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April 2, 2004
The RV Education 101 newsletter
Learning RVs the easy way www.rveducation101.com
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Issue # 2
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Quote of the Month
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"Shoot for the moon. Even if you miss, you'll land among the stars." -Les Brown
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Editorial by Mark
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Well it's official, our first issue of the newsletter went out and as far as I know it was well received. I would like to thank the reader's who e-mailed me with their support and for the responses to our "Favorite Destinations" and "Favorite RV Recipes" section.

I have been extremely busy working on some new projects involving work and adding a new room addition to our house. We have discovered that a thirteen year old and a seven year old need to have bedrooms of thier own. I was going to tackle the project on my own, but for the sake of time and my bad back I decided to hire a couple of people to help me out. I'm glad I did!

Through each stage of the construction process I thought about RV's. Like, how well is your RV constructed? I saw nails that missed their mark and boards that were cut a bit to short. The amazing thing was once everything was caulked, the trim work finished and a fresh coat of paint was applied it looked wonderful. What's behind the eye can be a little deceiving.

It made me think of when I sold RV's. I always explained how the RV was built to my customers. I even encouraged them to visit the plant and take a tour of the construction process. Again, the amazing thing was most people were sold on the RV because of the color of the fabrics or the "finished" look of the RV.

I know the foundation of our room addition is strong and the room itself will stand the test of time. I guess the moral of the story is that your RV is similar to your home. If you're going to finance your RV, like your home, make sure it will stand the test of time. Look beyond the finish when you buy it!

And remember if you enjoy the newsletter please pass it along to your friends and RV companions. Happy Camping,

Mark

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Feature Article ****The Price of Gas****

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It only seems appropriate to talk about gas prices in this months issue. Vacation season will soon be upon us and that means prime time for RV travel. It seems to me that this subject comes up every year about this time. I never understood why gas prices sky rocket every year when the average working family is planning to take their annual vacation. I try not to let it bother me. I try to look at it from an angle that I can deal with.

Last summer gas prices averaged about \$1.69 a gallon. Right now the average is somewhere around \$1.74 a gallon and the way it sounds it will continue to rise into the peak travel season. For the sake of this article let's say it will average \$1.85 a gallon. Our motor home holds 55 gallons of gas and we average 7.5 miles to a gallon. With gas prices at \$1.85 we could take a one thousand mile trip for around \$247.00 in gas. This trip

would cost \$22.00 more than it did to take the same trip last year. I don't know about you but I would pay \$247.00 just to avoid the hassle of leaving my car in the airport parking lot, dragging all the bags to the check-in counter, going through security, rushing to catch the plane and then having a two-hour layover.

I don't think the price of gasoline should deter us from planning trips and using our RVs. If gas prices do get to a point that I consider high, say like back in 1980 when gas cost about \$2.75 a gallon, we just plan trips that are closer to home. Some of our favorite destinations are within 200 miles of where we live. So, a round trip of 400 miles, which for me equates to one tank of gas, at \$2.75 a gallon, would cost a little over \$150.00. It would cost that much to spend a weekend at the beach in a hotel, and I would still spend over \$80.00 in gas to get there in my truck. Again, it is well worth \$150.00 to me to have everything you want and need right at your fingertips. Keep on RVing!!

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Tip of the Month

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Ozone in the air and UV rays from the sun shorten the life of your tires. It is not uncommon to see RV tires with low mileage and plenty of tread that are ruined by the damaging effects of the ozone and UV rays. Ozone in the air causes tires to dry rot and deteriorate and UV rays from the sun make it happen quicker. This is especially true of the tires sidewall. Inspect your tires for checking or cracks in the sidewalls. If you notice any damage have them inspected by a professional. There are basically two ways to protect your tires from these elements. Keep them covered with covers that will block out the sunlight when not in use, or for long-term storage remove the tires and store them in a cool dry place away from the sunlight. I also recommend that you place something like a piece of wood between the ground and the tires. Be sure that whatever you use is larger than the footprint of the tire.

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Readers Favorite RV Destinations

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I included this section in the newsletter for our readers to

write in and tell us your favorite RV destination. It can be a campground, a resort, where you boondock or anything else. In 200 words or less tell us where your favorite RV destination is and why it's your favorite. If we print your short story in a future issue you get your choice of an RV Education 101 e-book free of charge.

Last months winner wrote this.

