets spilled, etc. We wanted to make that cleaning job easy.

How long have you been working with the RV industry, and what other industries are you aligned with?

Fingleton: We have been supplying the RV industry in the U.S. for about five years with our regular KickVac, however the BIG Kick is a big step forward. It really is a full vacuum solution. In Europe we started supplying the RV market two years ago but already we have some big brand names, like Rapido and Benimar, who are installing us as a standard item.

Tell me about how Sweepovac's products work?

Fingleton: It's very simple, really. You just sweep your floor toward the Sweepovac, kick the big 'on button' and it sucks in the dirt. To use it as a regular vacuum to clean sofas, carpet floors or groom your dog, just plug the hose into the same opening and away you go. It's about simplicity, one machine, one simple install, two functions. Our hoses are really easy to handle. On our BIG Kick for instance, the hose starts at 10 feet but stretches out to 33 feet. The other nice feature is that we supply three easy-to-empty reusable bags. This is effectively a lifetime supply so the customer never needs to buy bags again.

How is it installed?

Fingleton: It's very easy. Every machine comes with a template to mark the cut out. Then it just slots home, is screwed into place and plugged into a regular outlet. It can be done in 15 minutes, and if the hole is precut on a production line, it's a 5-minute install.



How is it maintained?

Fingleton: There's practically no maintenance. Just empty the bag when it's full. After three years, you can wash the HEPA filter if it has gotten dirty.

What is the difference and what are the benefits of the KickVac and the BIG Kick?

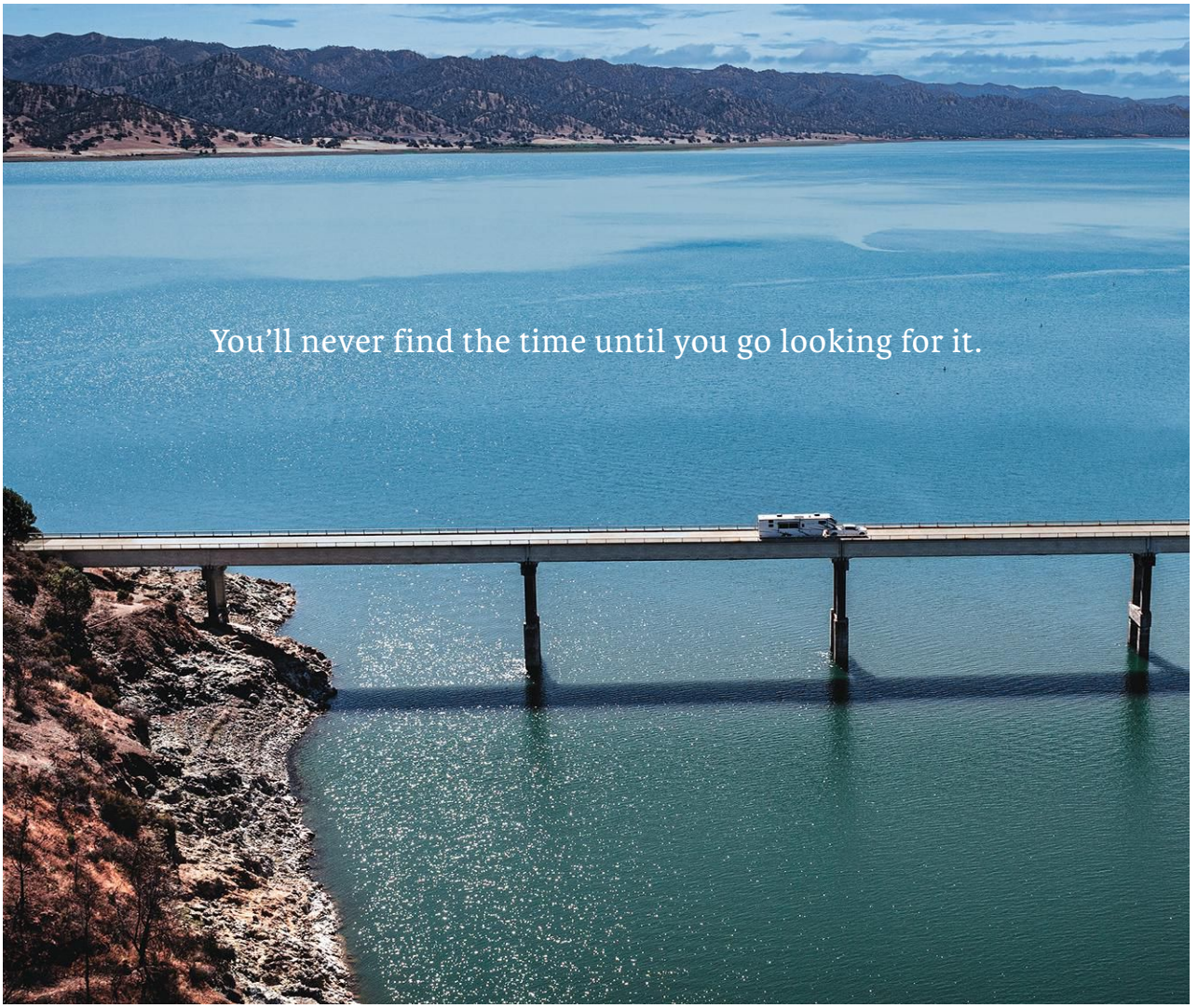
Fingleton: The BIG Kick is the natural choice for any RV. It offers huge suction power (23 KPA) and the hose stretches from 10 feet to 33 feet. It also comes with a good range of tools including a pet groomer and a storage bag that can be hung up containing the hose and all the parts. The regular KickVac is good choice for smaller motorhomes. It's very compact and fits under a 4-inch plinth.

Are you partnered with any RV manufacturers, or is the product available as an aftermarket product?

Fingleton: Yes to both; Forest River installs our regular KickVac in some of their models. We have just brought the BIG Kick to market now, so it's only available for the first time in the U.S. now. It works well as an aftermarket product also, but the ideal scenario is to fit it during the manufacturing process.

How are you distributed in the U.S. and/or who do you work with in the U.S.?

Fingleton: We distribute throughout the U.S. Our partners Tjernlund are a fifth-generation distributor out of Minneapolis. They can supply in any quantity and have competitive trade pricing. RVP









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THE CLASS OF 2022

AS A RED-HOT RV INDUSTRY COMES TO A SIMMER, FINDING PROFESSIONALS WITH GRIT, TALENT AND ADAPTABILITY IS ESSENTIAL. ARGUABLY MORE IMPORTANT, THOUGH, ARE THE INDIVIDUALS WHO STRIVE TO ESTABLISH TEAMWORK, LEAD INCLUSIVE DISCUSSIONS AND TAKE CARE OF THEIR PEOPLE AND COMMUNITIES. THESE QUALITIES ARE SEWN INTO THE FABRIC OF THIS YEAR'S 40 UNDER 40 RECOGNITION – RV PRO'S THIRD ANNUAL OPPORTUNITY TO SPOTLIGHT EMERGING LEADERS ACROSS ALL RV MARKET SEGMENTS.



ALEX RENARD

Four Seasons

General Manager of Sales/CEO/CFO/Managing Partner

With company: 4 years

Renard has a finance background that gave him a unique perspective when he moved into an ownership role at Four Seasons Sales. He is driving the big-picture direction of the dealership group, named Canada's "Fastest Growing RV Dealer," and also actively present on the sales floor working directly with customers. He leads by example and has helped develop "incredible" sales managers that utilize their talents and improve the sales experience. Renard is a fierce competitor and never stops working at a problem, his nominator says. The dealership has expanded its network by acquiring three new locations, increasing its overall sales while remaining committed to its one-of-a-kind mobile road service fleet. Renard says the most important thing in business is hiring the right people and treating them well. Four Seasons looks after its customers better than anybody, he says. Outside of work, Renard's nominator notes he is a red wine aficionado.

ALEXIS SKAGGS

Skaggs RV Outlet

Sales and Marketing Manager

With company: 27 years



Growing up in the family dealership has given Skaggs unique opportunities, including starting and running its horse and livestock trailer sales division – when she earned the prestigious FFA State Star in Agribusiness. Skaggs started "legally" working in the dealership in high school as a receptionist, then went to college and returned as finance manager. In 2020, she transitioned into sales and marketing manager, where she has consistently grown per copy revenue and created partnerships with key brands. Her master's certificates in organizational leadership and sustainable business, among other degrees, taught Skaggs the importance of cultivating and maintaining communicative partnerships and teams. Working alongside her father, NeVelle, in the dealership and on the family cow-calf operation taught her the value of hard work as a sixth-generation cattlewoman, and that "there's a time to be a lady and a time to get the job done." Skaggs is a member of the RV Women's Alliance with two fur children, Wynn and Sadie Jo.



ANDREW HODGSON

Timbren Industries

Sales and Marketing Director

With company: 13 years

Hodgson has worked at Timbren for 13 years and, since joining the company, he has always looked for opportunities to expand Timbren's product lines by talking with customers to see what's working and what's not. He takes that feedback and pushes Timbren and its people to make the best suspension products available that make vehicles and trailers safer and perform better, all while putting the customer at the front of all conversations. Hodgson's grandfather, Arnold Heron, founded Timbren more than 56 years ago because of his love for people and putting good products in their hands. That legacy lives on. Hodgson is following in his grandfather's footsteps and continues to create a culture of putting customers first. Andrew's passion for the organization his grandfather started is remarkable and, just like his grandfather, he is involved in all aspects of the still family-owned business. He has that same entrepreneurial spirit his grandfather had, which pushes him to find new markets, new product opportunities and to continue to treat customers like they're part of the family.

ANDREW MOCK

Lippert

Senior Vice President of Sales

With company: 8 years



Mock was born and raised in Syracuse, Indiana, and for years has been a respected leader at Lippert. He oversaw all sales for Furrion when it was bought by the supplier – one of the more challenging of Lippert's 90-plus acquisitions, Mock's nominator says. Through his leadership, the company has grown its furniture and Furrion businesses significantly. A true "product junkie," Mock has innovated numerous product launches in electronics, furniture and appliances. Customers trust him, Mock's nominator says, and will often have him walk through new floorplans for feedback before a launch. He has a positive attitude, high integrity and cares about his teammates, with no denial for being passionate about winning, his nominator says. He embodies the company's core values and is a true team player, serving as an example for team members. Outside of a "relentless hustle" at Lippert, Mock spends the most time with his wife, Johanna, and two daughters, Leighton and Harper. The family loves to take camping trips in their motorhome and enjoying life at the lake.



CAITLYN RUPNOW

United States Warranty Corporation (USWC)

Executive Assistant, Cancellation Dept.

With company: 5 years

Rupnow has excelled at her customer-facing role, showcasing USWC's value proposition to dealership owners and F&I management personnel. She represents the future generation with her work ethic, out-of-box thinking and being open to possibilities, USWC says. Rupnow finds that "win-win" for both parties and always has a sunny disposition, regardless of environment or outlying factors. She is trusted with sensitive matters, evidenced by promotions and her work on highly confidential projects. As part of the sales team, she developed the pilot "Success Club" – an incentive campaign to increase dealer sales across the country – and signed several dealers in her territory. Internal events are spearheaded by Rupnow, USWC says. She started in the industry as a receptionist, when leadership saw her business acumen and quickly promoted her to business development/sales. As USWC grew, she stepped into a larger, more diverse administrative role that includes oversight of the cancellation department.



CHRISTOPHER LISEO

National Indoor RV Centers (NIRVC)

General Sales Manager

With company: 17 years

Liseo is a lead-by-example manager, his nominator says, who implemented Salesforce and Cloudcall at his dealership and continues to improve the tools for obtaining 100% utilization across locations. Training his team to set expectations when it comes to inventory, order and price wait times, what ownership entails, and more are at the forefront for Liseo. He has a strong background in F&I and has been promoted multiple times within sales, eventually landing in the RV industry in his current role as general sales manager. He left the Florida market and headed to Georgia to build out the retail side of NIRVC, where it flourished and has seen tremendous YOY growth in Atlanta, which is the company's smallest market dealership. Liseo's nominator says he's a big fan of Simon Sinek books and capitalizing on "why" in relation to business and personal life.



CHRISTY PAUL

Micro-Air

Finance Administrator

With company: 3 years

Paul personifies hard work and commitment to the goals of the organization and helps uphold morale, her company says. She is a leader in all things finance and her role ranges from e-commerce to dealer relations, and from inventory to purchasing. Micro-Air's customers rely on Paul as their chief contact person for dealer purchases or as the point of contact for retail customers seeking satisfaction of their individual needs. In 2021, when the company was acquired, Paul spearheaded the changeover to an entirely new system needed for bookkeeping, accounting, inventory and purchasing, making it a seamless and smooth transition. Paul was promoted to finance administrator from her previous role supporting the purchasing director, and in doing so went from being an assistant to having her own assistant. Her coworkers also cite their admiration for her ability to put in such an excellent performance at work while handling all the responsibilities of being a single mom.



COLE PHILLIPS

Winnebago Industries

Plant Manager – Stichcraft Softgoods

With company: 12 years

Phillips is always ready to take on new tasks and successfully leads a highly engaged production team for Winnebago's Stichcraft furniture brand, his nominator says. His leadership helps the manufacturer meet the high-quality expectations of today's RV owner. Phillips never rejects an idea outright and he listens carefully to suggestions, his nominator says. He is respectful of his teammates and leads an inclusive facility. Many times, when faced with supplier outages, the company has leaned on Phillips and his team to design and produce alternate components, helping avoid shutdowns and deliver quality products. Stichcraft furniture is near the top of Winnebago's owner satisfaction surveys for all motorhomes where it's used, his nominator said. He is a dedicated father and active member in his community service organizations.



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DARLENE BORKHOLDER

Newmar Corp.

Purchasing Process Manager

With company: 8 years

Borkholder was hired as a purchasing administrator and was promoted to her current role, where she is considered a subject matter expert at Newmar. She is a systematic thinker who finds unique solutions for supply chain operations, and is always looking to develop tools for her team that aim to minimize workload and obsolescence, while maximizing on-time material deliveries. In addition to creating numerous business processes, Borkholder has continued to enhance and develop systems that boost Newmar's customized product, including purchasing in singular quantities that are discrete to its units and within the necessary lead times. Borkholder is a "legacy RV employee," her nominator says, whose father is a long-time Newmar staffer. She considers the industry a lifetime endeavor. Along with her supply chain role, she is the company's lead for Winnebago's Women's Inclusion Network, which focuses on creating diverse opportunities for women to grow in the RV workplace.



