

# RV Consumer e-Magazine

January 2016

Volume 6

Issue 1

DISCOVER

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# RV 2016

## What's New

## What's Cool

53rd Annual  
National RV Trade Show

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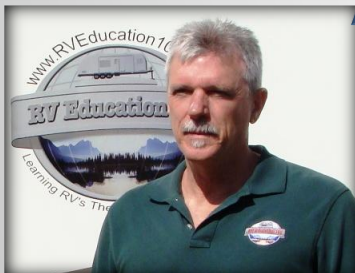
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Happy New Year. I hope you had a great Christmas holiday. Last month I attended the 53rd Annual National RV Trade Show in Louisville, Ky. and last fall I attended the Pennsylvania RV & Camping Show in Hershey, Pa. I look forward to these shows every year. It is incredible to see over 750,000 square feet of new RVs and RV exhibitors displaying products just for RVers. And it's difficult to cover that amount of display space in only three days.

But each year I leave these shows with an perspective of where the RV industry is, and it gets me excited for another year of what I am passionate about, RVs and camping. The 2015 shows did not disappoint. The RV industry is going strong, and with low fuel prices and interest rates the 2016 camping season promises to be a good one.

Sit back, relax and take a look at what's new & what's cool for 2016!

*Mark*

"Make 2016 a year to remember. Plan some RV trips in advance and don't let a busy schedule interfere with those plans!" ~ Mark Polk

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# RV Education 101 Product Catalog



Our digital [RV Product Catalog](#) puts all of our RV training products in one place, and we separate what products apply to what type of RV. For example if you own a travel trailer you can browse through the single DVD titles or go directly to the DVD value sets that apply specifically to travel trailers.

## Enjoy the RV Journey



wherever it takes you

Preview of the 53rd Annual National RV Trade Show

# RV 2016

## What's New? What's Cool?



Wholesale RV shipments to dealerships have been on the rise for several years now. RV shipments in 2013 totaled 321,000 and the 2016 projections are 375,100. These numbers indicate the RV industry is doing well and the economy is continuing to rebound. For potential RV owners the outlook is good. Fuel prices dropped, interest rates are still low and there lots of RVs to choose from.

The number of RV owning households in the U.S. continues to rise too. I personally contribute this to folks wanting to experience outdoor activities with family and friends and RVs are a great way to do it. With an RV you can

spend quality time with your family and friends, you can travel with your pets, you can tailgate at you favorite sporting event, take a quick weekend getaway or hit the road for months at a time. And every night when it's time to lay your head down on the pillow you get to do it in your own bed. Young families and retirees alike are in the market for RVs. It is a diverse marketplace and RV manufacturers need to be on the cutting edge of technology to satisfy all of the buyer's personal needs and wants. That is good news for the RV consumer. It translates to a wide variety of RV types and sizes equipped just the way you want it. If you are a "back to the basics" type camper there are RVs for you,



and likewise if you are a “high end buyer” there are models available with all the bells and whistles.

This year at the National RV Trade Show I wanted to look at what is new and innovative. For the past several years I said the trend in the RV industry is smaller, lighter and more fuel efficient RVs. With stringent EPA regulations and Corporate Average Fuel Economy (CAFÉ) regulations mandating improved fuel economy across manufacturers fleet’s of vehicles the result is smaller size tow vehicles. Smaller tow vehicles equate to smaller and lighter trailers. This trend can be seen on the motorized side as well. The Type B, B-plus and C motorhome market continues to increase. These smaller motorhomes are powered by more fuel efficient gas and diesel engines.



Another trend that continues to flourish is incorporating more electronics and technology in today’s RVs. The RV industry, like the automobile industry, looks at what future buyer’s expectations are, and

builds product for that generation of consumers. RV buyers are entering the market at a younger age than in the past. The millennial generation, those born at some point in the 80s to the 2000s are next in line to purchase RVs. This generation grew up with video games, computers and smart phones. Most don’t know what a pay phone is! For RV manufacturers this means adding the latest and greatest electronics and technology to RVs. This new buyer has expectations of operating the systems on the RV at the touch of a button. New technology is exactly what I saw as I navigated the 750,000 square feet of RVs and RV products on display at this year’s shows.