Here is our favorite destination:

Wind River State Park, near Alex City, Alabama. This park is on the shores of Lake Martin and many of the campsites back up right to the water. All the campsites are paved with water and electric, about half have sewer, and all are under the shade of giant pine trees. The sound of the wind sighing through the pines is so restful. You can bring a boat and tie it up right behind your campsite. During the day the lake, which is a huge reservoir, has great fishing, water-skiing, cruising to see the beautiful hilly and forested shoreline, and even a bluff on the south end you can climb up and jump off into deep water. The park has a great marina to launch your boat with a good camp-store at the marina for all those essentials you left behind.

There are numerous playground areas for kids. The bath houses are plentiful and clean. There are quite a few hiking trails to explore in the park that wind in the woods along the lake. There is even a great beach area to swim in the lake safely. Nearby are several good golf courses, Auburn University (War Eagle!) for great college sports, and Russell Athletics factory store for all kinds of sports clothing.

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Readers Favorite Recipes

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Part of the fun in RVing is not spending all of your time in the kitchen cooking, unless that's what you enjoy doing! We want simple and easy meals that don't require alot of time to prepare. Send us your favorite RV recipes or easy ways to make a meal. If we print it in a future newsletter you will receive a free RV Education 101 e-book of your choice.

Last months recipe winner is from Tane Yingling in Colorado Springs, CO. She actually had 2 for us that we thought were great!

This desert is great on the grill!

BANANA BOATS

4 medium to large ripe bananas

4 tsp. miniature chocolate chips

4 tblsp. miniature marshmallows

Slice the banana lengthwise leaving 1/2" on both sides.

Press both ends towards each other to open a pocket inside the banana. Fill each banana with a tsp. each of the chocolate chips and marshmallows. Shape heavy duty foil around the bottom and sides of each banana to form a boat, leaving the top open. Grill uncovered over medium heat for 10-15 minutes or until marshmallows melt and turn golden brown.

EASY CHILI CASSEROLE

3 c. tortilla chips, crushed (6 1/4-oz pkg.)

1 med. onion chopped

1 c. shredded Monterey Jack cheese

2 15 1/2-oz cans chili con carne with beans

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Into greased 2 quart dish place 3 cups chips. Sprinkle onion, & cheese on top. Spoon the chili con carne with beans on top of this. Add remaining chips. Bake 30 minutes. Serves 6. Fast and easy!

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FAQ and Answer

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I have had several people e-mail me asking how to de-winterize their RV's. I thought it would be a good idea to give a very basic list of the steps to follow to de-winterize your RV. Not all steps will apply to every RV, so follow the steps that apply to your particular RV.

1. If you used nontoxic RV antifreeze open all drains and drain the antifreeze from the system. If you do not have a bypass kit on the water heater drain the antifreeze from the water heater.
2. If you put any antifreeze in the fresh water tank be sure and drain it.
3. Close the drains.
4. Reconnect the outside shower hose if it was removed.
5. To remove antifreeze from the 12-volt water pump, add water

to the fresh water holding tank, turn the pump on and open all water faucets. Run water through the system and then turn the pump off.

6. Hook your hose up to the city water inlet. Turn the water on and open all water faucets. Run fresh water through the system for several minutes. Don't forget the outside shower if equipped.

7. Take the water heater out of the by-pass mode.

8. Flush the toilet.

9. Check the entire water system for leaks.

10. Fill and drain your black and gray holding tanks at least once.

11. Inspect the termination valve and lubricate the valve handles.

12. Treat the black tank with holding tank chemicals.

13. Reinstall any water filter cartridges you removed for winterizing.

If you want to sanitize the water system follow these guidelines.

1. Start by draining all of the old water out, and then close all of the drains.

2. Take a quarter cup of house hold bleach for every fifteen gallons of water that your fresh water tank holds.

3. Mix the bleach, with water, into a one-gallon container and pour it into the fresh water holding tank.

4. Fill the fresh water tank completely full of water.

5. Turn the water pump on, open all hot and cold faucets and run the water until you smell the bleach at each faucet.

6. Close the faucets and let it sit for at least four hours.

7. Drain the entire system and refill the fresh water tank with water.

8. Open all of the faucets and run the water until you no longer smell any bleach. It may be necessary to repeat this process again to eliminate all signs of bleach from the water system. Once this is done it is safe to use your water system. It's also a good idea to use a water filter at campgrounds and to keep bottled water on hand for drinking.