DONNA SCHMUCKER

GEN-Y Hitch

Marketing Director

With company: ~4 years

Schmucker has accelerated GEN-Y's growth in numerous ways, her company says, most notably by spreading its digital footprint across myriad channels. She is the face of the GEN-Y office, who plans and strategizes frequently with the organization's key leadership and team on everything from marketing spend to ad channels and company event planning. Hired straight out of college with a marketing degree, Schmucker has been a leader through a massive company expansion, including plans to finish a new building in 2023. GEN-Y Group's sales have increased more than 500% since her hire date, the company says, and the team has grown more than 300%. Schmucker was born and raised in Elkhart County, Indiana, and was even a high school student to GEN-Y Group's operations manager and 40 Under 40 nominator, Adam Yoder, who considers Schmucker a role model for young women "making their mark" in the RV industry.

DUSTIN BRETZ

Bretz RV

Owner/Director of Operations

With company: "Lifetime"

From developing training for RV techs, service and parts personnel, to adopting RECT as a focus for service teams, Bretz is a role model for his employees and other dealers, says his nominator. He is solely responsible for being the first RV retailer to partner with Lippert and develop an in-house institute to train technicians and other service-related employees. Bretz spearheaded construction of a 5,000-square-foot, "first of its kind" technical training facility and is the chairman of a top dealer 20 Group where he helps dealers shape policies and procedures to better serve their customers. Bretz initiated solutions for personnel challenges and labor shortages, which keep the service facility open seven days a week. He was also one of the first to centralize key operations positions to service multiple locations in the event of an employee loss. Bretz' leadership and ability to find big picture solutions has been instrumental to not only of the success of Bretz RV, but also in helping thousands of families get out camping quickly, safely and with a functional product, his nominator says.





GERTJAN MEIJER

VB-Airsuspension North America
President

With company: 9 years

Meijer has been in the RV industry for 12 years and has helped bring new, inventive air suspension systems to the U.S. While his company's headquarters is based in The Netherlands, sparking technological innovations in the North American market is at the forefront for Meijer, who established the segment and its dealer network. His knowledge-based leadership serves as an example, his nominator says. He treats customers fairly and with respect, and has contributed to "very low" employee turnover by exhibiting dignity and empathy to staff, Meijer's nominator says. He is skilled at convincing customers to invest in innovative products and even amid challenges, such as language barriers and differences in European time, distance, sales and logistics, Meijer set up his segment's dealer network and created a training/certification program. He is great communicator and motivator, his nominator says, is highly respected in the air suspension community and has driven sales in the marketplace. Since the company started in 2014, it now has $5.8 million in projected sales for 2022.



JACKIE TITUS

International RV
General Manager

With company: 10+ years

For Titus, the RV business is in her blood. Her father, who nominated her, says she's been coming to the office at International RV since she was three days old. Now, as a general manager at 29, she has helped take the business from $4 million in sales to more than $7 million. Titus has always been a natural leader and a believer in the industry, her father says. She has been involved in the business her entire life, with several of the dealership's employees and customers knowing her since she was a small child. Titus is known for having insight into what young RV buyers are looking for t, and she uses that knowledge to create satisfied customers. Titus is an avid camper who loves taking her daughter on trips. The duo has a goal of traveling to all 50 states on camping trips before Titus' daughter graduates from high school.



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IAN ISLEY

Affinity RV

Director of Parts and Service / General Manager in-training

With company: 20 years

Isley has worked in every department of Affinity RV, including as manager of its collision, service and parts departments at all locations. He has certifications from every RV-related component manufacturer and has been recognized in capacities with national industry associations, such as helping update the RV Dealers Association's Collision Estimator every year and working with the RV Technical Institute to develop service school curriculum. Isley helped open two dealership locations and maneuver the company through challenges during 2008-09, keeping staff morale and culture at its highest, Affinity says. He led outreach to provide RVs for first responders and hospitals during the pandemic and has contributed to Affinity RV's top dealership recognitions by Winnebago and more. Isley started with the dealership as a young boy from a family of RV professionals, helping his father in the collision department, and has since been promoted to the company's highest management role. After high school, he started full-time in the service department as a collision estimator, then service manager and several other titles before his current role. Isley is training to be general manager of all Affinity RV stores.

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JACOB SIMMONS

Pace International

Business Solutions Manager

With company: 6 years

Simmons has been instrumental to the success of Pace International the past few years, taking on additional roles, maintaining business momentum and helping grow the company even amid staff shortages. He was promoted to his current position to oversee Pace's RV retail/distribution in 2017 and has helped grow the segment 30% YOY each year since, including new product line launches, such as the award-winning TravlFi Journey1 hotspot that he helped develop. Simmons is "irreplaceable" and a reliable source for his peers, his nominator says. He is passionate about his fieldwork experience across all market segments, is always watching industry trends and listening to customers for additional opportunities to serve the market. Simmons helped maintain collaboration and employee morale when the organization shifted to a fully remote staff, and he is always one of the first to sign up for volunteer work, committees and special projects. Willing to step out of his role to help when needed, Simmons' direction has helped grow Pace's footprint by more than 900%, his nominator says. His outstanding character, professionalism and straightforward approach is how many of the company's customers recognize Simmons.





JASON SEELER

Diamond Shield

National Service Manager

With company: 6 years

Even during challenging times, Seeler is a calm presence on his team, says his nominator. As a national service manager, Seeler not only takes care of his customers, but also helps mentor other employees. His positive attitude and personal core values make him a great leader and an important part of the team, the company says. Seeler is patient and has great emotional intelligence, lives his values and leads by example. During his time at Diamond Shield, Seeler has tripled the growth of its customer service team and grown the retail segment by 30%, the company says. He ascended quickly at the company from customer service representative to customer service manager and now national service manager. He stayed focused on the company's long-term goals and did not let "all the outside noise" distract him. He has been an excellent example to his team and has helped many others stay collected during uncertain and overwhelming times.



JENNIFER JOHNSON

Wildwood RV Village

Operations Manager

With company: 5 years

In her multiple nominations by colleagues, Johnson was characterized by her leadership, compassion, positive attitude and team player mindset. Outside of her role leading a team to promote campgrounds and daily dealership business, she works for the Florida RV Parks and Campground Association and was recently voted in as Region 7 secretary for the Florida RV Trade Association (FRVTA). Johnson is "the most positive person in the RV industry," her nominator says, who has been in the segment for 15 years and is always building a stronger business by providing exceptional customer service. She helped bring Camping World and Dometic together and assisted her colleague in moving Camping World's mobile service forward with "advice and excitement." Full-time rentals at Wildwood RV Village have increased 15% YOY with Johnson, her nominator says, who works in the office and outside with tenants. She promotes her company through social media initiatives, as well as the industry and RV lifestyle itself. Johnson is credited for an exceptional work ethic and being a problem-solver who always finds a solution.

JENNIFER SOLOMON

GE Appliances, a Haier company (GEA)

Senior Marketing Manager of Recreational Living

With company: less than 2 years

Solomon has been instrumental to her company's overall go-to marketing strategy and ongoing efforts in the RV industry, GEA says. She worked with sales leaders to successfully advocate for the company's investment in RVs, established a dedicated Recreational Living team at GEA, and developed the segment's marketing strategy, brand guidelines and cross-product initiatives. Solomon has become a key "face" for GEA and an RV industry expert who helps educate her colleagues. She brings her authentic self to work every day, the company says, and has helped drive significant sales and share growth since she joined the team. Solomon originally tackled RV strategy for GEA in 2020 while participating in its Experienced Commercial Development Program and was promoted to senior marketing manager of Recreational Living in April 2021. Her positive attitude, enthusiasm, desire to build relationships within the industry and continuously learn is worth noting, GEA says.





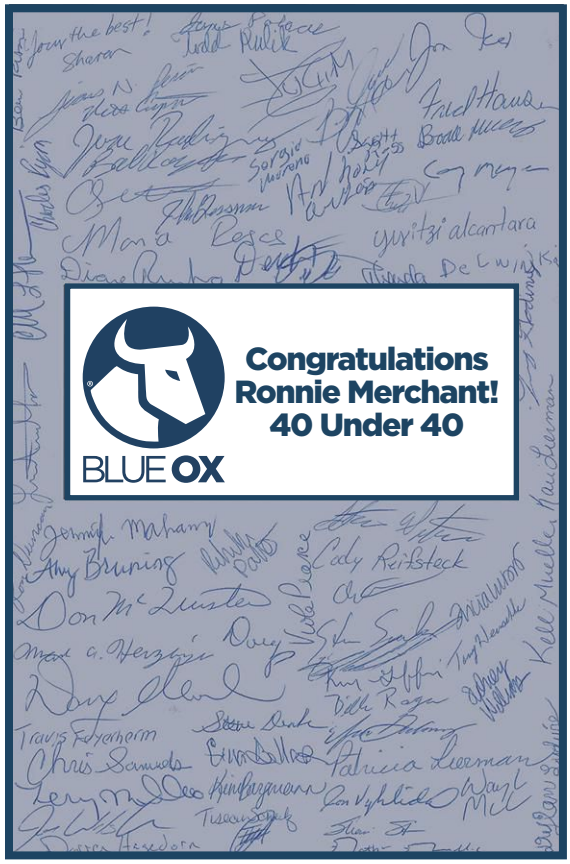
JESSE VALDEZ

Mericle RV

Service Manager

With company: 6 years

Valdez was Mericle RV's first hired employee when it opened in 2017 and he has been with the dealership since – along with being an avid RVer his entire adult life. He is motivated to problem-solve, with a passion and knowledge that helped him build a successful service department. From RV tech to shop foreman and now service manager, Valdez is eager to learn the business and climb the ranks to general manager, his nominator says. His organic growth and accomplishments have had an impact on the overall dealership. He implemented multiple processes to streamline and grow Mericle RV's service department, including addressing part sourcing during shortages, educating new RV owners and balancing service work with increased sales. Valdez's department has increased from one (himself) to 11 team members, with a 95% employee retention rate over two years. His efforts have increased metrics in all areas, and he is driven to motivate and mentor his team to excellence. Valdez prioritizes continued education and has a bright future at Mericle RV, his nominator says. He lives and breathes all things RV and the outdoors.







JOE HAUGEN

Haugen RV Group

Director of Inventory

With company: 2 years

Haugen leads Haugen RV Group's inventory with more than $100 million in sales. He created his own team and, in his nominator's eyes, has "one of the best inventory processes in the industry." He is respected and data-driven, while considering input from the company's general managers. Haugen comes to work every day and hustles to ensure he serves everyone in the business, even with inventory being among the hardest departments to maneuver in the last few years. He created a software system to manage the segment, and because of such, the dealership has "almost no aging inventory" – which speaks for itself, Haugen's nominator says. Before him, the company had no process in place for ordering. Haugen is one of the hardest workers on the job and usually "behind the scenes," says his nominator, who is Haugen's twin and former 40 Under 40 honoree. The company respects his views as he "leads the way" for the dealership's future growth.



JOE LAZZARINO

Explore USA / Aloha RV

General Manager

With company: 10 years

Lazzarino started as a salesman at Lazy Days, working as a manufacturer rep for Vanleigh RV, Tiffin and Redwood. He then opened several Explore USA dealerships across Texas as a general/market manager, eventually leading its Boerne location to a $65 million operation. He often is at the office before anyone else, always with a positive attitude and "unmatchable" energy, his nominator says. Lazzarino is enthusiastic and always demonstrates true dedication, serving as an example of a professional, leader and teammate across the company, paired with an extensive knowledge of product, F&I and "how a stellar team should run." He is always available to help, grow and teach, his nominator says, and there is not a moment when his team doesn't feel adequately led and encouraged. Lazzarino is heavily involved in RVR Universities and training across the company. After being a product manager and rep on the manufacturing side for THOR Industries brands, he joined the retail segment and was promoted from sales manager to general and market manager. Explore USA's Boerne team success is a direct reflection of Lazzarino's industry passion, his nominator says.



JONATHAN ELLIS

Truma

OEM Account Manager

With company: 6 years

When it comes to communicating the quality of Truma's products, Ellis is a master, his nominator says. He started working at Truma in 2015 and is known for delivering creative issues to any problems, showing his coworkers and customers that anything is possible. The company says Ellis has successfully shown industry leaders, managers, engineers, sales teams and production line workers that high-quality, efficient and reliable systems are in high demand in the RV industry. He shows all Truma partners by example and often supports through product training, gets his hands dirty with product installs and supports with the transfer of information throughout the organizations he works with. Ellis, who has been in the industry for 10 years, is also respected for not being afraid to ask hard questions and getting to the root of the issue, and then helping to provide specific and tailored solutions internally and externally.



JUAN TEJEDA

PPL Motor Homes

CEO

With company: 11 years

No matter what's on his plate, PPL says Tejeda has a hand in all business aspects from everyday activities, marketing initiatives and cultivating talent, to engaging with PPL customers and staff as "boots on the ground." He starts every workday off with an employee huddle to share inspiring words and is known to stop by the dealership to grill burgers for the team, PPL says. One of his favorite sayings is "control the controllable" – to seek solutions instead of dwelling on problems. Under Tejeda's leadership, PPL added 14 lenders to its portfolio, increased gross profit by 78.3% and revenue by 68.7% since June 2022 compared to last year, and helped PPL open its first location outside of Texas. Tejeda has received 36 awards since joining the RV industry, including Winnebago's Circle of Excellence Award, among others. He is a family man, PPL says, traveling across the country to visit dealership locations each week while making time for his wife, Monica, and two daughters, Ava and Ella.

Congratulations

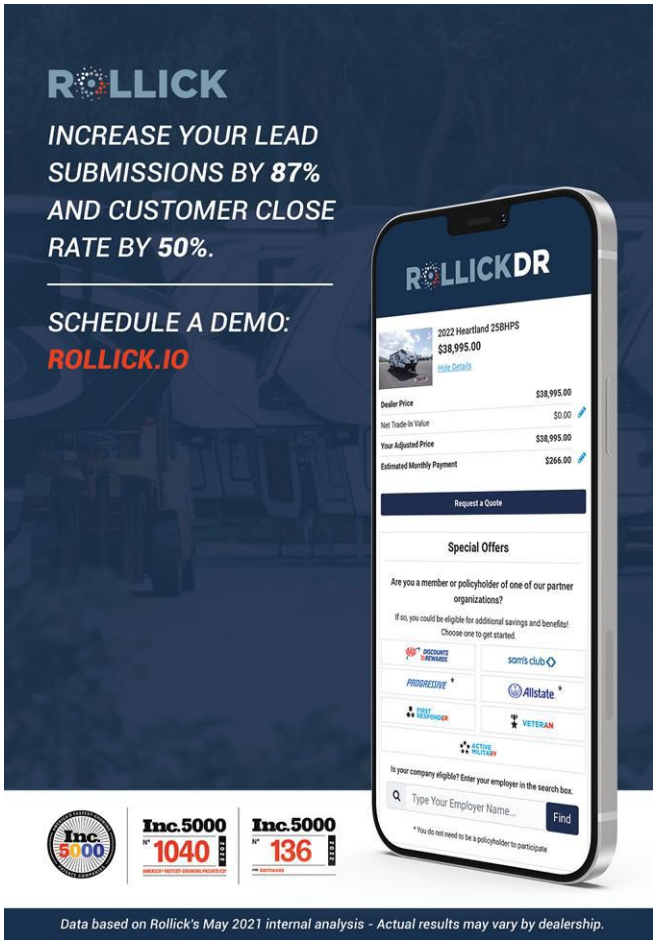
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Truma is proud of our own recipient,
Jonathan Ellis, OEM Account Manager.