Let’s take an inside look at what’s new and what’s cool from this years Pennsylvania RV & Camping Show and the 53<sup>rd</sup> Annual National RV Trade Show.

## Towable RVs

A good place to start the 2016 RV preview is with towable RVs. There were small and large toy haulers, travel trailers, hybrid trailers, pop-ups, truck campers and 5<sup>th</sup> wheel trailers on display at both shows.

The first RV manufacturer display I walked into confirmed my thoughts that the lightweight RV trend continues to gain traction in the industry. Featured at the Lance Camper display was a new Lance 650 truck camper. This lightweight truck camper was designed specifically with a ½ ton short bed pick up in mind.



The all new [Lance 650 truck camper](#) has a dry weight of 1,639 pounds and a floor length of 6' 10". It has a 22 gallon fresh water tank, and it can sleep three people. It is aluminum frame construction with block foam insulation and it is four-seasons capable. The 650 was equipped with every thing you need to go camping in



comfort, including a wet bath, AC, heat, 2-burner range, microwave, fridge, LED TV, USB outlets, Bluetooth App enabled, power awning and stereo.



For those of you who like truck campers, and have a heavy duty truck that can handle the weight, Lance has a good selection of larger models too, like this [Lance 1062 model with double slide](#)

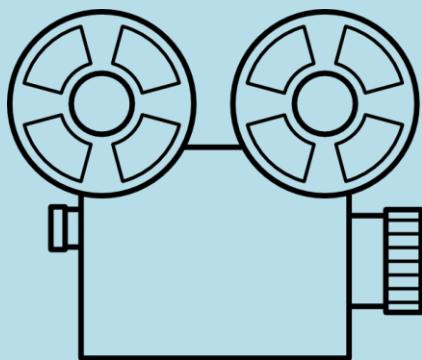


Lance 1062 interior





At the Pa. RV & Camping show last fall I noticed the Lance line-up of lightweight travel trailers on display. I took advantage of speaking to a Lance regional sales manager about how Lance builds a lightweight travel trailer that smaller tow vehicles are capable of towing. [Watch the video](#) to see what he had to say.



[How Lance Builds a Lightweight Travel Trailer](#)



Another trend gaining momentum is restoring vintage trailers. I have a passion for vintage trailers and I enjoy restoring them, but by the time you are finished with a restoration project you have lots of time and money invested. Some RV manufacturers have a solution for those who like the old school look, with modern day amenities. Take this Whitewater Retro 176 by [RiversideRVs.net](http://RiversideRVs.net) for example. Riverside RVs builds retro-style trailers in lengths ranging from 16 to 20 feet.



As the trend for renovating vintage RVs increases I am sure more RV manufacturers will duplicate retro-style trailers and motorhomes of years-gone-by. In 2015 Shasta reintroduced its [1961 replica Shasta Airflyte](#) with the famous wings, and Winnebago started producing modern day versions of its retro-style classic [Winnebago Brave motorhome](#)



## Tow Vehicles

Continuing with my future of RVs theory about “all things lighter” truck manufacturers factor into this as well. Government imposed fuel economy regulations have a lot to do with it, but I see other trends developing in the ½ ton pick-up marketplace that I never saw before.

In 2013 GM invited me to attend the North American International Auto Show (NAIAS) in Detroit, Michigan. They wanted me to see the new 2014 model-year Chevy Silverado and GMC Sierra line-up from a trailer towing perspective. I had the opportunity to talk with GM engineers and to get some viewpoints on the direction pick-up trucks are going in the future. One major goal for manufacturers was to meet stringent EPA and CAFÉ regulations.