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Classified Ads & Informative Links
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Visit our e-book page. <http://www.rveducation101.com/other.htm>
#1 selling e-book "Checklists for RVers"
"RV Towing, Weights, Hitch Work & Backing"
"Pop-Up Basics 101"
"RV Maintenance for Motor Homes"
"101 Tips for RVers"
Watch for new titles coming soon

FIVE of RV Education 101's training videos now available on DVD
Pop-Up 101 DVD
Class A Motor Home DVD
Class C Rental/Owner DVD
Winterizing and Storing Your RV DVD
Trailer Towing, Weights, Hitch Work & Backing DVD
<http://www.rveducation101.com/>

Do you have questions concerning trailer towing, weights, hitch work and backing? If so we have the answers. We just completed our 7th video, "Trailer Towing, Weights, Hitch Work & Backing" It is available in VHS and DVD. <http://www.rveducation101.com>

What is going to happen with gas prices this summer? At \$1.74 a gallon our 3,000 mile RV trip at 7.5 miles to a gallon will cost about \$700 in gas. Thats still not bad when you consider hotel rooms and eating out three times a day. Read more about it. http://money.cnn.com/2004/03/24/news/economy/gas_prices.reut/

Here are some more thoughts about gas prices from RV dealers and RV consumers.
<http://www.modbee.com/business/story/8285936p-9128421c.html>

Since we're on a roll with gas prices go here to find out how much gas will cost where you plan to travel and what you can do to conserve on fuel.

http://www.governmentguide.com/govsite.adp?bread=*Main&url=http://www.governmentguide.com/ams/clickThruRedirect.adp?55079743,32597293,http://www.fueleconomy.gov/feg/gasprices/states/index.shtml&CID=16101001

Here are some must read RV safety articles offered by RV Alliance America.

<http://www.rvaa.com/drivesaf.php3>

Do you have spare time on your hands, but don't know what to do? The US Army Corps of Engineers can use you. The Corps of Engineers is the steward of almost 12 million acres of land and water across the country. Volunteers play an important role in protecting the natural resources and maintaining recreation facilities. You could serve as campground hosts, staff visitor centers, conduct programs, maintain park trails and much more. www.orn.usace.army.mil/volunteer

If you're a solo woman RVer, or you're thinking about taking an RV trip by yourself we recently added a new e-book written specifically for you. "The Woman's Guide to Solo RVing" <http://www.rveducation101.com/ebooks.htm>

April Fuel Daze. Gas prices don't keep this couple at home! <http://thefacts.com/story.lasso?wcd=12966>

Would you like to camp for half price at over 800 quality resorts and campgrounds? http://www.rveducation101.com/happy_camper.htm

Are you looking for the perfect camping chair? Read about one woman's quest for a great lawn chair. <http://www.nytimes.com/2004/04/01/technology/circuits/01shop.html?ex=1081573200&en=2025749af74996fe&ei=5006&partner=ALTAVISTA>

KOA's are offering one free night of camping on May 14 for a good cause. <http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/4632442/>

Would you like a free 168 page, 2004 KOA campground directory? <http://www.koa.com/orderadirectory/>

Do you own a pop-up or you're considering getting one? Did you know there is a magazine and a website dedicated solely to

pop-ups and their owner's?
<http://www.popuptimes.com>

Would you like to learn more about our National Parks? You might get some great ideas for your next RV trip.
<http://www.nps.gov/>

The Recreation Vehicle Safety Education Foundation (RVSEF) is dedicated to the improvement of recreation vehicle safety, with a focus on education provided in a professional and objective way. To learn more about RVSEF visit their website at
<http://www.rvsafety.org/index.htm>

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About us:
Our goal with this monthly newsletter is to provide you with helpful information to make all of your RV experiences more enjoyable. I left my position as an RV Sales and F&I manager in 2000 to start my own company, RV Education 101. We produce educational videos, DVDs and e-books on how to use and maintain your RV.

The reason I left my job was due to my concern about the lack of educational and safety awareness material available to the RV consumer, in other words, you. We are a small company. My wife Dawn left her position in RV sales to help start the company and is our Sales and Marketing Director.

We currently have a 28-foot Class C motor home. We have two boys, Tyler 7 and Josh 13, both avid RVers and two dogs, Gracie and Buck. Gracie is the good one. If you would like to learn more about us and RV Education 101 feel free to visit our website at <http://www.rveducation101.com>

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Happy Camping,
Mark