Thank you Jonathan for making the RV industry, Simply Better!

truma



KESHIA HARRIS

Youngbloods RV & Outdoor

Warranty and Service Administrator

With company: 8 years



Harris started in the RV industry as a service writer and has worked every job in parts and service for Youngbloods RV & Outdoor. Along with assisting the dealership's front office, her nominator says she always has a positive attitude, takes time to connect with her coworkers, establishes teamwork and educates her colleagues on the industry. The growing dealership has added 10-plus employees to its parts and service department in the past two years. Outside of Youngbloods, Harris runs her own handcrafted jewelry and home accessories business called Lavender Lily Company, which she started while going through in-vitro fertilization (IVF) treatments. Harris says she and her husband, Cody, try to be infertility advocates who are grateful to IVF for the birth of their son, Lincoln, and another child currently on the way. She loves her family very much, Harris' nominator says, and also "loves what she does." Appreciation for her family, job and coworkers are at the forefront, Harris says, along with the RV industry and her contributions to its future.



KYLE CORREA-BRADY

RV Industry Association (RVIA)

Assistant General Counsel

With company: 5 years

Correa-Brady joined RVIA in 2017 as staff attorney, taking a leadership role when the organization faced critical industry issues, and was promoted to his current role in 2019. Correa-Brady led the implementation of a contract review and approval process, created a centralized database, and significantly improved RVIA's fiscal stewardship, financial transparency and program efficiency. Growing and preserving relationships with federal regulators and representing the industry for vehicle regulations have made Correa-Brady "instrumental" to RVIA and the industry at large. He helps develop programming for the annual Regulatory and Safety Compliance Seminar, oversees the RV-C Subcommittee and helps execute meetings for the Lawyers Committee. Correa-Brady can manage a wide variety of legal and business management tasks under time constraints, and has earned the trust, friendship and respect of his team and industry colleagues, RVIA says. His considerable knowledge, work ethic and personality make it easy for others to find comfort in his ongoing leadership.

LAVORIS BROWN

Motility Software Solutions

Senior Manager, Customer Success

With company: 13 years



Brown guides dealers on how to use the company's document management system (DMS) and improve workflows. He is known for his deep understanding of Motility products and infrastructure, which aides in the training process and customer support that his team provides. Lavoris is a selfless and sincere leader who is a true advocate of Motility, says his nominator. He continually raises the bar and takes pride in understanding best practices at dealerships across the country. Employees admire his industry perspective. Lavoris has responded to Motility's growth by building a team of experts to support an increased volume of customers, his nominator says. The team he built continues to pride itself on their ability to care for customers with a passion for understanding the industry. Lavoris is known as a trustworthy advocate for the company, who brings feedback from the field to the development team, so that the company can build what dealers need. All Motility employees and customers speak very highly of the work he is doing, the company says.



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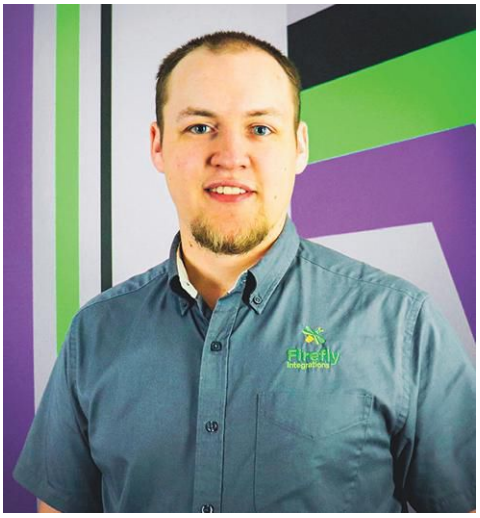


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LELAND BONTRAGER

Firefly Integrations

Vice President of Technical Support and Testing

With company: 3.5 years

Bontrager established and trained Firefly Integration's service team to fully support its manufacturer customers' product lines. Helping to install hardware, train on new systems and perform troubleshooting when needed are at the forefront for Bontrager's team. He goes "above and beyond" for both customers and employees, his nominator says, and although he manages a robust group, he has no problems going out into the field himself. With the large increase in the company's customers and sales, a big demand for technical support and service is inevitable. Bontrager very much leads by example, and has streamlined many of the company's processes necessary for the service team to better serve its customers. Firefly says it has grown from a small company with less than 50 employees to more than 120 on the team. Bontrager oversees around 20% of the company's staff and their daily operations.



MARC DISHER

Cleer Vision Windows, an Airxcel brand

Sales Manager

With company: 5+ years

Disher came to Cleer Vision Windows from the OEM side, where he worked for Heartland RV. That background, his company says, gives him an appreciation for the daily struggles and challenges Cleer Vision's customers face. He is also able to use that experience to work with customers in a way that solves their problems and adds value to the supplier-customer relationship. Since joining Cleer Vision, Disher has been actively involved with all aspects of the business, as he is an effective communicator with all levels of the organization. Disher has been an integral piece of its continued growth both within and outside the RV industry, the company says. He helped Cleer Vision navigate the challenges during the COVID period and most recently he's done a great job aggressively growing its share of the markets they serve, the company said. In his five-plus years with Cleer Vision, he has gone from being a sales representative to overseeing all of their accounts and a growing staff of sales and customer service folks. He has been promoted from sales representative to sales manager and been designated a valuable member of the leadership team.

MEGAN NEIGHBORS

Campers Inn RV

Marketing Manager

With company: 10+ years

Neighbors knows continuous improvement is the name of the game. She is often one to raise her hand for courses and other events that can help her become a better leader for her people and for the organization, her nominator says. She cares about her employees and her fellow teammates at Campers Inn RV. In addition to providing impactful coaching for her teammates, Neighbors began working for the dealership when they had just six locations – there are now 36. Growing the marketing team into a more sophisticated, data-driven and industry-leading operation was in her hands. Her success has allowed some of her teammates to move on to new positions, such as running marketing for other comparable organizations, her nominator says. During the pandemic, Neighbors launched marketing efforts that allowed the company to sell and deliver RVs to customers at their homes. In addition to handling millions of dollars in marketing campaigns for TV, radio, online and more, Neighbors is also on-hand for 100 shows and on-lot promotions.





MERLE SCHMUCKER

Founder/Owner

Sunset Park RV

With company: 15 years

Schmucker is not only a founder but is described by coworkers as the backbone of Sunset Park RV, showing his fellow employees by example that with hard work and dedication, anything is possible. Sunset Park employs nearly 100 workers from LaGrange County, Indiana, and surrounding areas. Schmucker is often the first one to report to work and the last one to leave, his coworkers say. His dedication to the company and employees creates an atmosphere that promotes competition and a workplace that values ideas and rewards input. Schmucker heads up two critical departments in the company that have been a challenge the past couple of years: purchasing and shipping. But he has grown the company's purchasing power with increased production and often looks outside the box to work with transportation companies and dealerships in order to supply Sunset's dealers with high-quality, low-cost travel trailers. Schmucker and his family put in 15-hour days routinely. As his coworker says, "Nominating him for this actually feels strange because he will not take any of the credit for the rise and success of Sunset Park. We've heard the stories of a guy building a trailer in his garage and turning that business into a success – this is one of those stories."



MIKE ELLINGSON

Coach-Net

RV Technician

With company: 7 years

Ellingson is Coach-Net's primary technician at its Lake Havasu, Arizona, satellite office. He and his wife opened the location, did most of its remodeling and manage the office with more than 30 employees. Ellingson helps diagnose RV technical issues, is an excellent communicator and is able to provide instruction to those without technical expertise. He is always looking for the newest technology in the RV industry and to better himself in his role, his nominator says. He helped create training videos for other agents and employees, and helped the marketing department create "Tech Tip" videos posted in the company's monthly newsletters. On work trips, Ellingson often takes the role of "dad" and ensures everyone has what they need and gets to the correct place, his nominator says. He is the recipient of eight company RV awards given for Coach-Net's values: honesty, humility, integrity, courage, excellence, family and servant's heart. Ellingson is a true advocate for the RV lifestyle as he, his wife and two children enjoy his off-road toys off the clock.



NATALIE MARTIN

Grand Design RV

Director of Marketing

With company: 1.5 years



Martin is a "pivotal stakeholder" for Grand Design who leads discussions and decision-making on how the company presents its brands to the market and grows its customer base. She was promoted from brand strategy manager to director of marketing, offering creative ideas that lend to the manufacturer's competitiveness, her nominator says. Martin leads a team of nine who cover graphic design, advertising, press, strategic branding initiatives and digital transformation. She guides conversations on important technology innovations and serves as a role model for "doing the right thing" – one of the company's mottos. With a growing customer base, Martin's priority is addressing their needs through channels that consumers prefer, such as via website, apps and social media accounts. Staying on top of consumer trends, needs and digital expectations is one of the many initiatives Martin's team is focused on – a challenge that is ever-evolving. Leads, reach and engagement are top priorities. Martin connects Grand Design departments through projects and internal communication channels that she has single-handedly taken on, her nominator says.



NATALIE NAQUIN

East to West

Sales Manager, Silver Lake label

With company: 5 years

Naquin is among few female sales managers in the RV industry, who solely manages Silver Lake, East to West's dedicated label for Camping World. She has managed the account for four years, growing it from 0 to now overseeing more than 100 dealerships within the CW organization. Amid the RV sales boom, Naquin worked with Forest River corporate to establish a new plant for her product. When the market recently slowed, she tackled new floorplans to better serve Camping World's needs. Her company considers her the youngest female sales manager in the industry, whose relationship and partnership with Camping World has been beneficial for East to West and Forest River as a whole. She is organized, methodical and always prepared, going above and beyond in servicing dealers and customers. At industry shows, she always greets with a smile and is ready to sell a trailer, East to West says.

NIC MARTIN

Jayco / Entegra Coach

Vice President of Sales

With company: 17 years



Martin started at Jayco as an assistant product director, and then in 2017 was promoted to product development director for the entire Jayco Motorized Group, where he was key in what was the start of one of the fastest-growing motorized brands in the industry, his company says, referring to Jayco/Entegra gas. In 2019, Martin was promoted again, this time to general manager of the Jayco Motorized group; in 2020 he was promoted to be general manager of the entire Jayco and Entegra motorhome group; then in 2021 he was promoted again to be vice president of sales of the entire Jayco/Entegra motorized teams, along with the Jayco towable group. Under Martin's leadership, his bosses say, Jayco's motorized group has grown from annual revenues in the range of $400 million to $500 million to the nearly $3 billion range. Company president Ken Walters calls Martin one of the best young product minds in the industry that brings a fresh perspective with math, science and logic.

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NICK BECKETT

B&B RV

General Manager

With company: 16 years

At 16 years old, Beckett was washing RVs and doing maintenance at B&B RV during his summers between school. After finishing college, he committed to the family business, working closely with his father and uncles to build a successful Denver-based dealership. Beckett has taken B&B RV to a "whole new level" with his extensive experience in every department, his nominator says. His father is an original co-founder of the family-owned dealership, which currently has manufacturers from across the world and is apart of a 20 Group. Beckett lives the camping lifestyle that the company sells – there are no "stuffy suits and ties" in the B&B office, his nominator says, who considers the dealership an amazing place to work because of Beckett's ability to both manage and let individuals grow. He stays updated on industry trends and works with wholesale contacts to shift inventory levels when needed, in addition to seeking the best for B&B's 70-unit rental fleet. The company has gone from five full-time employees to more than 20 currently, and moved to a 6-acre, 17,000-square-foot facility with a full-service shop.



RONNIE MERCHANT

Blue Ox / Hesse Enterprises

Chief Operating Officer

With company: 6 years

Merchant has been instrumental in leading Blue Ox into a transformative age of technological innovation, with his extensive supply chain and operations background in multiple industries. He led the company into a diversified portfolio of projects, driving revenue to fund a current plant expansion complete with numerous large-scale robotics additions. Merchant is also COO of Hesse Enterprises, an operation that oversees five other business entities. He has an inside joke with everyone at Blue Ox, his nominator says, tackles challenges head on and is the "first one to get his hands dirty." Bringing on new products, technology innovations and improvements, as well as cutting costs in purchasing and supply chain segments, are some of Merchant's accomplishments – lending to Blue Ox's nomination for Supplier of the Year by the RV Industry Association (RVIA) and 2020 Partner of the Year by Meyer Distributing, among other recognitions. Merchant's nominator says his working relationships and embodiment of the company's valued employees speaks volumes, mentioning some of Merchant's moving words after the company lost a longtime employee this year.



SARAH NEELY

The RV Industry Association / Go RVing

Senior Manager, Strategic Marketing and Data Analytics

With company: 5 years

Neely initially joined the RV Industry Association (RVIA) to revamp its member marketing strategy, sparking a new association name and logo, significant website updates and a digital newsletter launch. She later joined RVIA's consumer-facing arm, Go RVing, in a newly created role that recognized her talents. In every situation, Neely brings a "let's do this, and do it better than ever before" attitude, her nominator says. She is always ready and willing to step up, never afraid to jump in the deep end of a new project. Neely recently brought on Go RVing's newest team member and is considered by her nominators as strategic in thought, technically savvy and creative. On the heels of the organization's updated website launch, she curated a focus on first-time and "COVID buyers," with the site seeing a 40% increase in unique users, among other upticks, within the following two weeks. Not only does Neely embody the RVIA's core values with her member-first thoughts and actions, but she also prioritizes her team's needs as an invaluable member of Go RVing, her nominator says.