They did this by using technology like cylinder deactivation, continuous variable valve timing, and direct fuel injection. Other methods to accomplish this were to build the trucks lighter and more aerodynamic, but still retain the

horsepower and torque necessary to tow trailers. At the auto show I asked GM engineers about the possibility of a ½ diesel powered pick-up in the near future, but was told I would need to wait and see. [Read my Hood to Hitch review](#)

I often wondered why truck manufacturers were not building a ½ ton diesel powered truck that was both fuel efficient and powerful enough to tow many of today's travel trailers and mid-size 5<sup>th</sup> wheel trailers. Jump to 2015 and Ram was the first to introduce a ½ ton truck with a light-weight 3.0L V-6 eco-diesel engine producing 240HP and 420 lb-ft of torque.



For the past couple years I kept seeing a new Cummins 5.0L V-8 on display at the shows I attended and later discovered this 310HP and 555 lb-ft torque producing engine would be used in the 2016 Nissan Titan pick-up. It seemed odd that any truck other than Ram would have a Cummins diesel, but since Fiat acquired Chrysler they opted to use a popular Italian made diesel engine in their ½ ton truck line-up.



In Louisville this year I stumbled on a 2016 Chevy Colorado with a 2.8L Duramax diesel producing 305HP and 369 lb-ft torque. I guess my question about a diesel in a mid-sized GM truck just got answered. Not only do these small diesels have impressive tow ratings, they are claiming 28 to 30 mpg too.



[Ford Super Duty](#)



[Chevy Silverado HD](#)

And truck manufacturers won't disappoint the RV buyer who wants to tow a larger and heavier 5<sup>th</sup> wheel trailer or toy hauler either. The heavy duty trucks are under strict EPA regulations as well, but with advancements in technology to reduce diesel emissions truck manufacturers are still producing strong towing trucks with improved fuel economy. The cost factor does get passed on to the buyer, but it satisfies EPAs almost ridiculous standards while still allowing RV owners to tow heavier RVs.

New model heavy duty trucks built today have impressive tow ratings, like the Ram 3500 HD best in class diesel tow rating of 31,210 pounds. What impresses me is Ram actually used the J2807 towing standard to measure the heavy duty truck's towing capability which is proof the truck can actually tow the amount it claims.





At the RVIA show I also noticed a [Dynamax Isata 5 Series](#) Super C motorhome built on an HD Ram chassis and powered by a 6.7L Cummins. When I talked to the Dynamax representative he said they used the Ram because it outperformed the Ford chassis previously used.

To round out the lightweight towables there were all types and sizes of folding tent campers, hybrid trailers, tear drops and ultra-lightweight trailers on display at both shows. Depending on the type of camping you enjoy these models run the gamut from offering sparse features to all the features and comforts of home.



[Clipper by Coachmen](#)



[Winnie Drop by Winnebago](#)



[Bearcat Toy Hauler by Livin Lite](#)



The [ALiner](#) dormers offer additional living space and natural lighting inside



[Jayco Jay Feather Ultra Lites](#)





[Row of Z-1 lightweights by Crossroads RV](#)

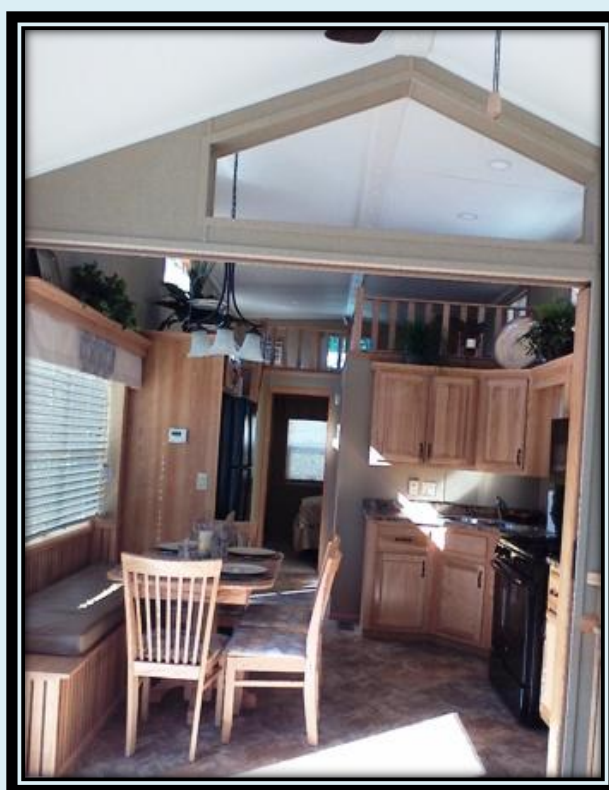


[Row of Apex Ultra Lites by Coachmen](#)