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SCOTT MCNAMARA

Marketing and Business Professional



McNamara takes an innovative and creative approach in leading the industry toward expansion and strengthening community relationships and local businesses' collaborative growth, his coworkers say. He helps generate revenue for the dealership's growing customer base and at the same time is helping partners grow their sales. These mutual and beneficial partnerships bring more than a 300% return on investment, the company says, as well as residual income as commissions for team members. McNamara's people skills make him an inspiring leader, his co-workers say, and his hard work and dedication motivates other employees to follow his path. McNamara never walked away in difficult times and is always offering extra help to his department. He is first to grab more responsibilities and is always willing to learn new skills to be helpful when needed. McNamara is the third generation to work at this family-owned and operated dealership



TIANA WALTER

Forest River

Designer, Rockwood/Flagstaff

With company: 2 years

Walter sets a new standard in RV design by keeping things residential, custom and modern, her company says. She works with many vendors and takes time to create relationships with everyone. Dealer feedback on Forest River's designs have greatly improved since Walter took over all aspects of interior and exterior design. With no background or familiarity with the industry, the company says she came in and took all challenges head on and has been an incredible asset to its division. Walter is the only one in her department, and she has helped move the industry forward by getting out of the "norm" for RV interiors. Her ability to bring innovation and creativity to the table has enhanced the manufacturer's Rockwood/Flagstaff brands, and her company says she's helped the divisions reach "the top" in a challenging market. Walter is a pleasure to work with both professionally and personally, her nominator said. She brings new ideas to the forefront and follows through to implementation.

TIMOTHY MORGAN

Storyteller Overland

Vice President of National Sales

With company: 3 generations



A seasoned industry veteran, Morgan started washing RVs at 13 years old, when his grandfather was a sales associate at a California dealership. He moved into sales at 18 for Giant RV and quickly ascended to the top of sales charts, later joining Roadtrek as a national sales rep. Morgan's industry knowledge and experience allowed Storyteller to achieve success while building a familiar infrastructure for dealers, with the company seeing a 78% jump in retail sales during his first month on board. The manufacturer says if "Captain Morgan" didn't put his steady hand on the ship wheel, it wouldn't have experienced the profitability it has. Morgan continues to show executive leadership qualities, whether leading by example or leading by conveying a message. He always knows how to have his actions or words resonate with those that need to see or hear them the most. Morgan is a steadying force within Storyteller, his coworker says, by continuously rising to the occasion of any challenge inside HQ, while simultaneously being able to connect with the company's endgame consumers on a retail level.



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Designing Woman

Mindy Cox keeps the interiors of REV RV Group's high-end diesels fresh.

By Jennifer King

If there's one thing that Mindy Cox can't leave out when concepting the interior design of a luxury RV, it's the lighting.

"Without being able to dim and offer the right kind of lighting, it would be difficult for me," says Cox, interior designer and lead designer for American Coach and Fleetwood RV's high-end diesel products. "I'm a fanatic over lighting; lighting is super important from an interior design aspect."

LED lighting has taken the world by storm, Cox says, and it's important to pay attention to lighting zones throughout the unit so that task lighting and accent lighting is available.

"We work with a professional lighting company to test every kelvin level within the interior to make sure everything falls within





the same categories," she says. "So our lights all have the same coloration so you're not looking at a halogen over here and an LED over here. Having lighting that is uniform throughout is super important.

"Everything is set up in moods, so you can have ambient lighting in the evening when you want to dial it down and watch TV or have a nice dinner, or you can click a button and hold and it will go up so you can have full task lighting.

"We put it at the floor, behind our windows, so at night it looks absolutely beautiful when you have it all on and you can control what you want on and what you don't want on."

Cox knows what she's talking about, having been in the business for about 20 years, starting with working with luxury buses, taking a break to focus on her family's retail furnishing business in Knoxville, Tennessee, then coming back to the RV industry 10 years ago and working on the American Coach line: American Coach, American Eagle, American Dream and American Tradition. Cox also oversees Fleetwood Discovery and Discovery LXE.

Seeking Inspiration

When it comes to discovering what's next for interior design, Cox turns to some likely – and unlikely – sources.

"I look for inspiration from kitchen and bath trade shows, the residential home furnishing side of the world," she says. "We go to High Point, North Carolina, and you get to see a lot of the new designs that have come out in home furnishings."

She also looks to boat shows and magazines for what's trending.

"I go to all of the RV shows and we have dealer events, we have owners rallies, so I love to pick their brain and say 'hey, what are you hearing? What's the general feedback from the products that we design?'" Cox says.

For example, the painted cabinetry option has been popular because it's something people are seeing in residential.

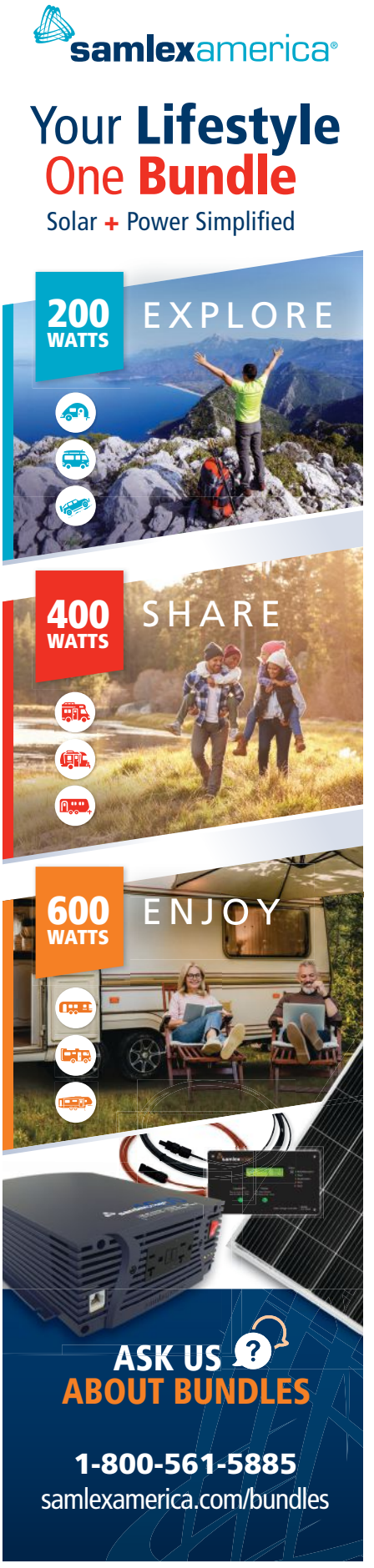
"I see a little more trend of even lighter cabinetry but also coffee hues, going back to a little bit of darker cabinetry for accent or islands," Cox says. "We're doing kitchen islands in some of our floorplans. It makes for a great workspace so that's something that's been kind of a popular floorplan that we've brought on this year, and it's been very well received.

"We're always trying to look for things from outside to bring into RV," Cox says. "We're looking for high-end residential and cutting-edge designs and then bring them back to where I'm working and designing."

The champagne bronze hardware – the new subtle gold that many are using in residential homes – is popular in RVs now, too. Cox says finishes are important in interiors, such as the champagne bronze, chrome and black that are still very trendy and popular in kitchen and bath.

Cox says she has started working with Cambria Quartz countertops and now they are bringing quartz into RVs.

"The way I design is more emphasis on the countertops because we're doing a luxury quartz that has a nice big vein running through, so not as much emphasis on a busier, mosaic backsplash, but something that will pair nicely with the countertop, so it's just complementing instead of



being busy," Cox says.

"Things that will give a high-end feeling that you're in your home but you're in a motorhome," Cox says about what she's looking for. "And some of these are people's homes or home away from home. So that's where I find a lot of ideas – in residential kitchen and bath."

Functional Fabrics

With the on-the-go lifestyle that comes with owning an RV, sourcing materials that will wear as little as possible over time is critical. Still, Cox says she considers the aesthetic as well as wearability.

"We have quite a few mills that we do business with that serve the RV as well as the residential industry, so the fabrics that we source have to perform, but also I don't want them to look like an RV fabric," she says. "We're really wanting the best of both."

Cox says she works to make sure her selections are commercial grade. If the fabric is going to be used on a seat, or a dinette chair, how well it will wear is important. But for an accent pillow to add in color or pattern, commercial grade fabric is not really necessary.

"We test for wearability to make sure that the materials we use on our furniture will be standing strong in five years, so we don't want anything that will flake or peel," Cox says. "We partner with some great suppliers that we trust and that have a great reputation."

From the bedding, pillow shams, valances, feature walls and more, Cox says there are 10 to 15 fabrics used in every unit's interior.

Since her family owns a home furnishing business, Cox's knowledge of the best furniture for RVs runs deep. In fact, her family has developed a line of furniture called Apex Custom Furniture for the American line.

"We use our exclusive line of furniture that is built more to have the residential look and feel," she says. "I'm able to control the designs, and we are different – we have something unique in the product from motion sofas to sleeper sofas, to recliners, to dinettes – so we have a full line of furniture that's just exclusive to American Coach."

Up-to-Date Interiors

Keeping the interiors fresh is the goal for Cox and her team. Each year, she says, they work with the sales team and their dealers to gain feedback on what are the bestselling features. They look at the statistics based on sales to consumers and revamp the interior every couple of years.

"We typically design three interiors per model, and we offer four wood colors – painted in two colors and two to three wood stain colors ranging from light, medium to dark, so we kind of cover the bases," she says. "Every year we get together and we review each model and look at what might be that décor that needs to go away — it might have run for a couple years and it's losing the excitement. So, we'll drop something and add something new."

Her team works to refresh the interior or create a new floorplan so there's always something new to debut at shows each year.

"You have to have the versatility but also differentiating between the brands, too; you don't want everything to just look alike," she says. RVP







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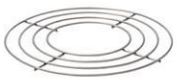
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Rv Pro Celebrates 40 Under 40 Class of 2022 *in Las Vegas*

Duane Spader Scholarship awarded to Hilltop RV & Camper employee.

The cheers said it all at RV PRO's third annual 40 Under 40 celebration, recognizing honorees in the Class of 2022.

Twenty-seven winners attended the event and were recognized on stage among nearly 150 coworkers, family and friends, who showed support as each honoree received their award as an up-and-comer in the RV industry. The ceremony took place on the second day of the RV Dealers Association (RVDA) Con/Expo at Caesars Palace in Las Vegas.

Co-emcees Chris Cieto, associate publisher of RV PRO; Kristina Shrider of RVEM Mastermind; and Jennifer King, executive editor of RV PRO, invited winners to the spotlight. All 40 of this year's class are featured in this issue of RV PRO magazine – including Kyle Correa-Brady, assistant general counsel for the RV Industry Association; Natalie Martin, director of marketing for Grand Design RV; Sarah Neely of Go RVing, and 37 more who represent all segments of the industry.

Representatives of 40 Under 40 sponsors also took the mic, congratulating winners on their contributions to the industry, to their companies and their communities. In attendance was Chad Reece of Winnebago; Jennifer Solomon of GE Appliances, a Haier company; Kim Gregory of Coach-Net; and Jason Nierman of Rollick.

"RV PRO is honored to recognize this year's class of high-achieving individuals making their mark on the RV industry. This event is inspiring, and we look forward to continuing the tradition of putting up-and-coming leaders in the spotlight," Cieto said. "Many thanks to the RV Dealers Association for incorporating our event into the Con/Expo schedule and hosting us at Caesars Palace."

Along with 40 Under 40, Tuesday night's event also recognized the recipient of the Duane Spader Leadership Development Scholarship, announced by Spader's two sons. The scholarship awarded $15,000 to Mike Hochstatter, general manager of Hilltop RV & Camper in Fridley, Minnesota.



40 Under 40 honoree Ronnie Merchant accepts his award at the Class of 2022 celebration.

Hart Elected RVDA Chairman; Wilkins Receives James B. Summers Award

The RV Dealers Association (RVDA) Convention/Expo draws a larger crowd than 2021 and inspires an audience with its keynote address.

Bustling is the word that comes to mind upon entering the hallways of the conference center of Caesars Palace, Las Vegas, where the RV Dealers Association gathered for its Convention/Expo this week. With several days chockfull of workshops, an address by an inspiring keynote speaker and a busy expo floor, the event was buzzing.

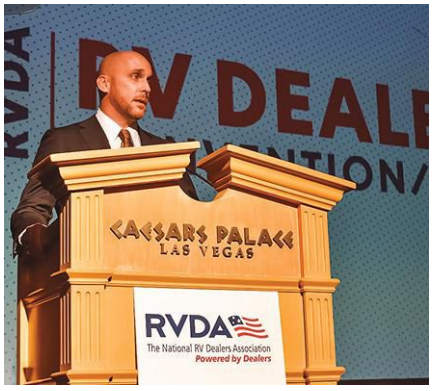
Wednesday at the annual meeting, the RVDA elected a new chairperson, turning the gavel over from Mike Pearo of Hilltop Campers & RV in Minnesota to Nathan Hart with Walnut Ridge Family RV Sales in New Castle, Indiana. Hart will serve his one-year term in 2023.

Along with Hart as chairman, other board officers elected for the coming year are:

- First Vice Chairman: Ryan Horsey of Parkview RV Center, Smyrna, Delaware
- Second Vice Chairman: Bob Cox of Stoltzfus RV, West Chester, Pennsylvania
- Secretary: Jon Ferrando of RV Retailer, Fort Lauderdale, Florida
- Treasurer: Larry Troutt III of Topper's Camping Center, Waller, Texas
- Immediate Past Chair: Mike Pearo of Hilltop Camper and RV, Fridley, Minnesota
- The remaining board members are:
- Brad Bacon of Pleasureland RV Center, St. Cloud, Minnesota
- Lane Bell of Bell Camper Sales, Bartlesville, Oklahoma
- Jim Colton of Colton RV, North Tonawanda, New York
- Frank Roberts of Longview RV Superstores, Windsor Locks, Connecticut
- Bell and Roberts are new to the board this year, having been elected earlier in the week by the RVDA Board of Delegates.
- The RV Assistance Corporation



Dealers and industry professionals flood the RVDA Expo hall.



Ryan Horsey, event chairman, welcomes attendees to the RVDA Con/Expo before the keynote speech.





Keynote speaker Molly Fletcher signs her book, "The Energy Clock," at the Wells Fargo booth on the Expo floor.

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DEMAND THE BEAR



RVDA elects new board officers and unveils the Chairman's Service Awards on Nov. 9.

Chairman is Jeff Hirsch of Campers Inn, Jacksonville, Florida

- The RV Rental Association Chairman is Scott Krenek of Krenek RV Center. Coloma, Michigan
- RV Learning Center Chairman is Jeff Pastore of Hartville RV Center, Hartville, Ohio.

The Chairman's Service Awards were also presented Wednesday morning, with Chris Andro, past chairman of RVDA, and Garry Enyart, an industry leader in improving Repair Event Cycle Time receiving recognition. The James B. Summers Award was also given to Brian Wilkins of Wilkins RV in New York and a former RVDA chairman.

In introducing Wilkins, Phil Ingrassia, president of the RVDA, invited all the past recipients of the James B. Summers Award to join him onstage.

"During his tenure as RVDA Chairman of the Board, and in many other industry leadership positions he has held throughout the years, Brian has worked hard to strengthen the bonds connecting RV dealers, manufacturers, suppliers, and RV owners," Ingrassia said in his introduction of Wilkins.

"His efforts to improve the RV ownership experience are bearing fruit today through the industry's efforts to improve Repair Event Cycle Time. Brian's frank – but fair – challenge to the industry to improve the supply chain and get customers back on the road has sparked many of the ongoing initiatives to streamline the service, parts, and distribution channel.

"As a businessman, his leadership has made Wilkins RV an RV retailing force in New York. The dealership also supports its community through various events throughout the year including the Wilkins Family Charitable Golf Tournament, with proceeds benefiting Alzheimer's Disease research.

"Wilkins RV is also a major donor to the Mike Molino RV Learning Center and Brian serves on its board of directions.

"Brian remains focused on the company's mission of creating enduring memories for RV owners through providing exceptional experiences.

"Brian, on behalf of the RVDA Board, and all your many friends in RV business congratulations!"

Attendees noted that the crowd at the Convention/Expo was much heavier than last year, which was the first year the event resumed following the COVID-19 pandemic. Talk at each workshop centered around the increased volume of service work that dealers are handling, following a flood of first-time buyers who entered the RV market during the past two years.

At one workshop, Jesse Stopnitzky of Performance Brokerage Services noted that dealers are focusing their attention


RVDA President Phil Ingrassia

at stabilizing business challenges after the recent whirlwind, but it was still a "buyer's market" for the time being if dealers are interested in buying to increase their footprint or selling their business.

During the packed-house keynote address Tuesday, Molly Fletcher, a former sports agent who worked with clients such as former Boston Celtics coach Doc Rivers and John Smoltz for the Atlanta Braves, used storytelling to drive home our opportunity to be "fearless at work." She said what she's admired most about working with the top athletes and sportsmen and women is their ability to overcome adversity quickly and "step into the change" knowing they would become a better person on the other side.

"Being resilient is key," Fletcher said. RVP


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Special Product Focus

RV Interiors & Appliances

"Home on wheels" has reached a whole new level in recent years, with more RVers demanding the same residential quality and creature comforts in their rigs as they have at home. From kitchen appliances and water treatments to designer fabrics and smart thermostats, there's something to boost every RV interior in this month's special product focus — for full-timers and boondockers alike.

For more information on the products in this section, type the web address that appears below a respective product into your browser. Viewers of the magazine's digital edition can click their mouse on any listing to be taken directly to the respective company's website.



MOTORIZED DUAL ROLLER SHADE

Auto-Motion Shade, Scarborough, Ontario, Canada, presents its Motorized Dual Roller Shade (DRS-555CE). This upscale, motorized window covering is for RV living rooms and limousines, with independent rolls for day and night fabrics. The system is remote controlled and optionally works with Amazon Alexa or Google Home voice control. The DRS system features a click-easy mounting rail for fast installation or removal. Available with an external or fabric-covered hem bar, and an option to include a covered valance for insertion of either the day or night fabric all to harmonize with either shade.

automotionshade.com



RV COVERS

Camco Mfg., Greensboro, North Carolina, offers its Pro-Tec RV Covers. It's essential to shelter your RV from the elements — especially while it's not in use. Pro-Tec covers help extend the life of your RV, while reducing the need to wash, wax and do roof treatments. These covers are durable and help protect against the elements. They ward off dirt and pollen from building up and leaving black streaks. Pro-Tec covers help stop your exterior paint/graphics from fading and cracking. Made of three layers of breathable, water-resistant material with UV protection.

camco.net

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RESIDENTIAL KITCHEN FAUCET

Dura Faucet, Camas, Washington, presents its DF-NMK504-MBRG — a heavy duty, residential grade, spring coil kitchen pull-down faucet. This kitchen faucet features a sprayer head that toggles from aerated and spray streams to help attack those dirty dishes. The matte black and rose gold finish will highlight the interior of your RV.

durafaucet.com



FREESTANDING GAS RANGE

GE Appliances, a Haier company, Louisville, Kentucky, offers its GE Profile 24-inch, 12-volt RV Gas Range. GE Profile's new Freestanding Range (PLS624RTSS) is RV-ready, running off 12-volt DC power and with specifically engineered secure and silent connections for the cast iron, edge-to-edge grates. These products were designed with installation in mind, with rear-facing LP connections, front foot retainers and anti-tip bracket. The unit also boasts a built-in storage drawer, white back-lit cast metal knobs, and a 3.7-cubic-foot oven capacity that has been tested to ensure even cooking. Similar drop-in models also available.

mwss.force.com/s/product/detail/01t4o000004DdxcAAC



REPLACEMENT KITCHEN SINK

Specialty Recreation, El Cajon, California, presents its Replacement Kitchen Sinks. Direct replacement for many original sinks with double bowl design and low-rise center, allowing more room for pans. One piece hand-laid fiberglass for extreme durability and strength. High-gloss fiberglass is easy to clean and stain resistant. Pre-drilled sink includes mounting studs. Outer dimensions are 19 inches by 24 inches, bowl depth is 6 inches and center divider has a 2.5-inch rise.

specrec.com

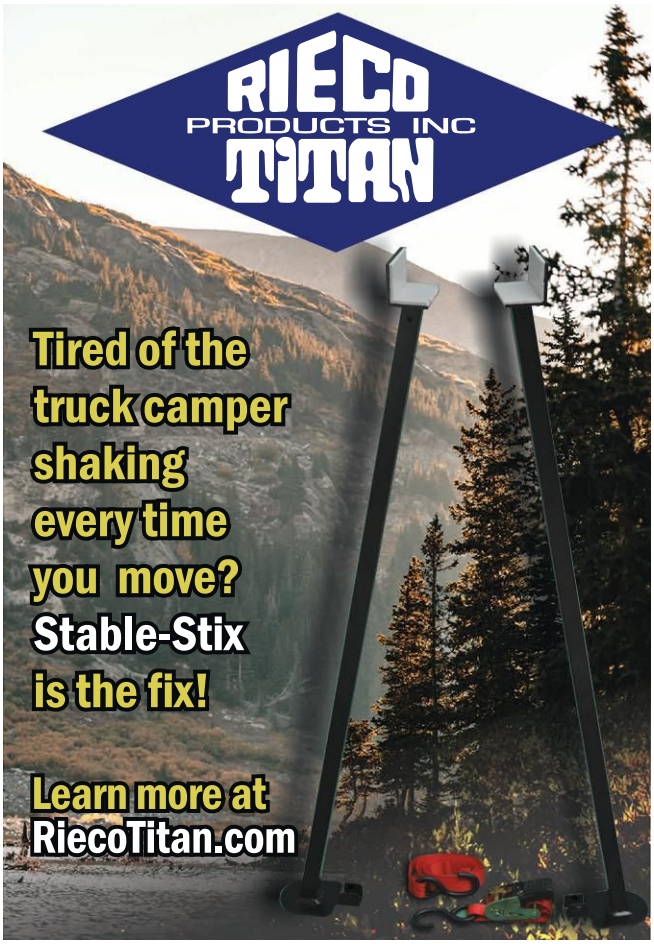


THREE-BURNER GAS RANGE

Furrion, Elkhart, Indiana, presents its 24-inch Chef Collection RV 3-Burner Gas Range. Cooking in your RV has a more residential feel. Say goodbye to small camp stoves and limited camper cooking capacity. The Chef Collection RV range boasts an oven that is more than 20% larger than previous models, which is perfect for full-time and frequent RVers. The larger capacity oven with four racks and powerful cooktop means home-cooked meals are on the menu, on the road or in the campground.

furrion.com


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RV WATER PURIFIER

Lippert, Elkhart, Indiana, offers its Acuva Wanderer 2.0 RV Water Purifier. Most systems available for off-grid living are simply RV water filters, not water purification systems. Average filters don't prevent most bacteria or viruses from flowing through the water lines. The Acuva Wanderer 2.0 water purification system is a powerful, low-maintenance water purifier specifically designed for RVs and boats. It employs powerful UV-LED technology to eradicate waterborne illnesses. It's also easy to install under the sink of your unit.

lippert.com



DAY-NIGHT ROLLER SHADES

MCD Innovations, an Airxcel brand, McKinney, Texas, presents its American Duo Roller Shade. The Day-Night Roller Shades by MCD feature two shades: a light-filtering day shade and a light-blocking night shade, in one convenient to use roller treatment. The day shade offers outward visibility and UV protection; the night shade was designed for privacy with 100% blackout material. Both shades are available in multiple colors, custom made for your specific RV model. American Duo Roller Shades are available in manual, switch electric, remote electronic models or a combination thereof.

mcdinnovations.com

INSTANT WATER HEATER



Truma, Elkhart, Indiana, offers the AquaGo, an instant water heater regardless of flow rate. The AquaGo missing vessel maintains constant water temperature with no scalding and has all-season use with optional anti-freeze function (comfort and comfort plus). The Truma AquaGo also can be decalcified. Winterization is also simple thanks to the Easy Drain Lever. Truma AquaGo is available in three models: Comfort Plus, Comfort and Basic.

truma.net



RV FABRICS COLLECTION

Richloom, New York, New York, presents its RV Collection. Richloom's 2022 RV collection is where innovative design meets durability and easy maintenance. Created for every room of your RV, Richloom follows the latest trends in the industry. Richloom's collection includes classic and fashion-forward polyurethane looks, nature inspired textures in a calming neutral palette and fun multicolored jacquards, as well as lighter-weight bedding fabrics. With many fabrics made in the USA, Richloom's RV collection creates understated elegance and reflects comfort and timeless versatility, suitable for every lifestyle.

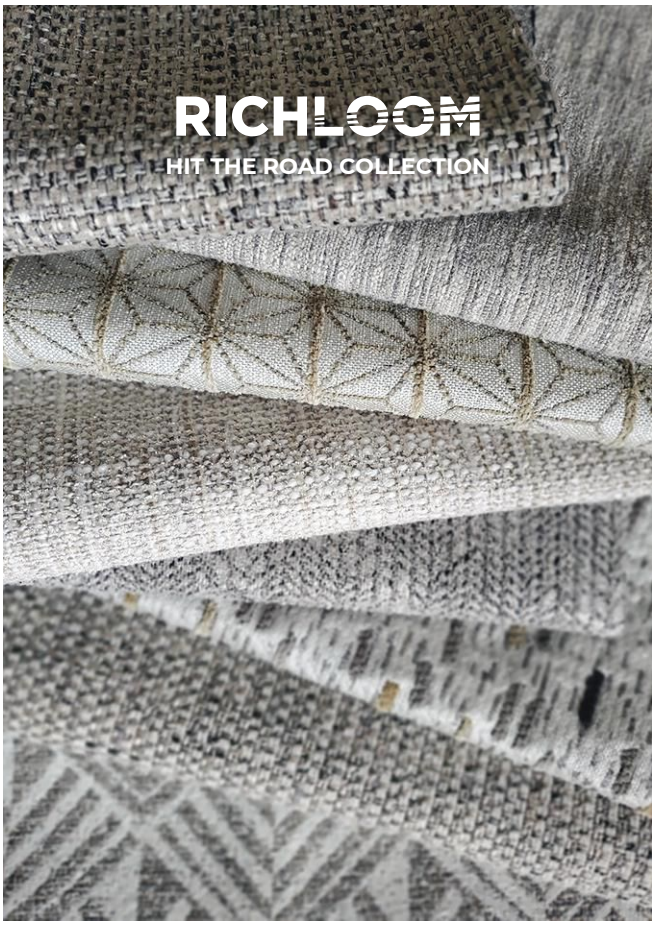
richloom.com

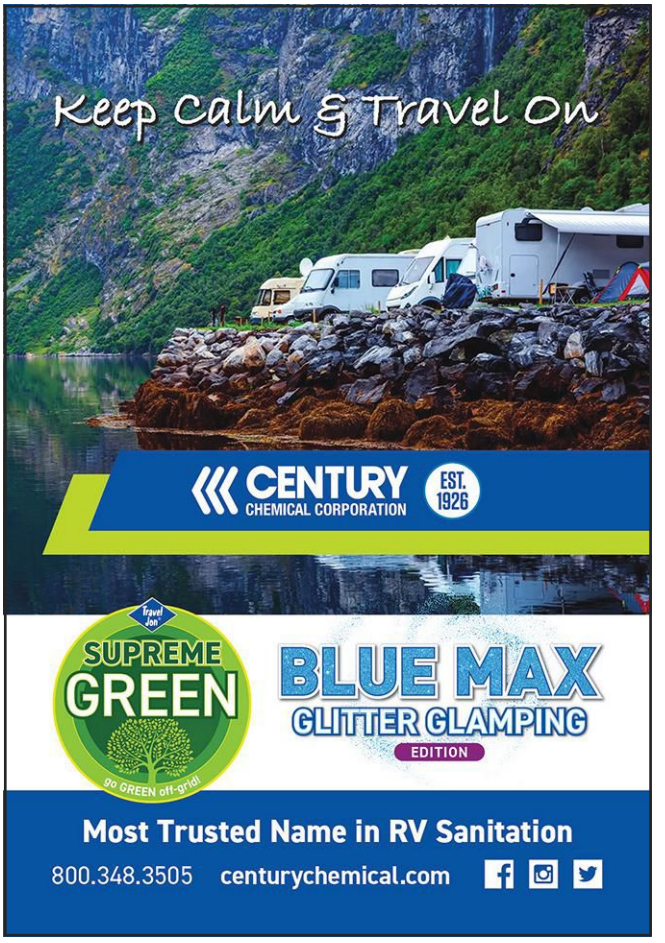


WI-FI SMART THERMOSTAT

Micro-Air, Allentown, New Jersey, offers its EasyTouch RV WiFi Smart Thermostat. This is an important product for pets. A Wi-Fi thermostat with an app that is sleek, simple to install (drop-in replacement for nearly every AC t-stat model), user friendly interface, intuitive to use and pet friendly. With over-the-air updates, this product continues to improve with each enhancement. Allows for the remote monitoring of cabin temps plus remote temperature control. Great visual appearance. No subscription required, works right out of the box.

microair.net and micro-air.com







HYDRONIC RV HEATER

International Thermal Research, Richmond, British Columbia, Canada, offers its OASIS NE, an all-in-one, "drop in place" RV hydronic heating system as a replacement for any Aqua-Hot 400 series. It's also the best value-added choice for new RV installations. The OASIS NE provides 50,000 "true output BTUs" and instant, continuous hot water with no interruption of space heating. OASIS NE provides almost 40% greater heat capacity, 80% more available electrical wattage and 15% hotter water.