Something else gaining popularity in the RV marketplace is destination camping. Lots of folks have a favorite destination at the coast or in the mountains that they enjoy returning to on a regular basis. To accommodate these needs there is a wide variety of Park Model Trailer manufacturers. When you purchase a park model trailer it is usually set-up and left at your favorite camping destination on a semi-permanent or permanent basis.



There are park model trailers that resemble cottages with siding and gable shingled roofs (pictured above) and there are park models that look more like a conventional travel trailer. Park model trailers come equipped with residential style appliances, furnishing and toilets.



There are park model vacation homes available to meet different needs and price points. If you enjoy destination camping a park model is the way to go.







Speaking of Ultra-lite travel trailers this one did not even fit in the photograph. It is a 37.6 foot [Winnebago Ultralite travel trailer](#) I saw at the Pa. RV & Camping show



[Montana by Keystone](#)

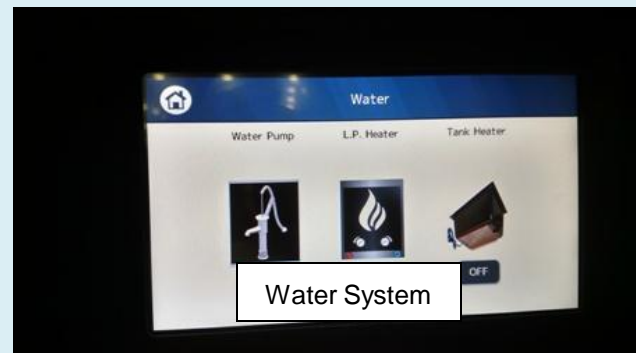
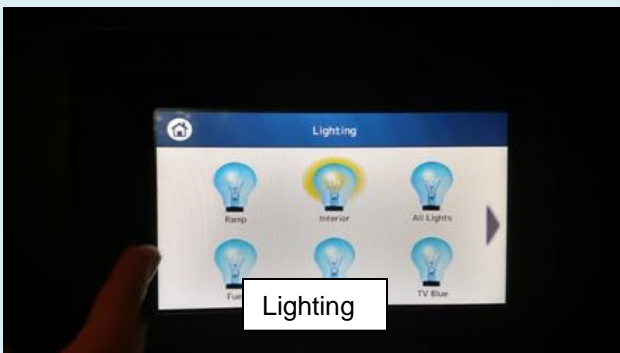
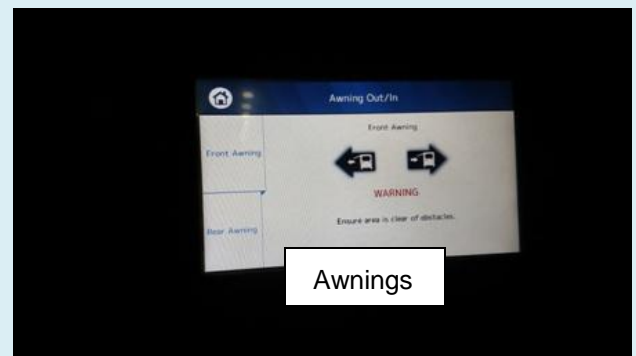
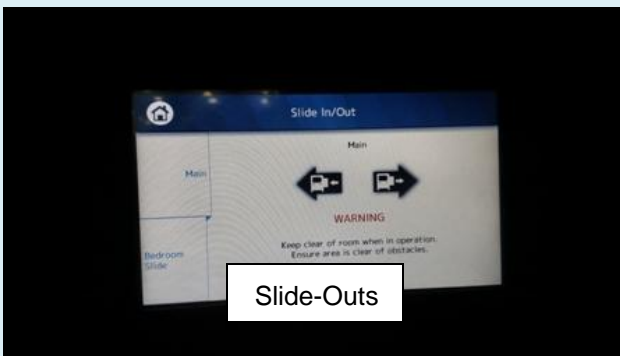
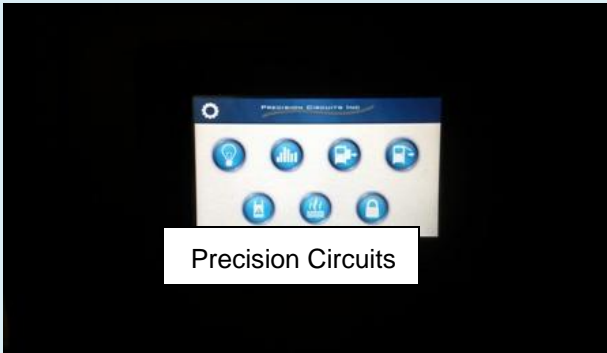


[Cyclone by Heartland](#)

And of course if you are interested in a larger high-end travel trailer, 5<sup>th</sup> wheel trailer or toy hauler there are lots of brands and models to choose from.

## New Technology

I mentioned earlier that RV manufacturers are focusing attention on the next generation of RV buyers. The next generation grew up playing video games, using computers and with smart phones. They want, or expect, the systems on the RV to operate at the push of a button. Just a few short years ago the only digital display in an RV was the monitor panel. Now you can control almost everything in the RV from a single control panel, and there are Apps to control the functions from your phone. This system is used in some Forest River products.



I have seen this type of technology used in higher end units for a few years now and I anticipate as the cost drops this technology will be offered and used in more RV brands by more RV manufacturers.

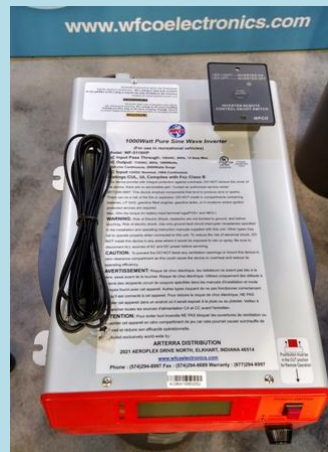




Last year I talked about seeing more RV manufacturers building all-electric RV models with induction cook tops and residential style refrigerators, eliminating the need for propane as long as there is a source of electricity, be it the power pedestal or a generator. This year I saw more of this technology.



The all-electric refrigerators have a dedicated battery and a dedicated inverter.



And as I mentioned almost every thing in the RV can be operated at the touch of a button, from lighting to awnings to roller shades by using an app on your phone, a remote control, or a touchpad panel in the RV.



And don't forget on-demand water heaters that provide hot water faster than your water heater at home, big screen TVs, fireplaces, satellite TV, charging stations, climate controlled heat & AC, solar panel technology, LED lighting, and entertainment centers with surround sound. Technology in today's RVs almost surpasses the creature comforts found in our own homes. I can hardly wait to see what the future will bring.

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- Telly Award Winning RV entertainment
- Each episode of this hit series provides valuable RV information!

Don't forget to check out [Mark's Blog](#), our free [RV101.TV site](#) and the brand new [RV DIY Channel](#) too!

I also remember working on RVs when there were no wiring diagrams available and troubleshooting a wiring problem could be a nightmare. This precision-plex diagnostics center I saw on some Forest River products is bringing the RV industry into the 21<sup>st</sup> century. With a diagnostic center like this the owner can check the systems on the RV for proper operation, and technicians can troubleshoot and diagnose problems from one central location. Repairs can be made quicker saving the consumer money on repair bills. I for one am glad to see the RV industry making strides in technology and repair and improving warranty, parts and customer service along the lines of the auto industry.