itrheat.com



STOVETOP OVEN

Omniasweden, Chicago, offers its Omnia Stovetop Oven. The Omnia boasts a simple, robust design and features three parts that work together to provide heat from above and below: the pan, the base and the lid. These three parts must always be used together. The Omnia works on all heated sources except induction stovetops and heat will vary in relation to the heat source used. RVers can use the Omnia to make fresh-baked bread and oven dishes directly on the stove.

omniasweden.com



RV RUG SETS

Prest-O-Fit Mfg., Chandler, Arizona, offers its Decorian 2-Piece RV Rug Sets in the Trellis Design. These stylish trellis design rugs are sized specifically for RVs and available in two fashionable colors to complement a variety of interior motifs while protecting your flooring. The low-pile height allows for easy door clearance, and the skid-resistant latex backing works on both carpet and hard floors. The rugs are made of high-quality indoor polyester carpet and finished on all edges to prevent fraying. These rugs are easy to vacuum and can be spot cleaned as needed. Air dry only.

prestofit.com



ELECTRIC FIREPLACE

Pinnacle Appliances, Houston, Texas, presents its Electric Fireplace. Warm up to this Happy Holiday season with Pinnacle's Electric Fireplace, which will cozily engulf you with its realistic flame log effect, adjustable heat and five brightness levels. Freestanding, portable with casters included, seven LED color options and overheat protection are some of its features.

pinnaclecombos.com



STANDALONE PEDESTAL RANGE

Suburban, an Airxcel brand, Dayton, Tennessee, presents its Pedestal Range — a standalone range with a spacious 2.3-cubic-foot oven interior, fully integrated warming drawer and cast-iron cooktop set on adjustable feet. Features match-free lighting with deep-recess cooktop and elevated, fully sealed burners to protect the gas jets from boil-overs. Range also features wing-style edges to bridge the gap between counter and cooktop. The cooktop can become counter space with the smoked glass cover that is easy to clean. Suburban's Pedestal range comes with a two-year limited warranty.

suburbanrv.com

RV REFRIGERATOR

Norcold, Ann Arbor, Michigan, presents its POLAR N8DC Polar Series Refrigerator that features an upgraded appearance with enhanced modern styling. The taller door panels provide a more built-in look, with reversible stainless-steel doors with curved edges. Dual crisper drawers allow vegetable storage and more, and a travel latch keeps the doors closed during transit. Night Mode feature reduces both compressor and fan speed to conserve the battery charge and reduce noise. The refrigerator includes RV-standard mounting holes for easy installation without brackets.

norcold.com



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The NEW RV-Concealed Hinge is designed and intended to be used in the assembly of cabinets specifically for the RV industry.
A highly durable Detent Ball was added to the cup of the hinge which acts as a detent force when the cabinet is in the closed position, thus allowing the cabinet to stay shut while in transit.



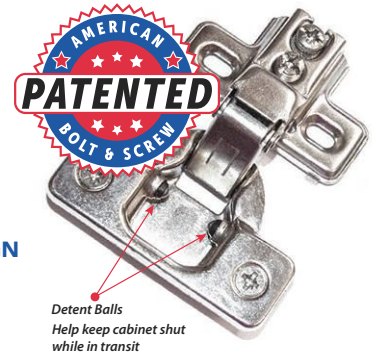
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Avoid the cost and labor of annoying roller catches. The ABS RV-Concealed Hinge incorporates the Detent feature ALL-IN-ONE!

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Detent Balls
Help keep cabinet shut while in transit



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RV VACUUM SOLUTION

Sweepovac Limited, St. Paul, Minneapolis, offers its Sweepovac BIG Kick vacuum designed especially for RVs and motorhomes. Combines a kick pan and regular vacuum in a single unit so it can be fitted in less than 10 minutes. It offers powerful suction and an easy-to-handle hose that extends from 10 feet to 33 feet. The BIG Kick comes with a full range of attachments, including a pet grooming tool and a cloth carrier bag to store everything. Three reusable bags are included so owners never have to buy bags again. The Sweepovac BIG Kick is the ultimate vacuum for any RV or motorhome.

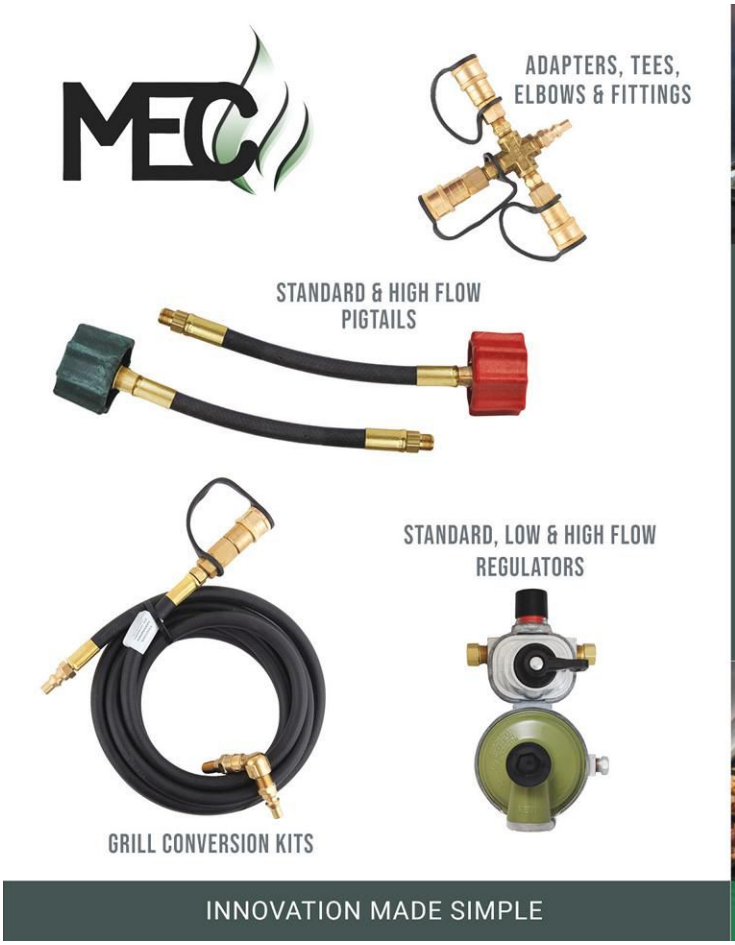
sweepovac.com/bigkick



STAINLESS STEEL DOOR FRIDGE

Dometic, Elkhart, Indiana, brings a fresh design to the RV kitchen with the DMC 4081. The refrigerator features stainless steel doors with tight radius corners, rolled edges and a recessed side-pocket latching handle. Inside the fridge are glass shelves, clear door bins, dual crisper drawers and LED illumination. The DMC offers 8 cubic feet of storage. Digital controls provide flexibility between performance and power consumption. Dometic's variable speed compressor is purpose-built for the RV industry.

dometic.com







PULL-DOWN KITCHEN FAUCET

Valterra Products, Mission Hills, California, offers its Premium Collection Single-Handle Pull-Down Kitchen Faucet. The faucet is easy to use with a sleek pull-down nozzle, stream/spray switch and advanced quick return for smooth retraction. Includes an optional base plate to install as a single hole or three-hole mount. Available in chrome, brushed nickel and rubbed bronze to match the style of your home or RV. Phoenix Premium collection faucets are made to last with hybrid under-bodies, ceramic disk valves, brass shanks, polymer waterways and a limited lifetime warranty.

valterra.com

UNIVERSAL SHOWER



DUO FORM, Edwardsburg, Michigan, presents its DUO UNIVERSAL SHOWER, which comes in three easy-to-assemble pieces with two interchangeable corner locking segments. The new shower features a customizable sizing system and a "Score and Snap" design that makes it simple to trim and fit to the unit, with a unique style line feature that makes it easy to trim walls for a custom fit. The style lines blend seamlessly into the shower wall design and work as route guides on the reverse side of the walls to simplify cutting. The Universal Shower is 66-inches tall and can be cut to 62 inches or 59 inches in height. The width is 44 inches wide but could fit showers up to 48 inches wide maximum, utilizing the custom corner locking segments, which give customers more customization options.

duoformplastics.com/product/duo-universal-shower-system

BUNK LADDER



Stromberg Carlson, Traverse City, Michigan, offers its Bunk Ladder. Need to provide small feet easier access to their beds or larger feet easier access to stored items? Look no further. The injection molded treads provide comfort to bare feet. Large hooks can go over facia board or mount with included bracket for more security. Stromberg's bunk ladder is rated for 250-pound maximum load at an 11-degree mounting angle. Available in silver or black, in lengths 60 inches or 66 inches. Made in the USA.

strombergcarlson.com

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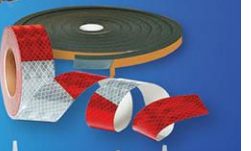


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Female Customers vs. Male Customers

Know how to tailor your sales pitch for men and women to appeal to everyone.

Men are hunters, women are gatherers – unless there isn't a man around to do the hunting, and then in every society, in every walk of life, the women become the hunters as well. If you've ever seen a female cat after a mouse, a lioness on the hunt to feed her cubs or Katniss Everdeen with her bow and arrow, you know how women can step up to a challenge when needed.

So, what does this have to do with shopping for and buying an RV? If a woman is on her own shopping at your store, she is in full hunt-mode with the innate intelligence of the gatherer of information.

After Googling an endless number of studies about the differences between the genders, I finally gave up. I'm going with instinct instead – something we all have in common. It's just a matter of listening to it! We all listen, but women often call it instinct, and men call it a gut feeling. They are the same thing.

Selling Smart

When women shop for a large ticket item like a car or RV, they come in cautiously. They are often used to not being taken seriously. Some may seem highly confident and challenging, while others – not so much. Women couldn't even have their own credit cards until the passing of the Equal Credit Opportunity Act in 1974. They rarely grow up as gearheads. Some do, of course, but the majority don't. They know the items they are looking at in your store or lot have many moving



Linda Cahan is the president of Portland, Oregon-based Cahan & Co., a consulting firm that works with retailers of all sizes and categories to improve their bottom line through creative, affordable and appropriate visual merchandising, store design and renovations. For more information, visit lindacahan.com.

parts that they are often unfamiliar with. But, as the guardians of children – or even just of themselves – they are looking for the best deal on the best product. That includes what is most safe, secure, least likely to break down or kill/maim anyone. Also, what is easiest to maintain.

Men like to know how something works. That way, they can potentially fix any relatively simple problems that arise. Women want to know it will work and if it doesn't, how easy is it to fix, and how responsive will you be to be there for her if she needs help. When you're selling to a woman who is alone, reassuring her about your reliability and after-sales care will go a long way to establishing a good seller/customer relationship.

Initially, find out why this woman is shopping for an RV or related products. Is it for long trips, family vacations, escape weekends or potentially a living space? Women respond to benefits and your sales pitch to a woman should include the benefits first. If you're a man who is excited about by the power of a motorhome's engine, be aware that the best information for a woman would include why the power is good. Then, go into the differences between the engines and what each type of power is best for her travel needs. The same goes for what type of unit would be best – towable, lightweight or motorhome.

Safety is a huge concern and that includes degassing for new models. Not all people think the "new car smell" is good. Some know it's degassing chemicals that aren't necessarily good for our health. Get the facts on the various degrees of degassing and make sure you know them if and when you're asked.

Women like to communicate and connect. It's not a "just the facts, ma'am" situation. Men thrive on facts. Women relate to stories and the sense of someone who is a kindred spirit. The more honest and human you are (male or female), the more interested most women will be in doing business with you. Women generally regard asking for help as an efficient way to shop. As far as they are concerned, that's why you're there. And, as a woman, I agree 100%!

Scan the 'Sky'

In my last column, I talked about the basics of good store presentation. Cleanliness truly is next to godliness for a woman. Dust, dirt and clutter are sale killers. If a customer's hands or fingers stick to anything, fuhgeddaboudit! That includes the restroom. Make sure your restroom is cleaned at least three times daily. Same for your desks and sales counters.

When I consulted for American Express TRS ages ago, I reworked all their signage. They were frustrated that people would come into the "store" and rather than looking at the overhead signs to find what they wanted, they immediately asked the first person they saw as they entered. That person could rarely get their work done as they were acting as an information booth. I told them then, and am telling you now – that's human nature. Some people will look for the directional signs, most will



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just ask the first human they see who looks official. Always put a friendly extrovert at the front of your store. Don't give them a ton of paperwork so they rarely look up. Their job is to direct a customer to another salesperson unless they're the only person in the store. No matter how busy they are with paperwork, that lone person must look up, smile, and say hi!

You need three types of signs in your store:

- directional/wayfinding
- informational
- pricing

Your directional/wayfinding signs are only needed if your location is large or tall fixtures are blocking the view of the store and customers can't see what they're looking for. People instinctively scan the "sky" looking for signs. If chemicals are hidden, you need a sign.

Informational signs are what you have on or next to your spa units. These must have both features and benefits to sell to men and women. In a perfect world, the chemical section would also have some informational signs to educate people about what all that random stuff is and what it does.

Back Up, Bud!

Remember "Don't Stand So Close to Me" by The Police? That could be the theme song many women have with male or female salespeople. Personal space is huge! When a woman feels physically crowded, she will shrink inside. And then she will want to leave as quickly as possible.

In North American culture, a standard space apart from a stranger is a minimum of 3 feet. If you have sales associates from other countries, their space parameters and experiences may be different, and they need to learn how uncomfortable it can make a woman (or man) when someone is "in their face."

Another space issue can be between racks and gondolas. If a woman has to bend down to get an accessory or chemical and there's a chance that another person, especially a male, walking down the aisle may accidentally brush against her, she may leave the aisle rather than risk the invasion of her personal space. (Paco Underhill, Envirosell, NY: "Why We Buy")

Now, while you're still humming The Police song, remember the basics of selling to women: Engage them with initial warmth and friendliness. Do not stand too close or be too cloying. The store should be clean, uncluttered and have at least 3 feet or more aisle space.

Know the benefits including safety and reliability for each product you carry. Once you know why the female customer is shopping, guide her to the unit that makes the most sense for her, not just the one with the "newest and greatest" features. Be helpful and listen. Being helpful is easy – listening, not always.

Your informational signage should have the facts and figures but also include the benefits. That way you are appealing to everyone. By the way, this style will work with men if you give them the facts first, benefits afterwards.