We truly live in an age of technology and it can be mind-boggling to see where it will go next. But remember, part of the camping experience is getting the kids outside to enjoy what nature has to offer. I remember telling the boys to leave the video games home when we went camping, but the next generation of buyers want RVs equipped with the same devices that tend to keep us indoors when we are home. I guess it's up to the individual to determine what camping means to them. I will always feel the "getting back to nature" part is an important aspect to camping, but that's just me.





## Motorized RVs

The motorized side of the RV market is similar to the towables in my opinion. I continue to see increases in smaller, lighter and more fuel efficient motorhomes. Some of these models get better fuel economy than my last pick-up truck. The demand for these smaller motorhomes is growing, and I credit much of that to the Sprinter chassis that entered the RV marketplace over a decade ago. The Sprinter chassis has changed ownership several times through the years (Mercedes Benz, Dodge, Freightliner) but regardless of the badge it has proven itself as the premier platform to build type B, B-plus and C motorhomes on.

It is evident that other vehicle manufacturers took notice of this potential market with the Ram ProMaster and Ford Transit based motorhomes competing for a piece of the Type B, B-plus and C motorhome pie.

These type B and B-plus motorhomes are tall and wide enough to provide comfortable living space, they are fuel efficient with both gas and diesel powerplants available, they are easier to drive than their type A counterpart and they offer varying price points to attract potential buyers interested in a smaller motorhome.



New 2017 [Winnebago View/Navion](http://www.winnebago.com) 24G powered by a Mercedes diesel, double slide-out floorplan. Look at the space saving bathroom design.





For those interested in a motorhome, but need or want something a little bigger there are lots of Type C motorhomes to choose from. Type C motorhomes are a great choice for families with the extra sleeping accommodations over the cab. The motorhome pictured is a [new Winnebago Minnie Winnie 31G](#) with a full-wall slide on a Ford chassis. The full-wall slide-out really opens up the interior living space.

**NEW**  
**Minnie Winnie 31G**

**Winnebago**

**Accommodations & Features**

- Full-wall slide opens on driver side
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- Built-in bike rack converts to large motorcycle storage
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- Large pantry with drawers
- Large storage in passenger side

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- Available gas oven
- Available 12' 180° swivel seats with cup holders and foot rests
- Available dual-pane windows
- Available deluxe patio and graphics
- Available optional package with stereo, TV, computer, DVD, radio, speakers and USB refrigerator

# RV Education 101 Releases Video App

***The new RV Education 101 App gives you instant access to the videos you purchase and is available in both Apple and Android operating systems.***

Tablets and smart phones are forecast to be the majority platform for video by 2016 and we wanted to offer our customers a bulletproof method for instant video content delivery. Our goal was to perfect this technology, for both download and streamed video, so our customers can view the content with or without an internet connection. It took us over eight years, but our new [RV Education 101 video App](#) perfected the instant video download process.”

The biggest technological feat RV Education 101 faced was developing a system that worked 100% of the time for portable devices using Apple and Android operating systems. “It seemed like every time we got our current download process to work on one device a new product came out that it didn’t work on. That problem was solved when RV Education 101 developed the new video App. Apps are faster, more convenient and provide additional functionality, like the capability to download videos directly to a device for offline viewing.

**The new App is titled “RV Education 101” and is available through both [Apple](#) and [Android](#) App Stores.** The IOS App works on iPhone, iPad and iPod touch devices.

When you open the App’s main menu it lists all of the full-feature RV training titles currently available, and you have the option to purchase individual chapters, or the entire video. And because it is an instant download with limited overhead we can pass the savings onto you.





# RV Education 101 YouTube Channel



If you want access to informative RV how-to videos, RV product videos, RV installation videos and more take a minute to visit our [RV Education YouTube channel](#).

You can subscribe to our channel and get notified every time we post a new video. We currently have over 250 RV Education 101 produced videos posted on our channel with over 19,871 subscribers and 5,396,069 video views.