Which sex likes to haggle for a better price? Both. But women statistically tend to haggle more than men. Good luck with that when they're on the hunt! RVP

TIPS FOR BETTER SIGNAGE

- Keep the wording short and simple. This makes sense for all humans.
- Avoid technical jargon. More tech information can be on a sheet of better-quality paper in a plexiglass holder or a QR code for people who know how to use them.
- Keep directional signs at 7.5 feet high, where they will be seen.
- Price everything!
- Keep all elements of typography – type, color, size and fonts – uniform in all signage.
- To keep the visual clutter to a minimum, if you use counter cards and posters, only use them if you sell the merchandise shown. Posters are sales vehicles, not wallpaper! Unframed posters look like a high schoolers bedroom or a college dorm room.



Today's Market Direction

After the roller coaster of the last few years, how does a dealer dare to compare?

When speaking with folks in the industry, the most common topic has always been "what's business like?" That's changed over recent months. It is still basically the same question, but it has taken on a new dimension. Now there is a different tier to that question including some validation of the method of comparison. Because our industry has been so changed in the past couple of years, we want to look at what basis we can use for comparison.

No one can dispute that we have been through some unusual times. Anyone who has been in our industry for the past 10 years or so knows very well the cyclic nature of business. But the past couple of years have been an aberration. I have most often characterized selling RVs in the recent market as being a bear in a salmon run. We just have not had to work for sales. Market dynamics have been such that it has been a strong seller's market. Other markets, such as real estate, have also been like that.

Like other markets, the drivers have paired unprecedented demand together with supply lines that were behind the curve in meeting the accelerated demand. The result, predictably, has been increasing prices on both the



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wholesale and retail sides of the market. It doesn't seem that anyone thinks the strength of this market can be sustained long term. So, how can you plan?

It begins to beg the question, what will "normal" look like in the future? As I mentioned before, we all understand that business is cyclical. And the questions about how to plan inventory and stock units is always a focus this time of year.

When dealers start to budget and forecast sales for the next year, it seems to be quite difficult to get a "feel" for the direction of the market this year. It's a challenge with profound impact on the dealer's future.

When we look at this year against last year in the 20 Group discussions, it becomes clear that we must think carefully about what the numbers are showing. This year might seem a bit anemic compared to last year's performance. But when you look at how strong the past two years have been in sales, it seems to match or to slightly exceed last year's performance.

So, even a small improvement, say in the single digits as a percentage of growth over last year, should be understood as terrific. If last year was weak and this year was strong, you are actually only getting back to where you were. Understand?

All that said, what should be used to compare? It's been almost three years since the start of the pandemic. It's hard to believe it has been that long. But remember we were starting to talk about the virus in November 2019. We started having the full lockdowns in March 2020. With the lockdown, sales started to climb quickly in nearly all segments of the retail market. So, the numbers I'm looking at as an "aberration" are those from 2020 and 2021.

Would it be fair or reasonable then to look at 2019 as a "normal" year? You could certainly use 2019 and factor in some level of growth. But here's the dilemma: When looking at a broad view of dealers I'm watching, the difference in revenue growth between 2018 and 2019 is a single digit percentage. When I look at the growth between 2019 and 2021 for the same period with the same dealers, I'm seeing 50% growth. That is, the dealer in 2021 is doing 150% of the revenue in 2019. The same dealers looking at 2022 over 2021 are just slightly behind last year through September 2022.

My advice would be to look at 2019 and model it in the manner I mention above. Then take an average of 2018, 2019 and 2020 and apply the same growth factor. See how those two numbers correspond to what you are experiencing in 2022.

If you take those same dealers for 2019 and factor 12% growth for the next three years (2020, 2021 and 2022), you come close to where they are in current growth but still a shade under what has already been booked to revenue so far this year (at the time of this writing). That may be the closest match as a way to look at it.

That is, take pre-pandemic revenue or units and factor a small double-digit growth for each of the succeeding years. Wow, huh?!

How can you determine what is possible and, better yet, probable for 2023?

My advice would be to look at 2019 and model it in the manner I mention above. Then take an average of 2018, 2019 and 2020 and apply the same growth factor. See how those two numbers correspond to what you are experiencing in 2022.

As a reality check, you should also factor in changes in product lines. I'm seeing most dealers reevaluating relationships and lines. Wholesale pricing and warranty struggles are cited as the major determining factors in those changes. But, for certain, you'll want to look at how changes in your product lineup will affect future business.

All of this is still like looking at a crystal ball. And from where I sit, the picture is far from clear. With some planning, thinking and practical experience you should be able to get enough of a grip to plan for business next year. Just work to stay agile because we're still likely to see some shifting in business over the next 12 to 24 months. RVP

RELATED NEWS

OUTDOOR RECREATION INDUSTRY WORTH $862B ANNUALLY

The U.S. Department of Commerce's Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA) has released economic data it gathered in 2021 that shows how hugely beneficial outdoor recreation is to the overall U.S. economy. These new numbers show outdoor recreation generates $862 billion in economic output annually, or 1.9% of the nation's GDP, along with the supporting 4.5 million jobs.

This means the outdoor recreation economy contributes more to the U.S. economy than oil and gas extraction, mining and farming.

This is the fifth consecutive year that BEA has released government data on this critical industry sector, and it contains both national- and state-level data.

The release shows how the outdoor industry, which played a vital economic and social role throughout the pandemic, has since sustained remarkable growth, and continued to bolster local economies. The outdoor recreation economy came back stronger than ever after the COVID-19 pandemic and remains a steady source of strength nationally and a booming job creator locally.

According to the report, trips and travel coming back, record sales in many outdoor segments, manufacturing increasing, as well as the drive to continue to recreate for quality of life is what allowed the industry to bounce back from the effects of COVID-19 in 2020.

"The BEA data underscores how important it is to invest in public lands, waters and recreation infrastructure from coast to coast and for recreation activities of all types," said Jessica Turner, president of the Outdoor Recreation Roundtable. "From the creation of jobs and increased profit for small businesses in local economies, to larger boons to our national economy, this sector is a consistent driver, even in times of economic uncertainty. The strength of the outdoor recreation economy reflects what many in the industry have long known to be true: there are infinite benefits that come from more people spending time outdoors, and they'll only grow with continued investment."

Added Craig Kirby, president and CEO of the RV Industry Association: "The RV industry has seen a record number of younger and more diverse customers flock to RVs as a way to fulfill their desire to get outdoors, take part in all kinds of outdoor recreation, and live an active outdoor lifestyle. RVs provide a basecamp for every form of recreation included in these new economic numbers, from boating and fishing to hiking, biking, and climbing. What these new numbers show is that outdoor recreation is not just good for people's physical and mental health, it is also a significant economic driver across the entire country."





The Façade Fallacy

Is your tidy parts and accessory department just a front for a messy storage area?

Since a portion of this month's issue of RV PRO focuses on interiors, I have decided to devote my column to interiors as well. However, instead of the interiors of RVs, the interiors discussed in my column are the interiors of your parts and accessory departments.

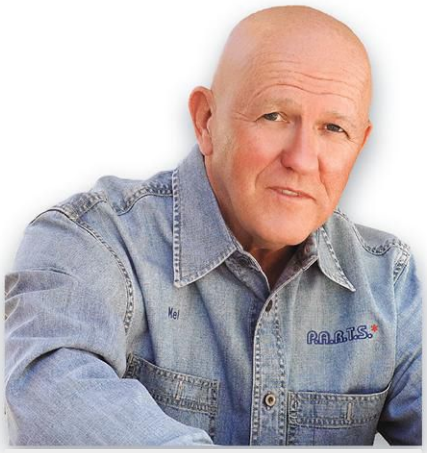
Being that my professional forte is inventory management, I am somewhat biased in my belief that the parts and accessory department is important to the efficiency and profitability of the entire RV dealership. By extension, I also feel that if the parts and accessory department can operate more efficiently and profitably, then this could assist the other departments to do so as well.

Department of the Interior

Parts and accessory department display areas are frequently quite spiffy. Yet, walk behind the walls separating the display areas from the storage areas, and it is occasionally like Alice walking through the looking glass. It could be a different environment.

In 1995, I named this disparity between the condition of the parts and accessory display areas and the storage areas as "The Façade Fallacy."

On the sets of many movies,



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especially older Westerns, the buildings are not actually buildings yet merely facades or fronts. In many dealerships that I have visited, the conditions in the display areas of the parts and accessory department are a front for the storage areas. Yet, rather being organized and clean as are most display areas, the storage areas are sometimes disorganized and dirty.

Behind the Scenes

During your most recent walk through the parts and accessory storage areas, were any goods on the floor? Were there any beverage containers sitting on any of the shelves? Had the trash receptacles been emptied and cleaned recently? Would you be proud to give a customer a tour of these areas?

If the storage areas in your dealership are not clean and are in disarray, you might consider inviting the parts and accessory department manager to join you in a tour through the storage areas so that you can point to those areas that don't meet your criteria. After this tour, perhaps you could schedule a meeting with the parts and accessory staff to develop a plan to enhance the storage areas.

At this point, you might be thinking "that Selway is at it again." I seem to always suggest changes to your dealership that require effort on the part of you and your associates. And you would be correct in your thinking. But then, if you read the columns by Chuck Marzahn, Don Reed and Bob Zagami in the August issue of RV PRO, you would know that they also suggest some work that could increase your income or that could possibly reduce your liabilities due to unsafe working conditions.

In my experiences as a parts department manager and as an inventory consultant, a clean and organized department provides the opportunity for increased sales, enhanced levels of customer service and improved staff morale.

Some Easy Fixes

So, if you have decided that a few more dollars and glowing customer accolades might appeal to you, here are a few things that could enhance the interior of your parts and accessory department:

1. If you have not already read my columns in the August and September issues of RV PRO, I suggest that you do so because these two columns provided solutions for finding SPACE (also see sidebar on pg. 73) in your parts and accessory storage areas. An organized storage area can reduce the steps necessary to process a transaction, which provides the opportunity to reduce the transaction time, which, thereby, increases the number of transactions that could be processed, which could increase the sales volume.
2. Schedule a meeting with the parts and accessory department personnel at which you can establish your expectations regarding the cleanliness and organization for the department. Make a list of some items that you have noticed in your

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Track sales data for the department for at least six months to determine if these cleaning and organizing projects have provided increased sales volume. Report your findings to the parts and accessory department personnel.

walkaround so that you can provide examples for your associates. You might even lead a tour to point out these culprits. This list could include but not be limited to:

- Empty cartons that could be flattened for reuse or disposal
- Opened cartons that contain goods and must be researched to determine if the contents are complete and/or in saleable condition, or if pieces must be ordered to complete the contents (or if the carton and its contents must be discarded)
- Beverage and food containers that are lying about, especially any that are on a storage shelf
- Components of a prior computer system that could be disposed of in the most efficient and economically beneficial manner
- Empty or condense storage units that are not full that could be organized more efficiently to optimize the storage space and possibly minimize the time required to process a transaction
- Elimination of outdated parts and accessory catalogs
- Coordination of designated storage areas/units for dealership maintenance supplies and equipment such as light bulbs, paper goods, cleaning supplies, etc.
- Inspect goods that are damaged or unidentifiable to determine the most appropriate methods for disposal

3. Make a note in your Daily To-Do List (or for your general manager) to walk through the parts and accessory department and record any items that require improvement or attention. This will be exercising your Management Pects: insPECT what you exPECT to gain the resPECT of your associates.
4. Direct the parts and accessory manager to provide you with a list of those associates who have participated in the department enhancement efforts each week. Ask to be allowed to participate in the weekly department staff meeting so that you can recognize these individuals for their efforts.

5. Track the sales data for the department for at least six months to determine if these cleaning and organizing projects have provided increased sales volume. Report your findings to the parts and accessory department personnel.

Then What?

If you or your general manager have been exercising your Management PECTS as noted in step three, then eventually the cleaning and organization project will evolve into a maintenance routine. And "The Façade Fallacy" will have been banished from your business. RVP

HOW TO CREATE SPACE

Separate the wheat from the chaff.
Apply the management by walking around concept and walk through your parts department storage area(s) and workstations while recording items that don't belong.

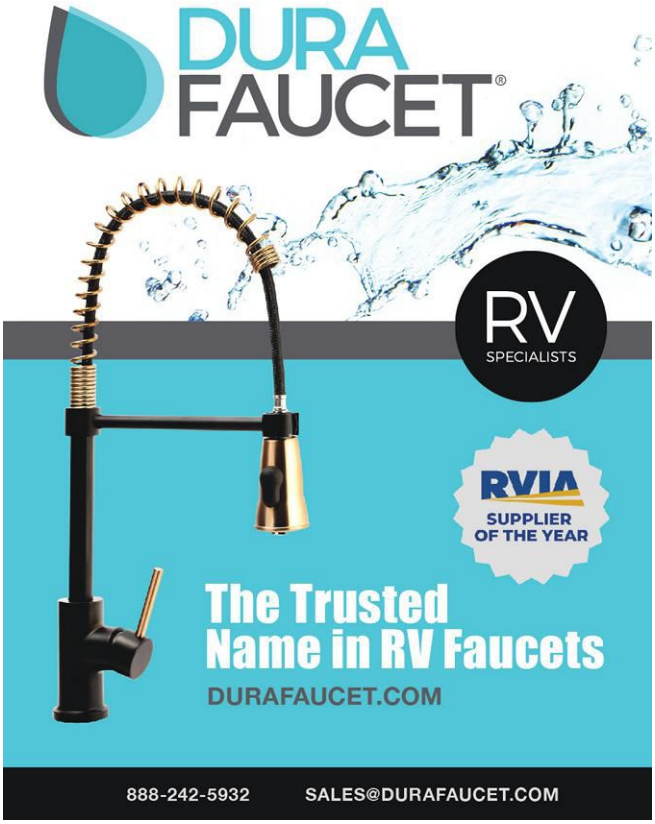
Poll your associates.
Solicit their input as to how and where the remaining inventory and support goods should be placed and how traffic patterns could be arranged.

Ask questions.
Talk to associates about the parts department storage area(s) and the contents. See the list of questions I provided in the August 2022 article.

Contact equipment vendors.
There are many manufacturers of storage equipment and related materials. They will ask about your special storage needs and schedule either an in-person visit or video-visit to view your current facility.

Execute your plan.
If you are renovating an existing facility, this step will most likely have to occur as a planned series of operations because you must support the daily needs of the dealership.

Exercise your Management Pects: insPECT what you exPECT to gain the resPECT of your associates.







The 3 Most Ignored Processes in Today's Service Departments

My team here at DealerPRO has evaluated and analyzed more than a hundred RV service departments over the past 20 years. In doing so, we consistently find three processes that are ignored and/or misunderstood by the management team. So, in this article, we will try to explain the following:

- Why are they ignored?
- How can you correct it?
- What are the benefits of doing so?

Most Ignored Process No. 1: Presenting Maintenance Menus

The question I have for RV dealers and general managers is, do you use some form of a menu in your F&I department? Every dealership we've been in certainly does. Why do you use F&I menus? Here's two good reasons: To provide every customer with a higher level of service, and to increase gross profit per camper sold.



Don Reed is the CEO of DealerPRO Training Solutions in Columbus, Ohio. For more information, visit dealerprotraining.com or call 888-553-0100.

That certainly makes sense to me as it probably does to you. Why should your service department be any different? We find that about 80% of service departments are not using a maintenance menu – why?

1. Managers don't know how to build a proper menu. But the fact is, the worst possible menu will still increase service and parts sales if it is presented to every customer, just like in F&I. In other words, 100% of your service customers are given the opportunity to say "yes" to an additional product or service. Sound familiar?
2. Service advisors haven't been trained on how to give a proper feature/benefit presentation. Do you have untrained F&I producers who can't give a proper presentation? I'm guessing not.
3. Dealers are not committed to making menu presentations a priority and make it company policy for advisors to present to 100% of their customers.
4. Note: I've actually had dealers tell me, "I don't want my advisors to oversell my customers." However, I've never heard a dealer tell me they don't want their F&I producers to increase the sale of F&I products/services. Why does one dealer average $800 PRU (per retail unit) in F&I, while another is averaging $1,600 PRU in the same market? The answer is consistent menu presentations. Why should service be any different?

Most Ignored Process No. 2: Multipoint Inspection Process (MPI)

Question: Do you perform an MPI on all used RVs? Why?

1. To provide the customer with a higher quality RV
2. To increase gross profit per RV sold

Why should service be any different?

Again, we find that about 80% of service departments are not performing a complete multipoint inspection for customers – why?

- Managers don't hold technicians accountable for a proper inspection
- Advisors don't know how to present the value of an MPI and then sell the results to the customer
- Dealers are not committed to making MPIs a priority

Question: What is the primary mission of every service department? Answer: To provide every customer with a safe and reliable RV. How do you do this?

1. 100% menu presentations = reliability
2. 100% multipoint inspections = safety and reliability

MPIs should not be optional for customers. MPIs should not be optional for recon.

Daily Performance Tracking

- Technician MPI completion/closing ratio (90%/30%)

F&I		SERVICE
X	100% feature/benefit presentations	X
X	present every customer with options	X
X	track individual performance	X
X	measure results daily	X
X	continuous training	X

A comparison of the key metrics that should be measured in both F&I and service

F&I PRODUCERS	SERVICE ADVISORS
Finance penetration	Number of repair orders per day
ESC penetration	Sales per day
Tire and wheel sales	Number of menu sales per day
Roadside assistance	Sales per repair order
Gross per retail unit	Hours per repair order

Some management processes for maximum results

Same processes – different training! 100% compliance requires dealer's commitment!







RECON	MPI KEY PROCESSES	RETAIL
X	Service advisor explains MPI will be performed to ensure safety and reliability at no charge	X
X	Technician performs MPI and diagnoses primary item	X
X	Parts provides parts pricing estimate for primary item and MPI	X
X	Advisor presents results for approval to repair	X

- Advisor MPI closing Ratio (40%)
- Audit MPI for accuracy daily
- Track opportunities by red-yellow-green

Sell Technicians on the Benefits

- Increases their productivity
- Ethical responsibility to the customer
- Provides a safe and reliable RV to the customer

Most Ignored Process No. 3:
Train Lower Skill Level Technicians How to Inspect

Moving on to a key process that far too many managers and dealers pay little attention to, which absolutely amazes me, and that's technician productivity. Do you measure sales performance for all salespeople? Do you measure sales performance for all F&I producers? The answer to both questions is likely yes.

Why?

1. To hold everyone accountable for their performance
2. To identify underachievers
3. To provide additional training where needed
4. To improve closing ratios

What percentage of dealerships track the performance of their sales team accurately? Answer: 100%. What percentage of dealerships track the performance of their service team accurately? Answer: 20%. Do you see an opportunity for change?

What are 80% of the dealers doing wrong?

1. Failure to measure hours produced per technician daily
2. Failure to track hourly technicians' productivity daily
3. Failure to follow published labor time guides
4. Lack of urgency to achieve goals daily
5. Lack of incentivized pay plans for hourly techs
6. Lack of training for low skill level technicians
7. Lack of attention by dealers, GMs, service directors

Remember this: If you can effectively train your advisors on menu presentations and complete proper MPIs, your technician productivity will automatically increase and you're well on your way to a record year in service and parts sales. It works in the sales department, and it will work in your service department, too! RVP

PRODUCT HIGHLIGHTS

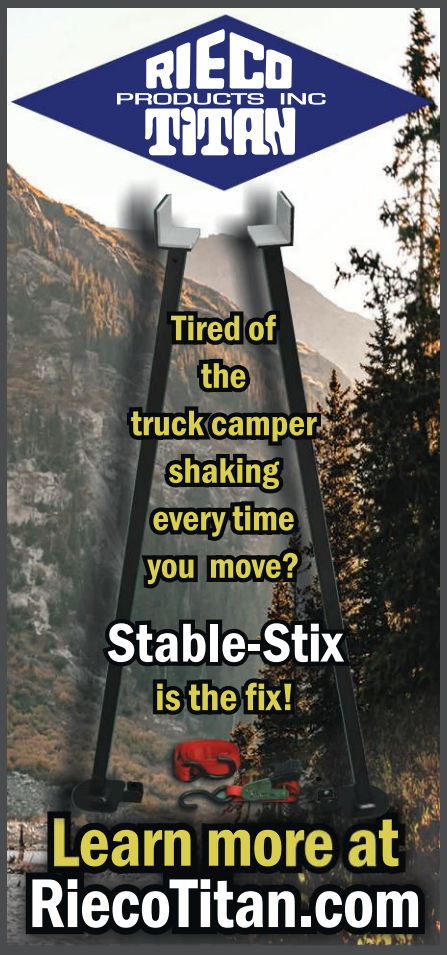
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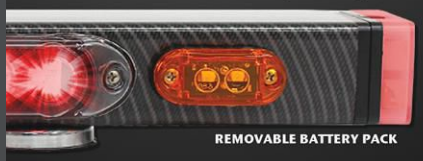
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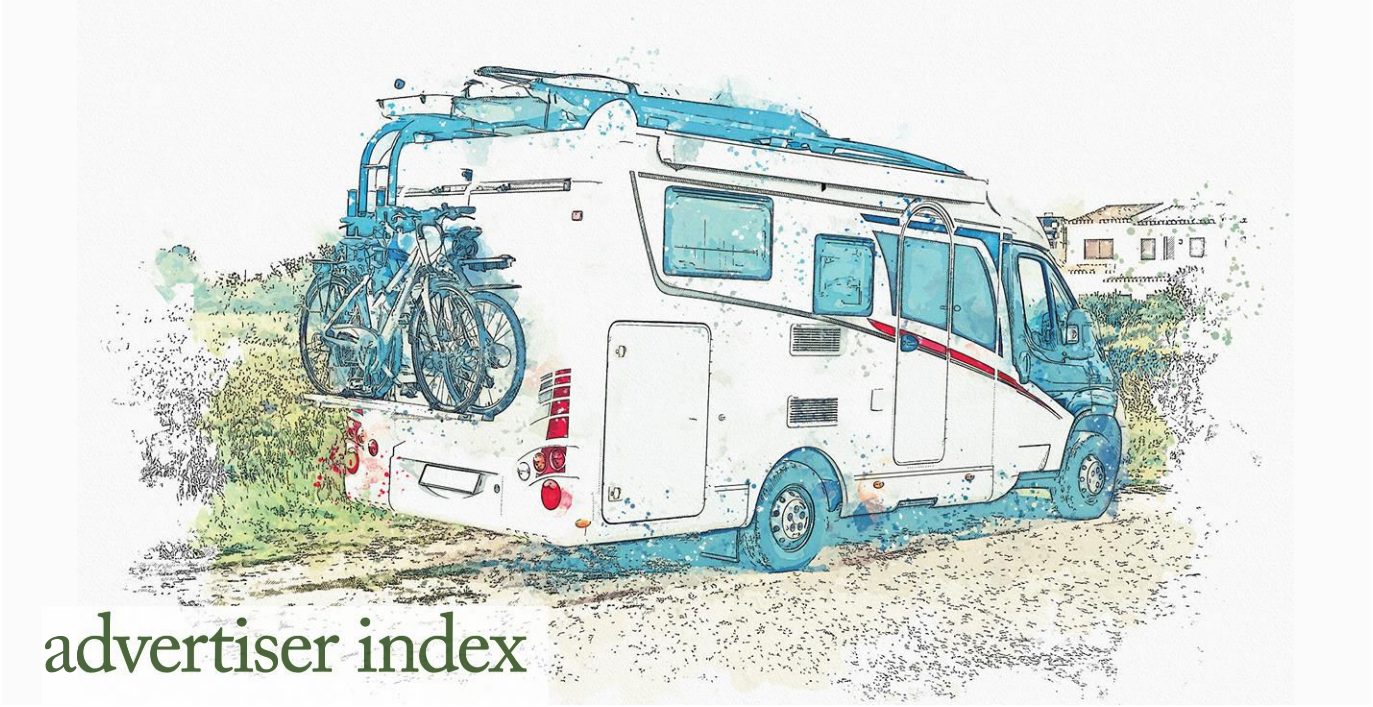
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Samlex America	47
Southwire Co	65
Specialty Recreation Inc	71
Sunset Park RV	30
Sweepovac Ltd	63
Thermo-Tec	58
Thetford/Norcold Corporate Headquarters	7,51,77
Timbren Industries Inc	IBC
TowMate LLC	78
Trim-Lok Inc	15
Truck System Technologies Inc	69
Truma	35
Ultra-Fab Products Inc	66
United States Warranty Corporation	33
Winnebago Industries Inc	29

Pit Stop



The 3 most ignored processes in today's service departments are:

Presenting maintenance menus: F&I menus help provide higher level of service and increase gross profit per RV sold

Multi-point inspection process: Hold your techs accountable for proper inspections

Sales team vs. technicians: Track your service team's performance as accurately as sales

Read more in RV PRO's December column by Don Reed on page 74.

SEPTEMBER SHIPMENTS

28,333 TOTAL of September RV shipments

48.5% DECREASE compared to Sept. 2021

8.2% DECREASE through Sept 2022 compared to same point last year

"This latest shipment report shows that RV production is continuing to normalize off of last year's record production and tracks with our latest forecast for 2022," said RV Industry Association President and CEO Craig Kirby. "Campgrounds continue to report strong reservations as the many people who bought RVs in the past few years are using the RVs to spend quality time with friends and family this fall while enjoying the many physical and mental health benefits of getting outdoors."

Breaking Records:

The U.S. Department of Commerce's Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA) released 2021 data on the outdoor recreation economy, which generates:

$862 billion in economic output

4.5 million jobs

1.9% of GDP

This means outdoor recreation contributes more to the U.S. economy than oil and gas extraction, mining and farming.

SOURCE: RVIA.ORG

Holiday gift ideas for RVers

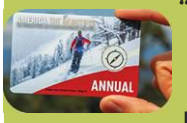


who have (nearly) everything:



Rolls of quarters – perfect stocking stuffer for the traveler who frequents laundromats

Instant Pot



"America the Beautiful" pass – provides free admission to all U.S. national parks

Camping club pass

Tire pressure monitor alert – replaces tire pressure valve caps



Folding step stool



General household hand tool kit





Better Ride Quality | *Added Stability* | *Satisfaction Guarantee* | *Zero Maintenance* | *Easy Installation* | *Lifetime Warranty*



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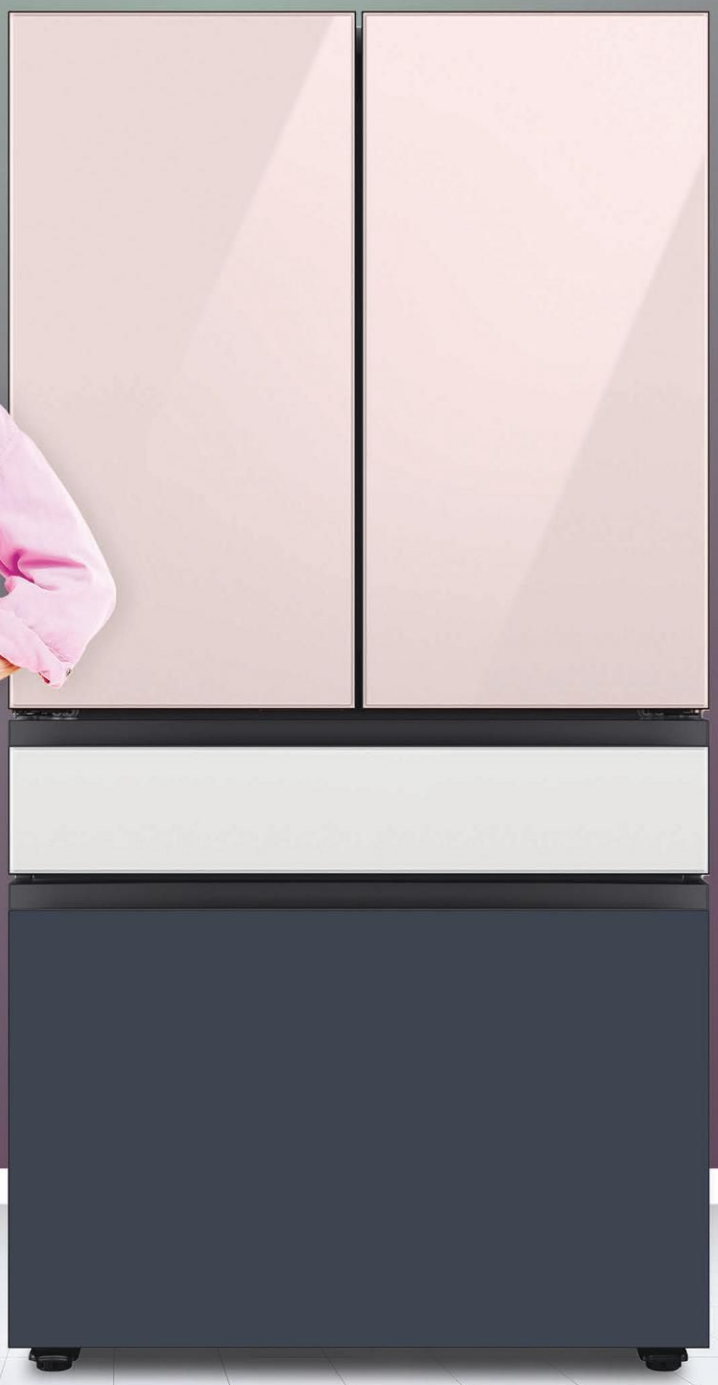
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