It's a great place to sharpen up on your RV skills and learn more about how to use and maintain your RV.

## RV Chassis

When I was selling RVs in the 90s Type A gas motorhomes were built on either a Chevy P-30 chassis powered by a 454, or a Ford F53 chassis powered by a 460. Workhorse Custom Chassis (WCC) entered the RV marketplace in the late 90s, taking over production of GM's P-series chassis business. The Workhorse chassis was powered by an 8.1L Chevrolet engine. Meanwhile Ford continued to upgrade it's chassis and engine using a Triton V10. The competition was good for motorhome owners since both chassis manufacturers continued to enhance its offering and steadily improve on the product.

In 2012 Workhorse closed its doors, leaving Ford as the sole producer of Type A motorhome gas chassis'. The Type A motorhome business dropped significantly after the recession, but has steadily increased since 2009. Other chassis builders took notice of this and in 2015 Workhorse announced it was re-entering the RV marketplace with an improved chassis design, two gasoline engines choices (6.0L and 8.8L) coupled to an Allison transmission. This new competition will surely result in future improvements to the Ford RV chassis as well.

When I was in Louisville I stopped by the [Freightliner Custom Chassis](#) display. They had a new front engine diesel chassis, powered by a 6.7L Cummins, on display that they hoped would spark some interest among RV manufacturers to compete against the gas chassis segment of the market. There was also some talk about a possible gas powered Freightliner chassis at some point in the future.

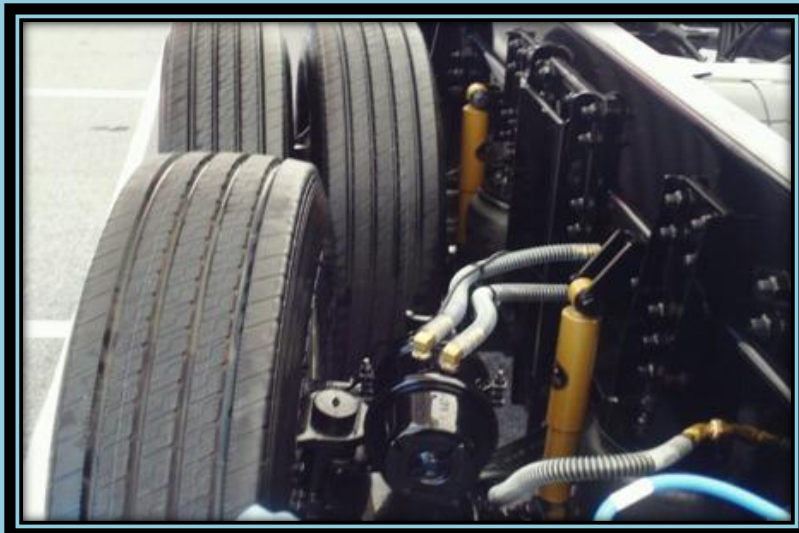




If you are interested in a chassis to use as a platform for a diesel motorhome Freightliner Custom Chassis has you covered. At the Pennsylvania RV & Camping Show I ran across this Freightliner UltraSteer chassis.



This FCC chassis was designed with premium RVs in mind, and with UltraSteer the wheels on the tag axle follow the ideal turning path of the front suspension, giving the inside wheel optimal turning range. The result is a 17% reduction in the curb-to-curb turning radius, which is a 140% advantage over typical steer tag axles, and a 20% tighter turning angle than the closest competitor.



It would not be fair for me to categorize a “Best in Show” since it was physically impossible to see all of the RVs on display at the National RV Trade Show. With that said, one of my favorites was the 2016 [Winnebago Grand Tour](#).

This elegant and luxurious diesel-pusher is built on a Winnebago-exclusive Maxum Chassis® and is powered by 450-hp Cummins®. The Grand Tour has too many features to list here so I will let the pictures do the talking. The model on display had an MSRP of \$485,366.



### ***Take a Tour of the 2016 Winnebago Grand Tour***







***2016 Winnebago Grand Tour Interior***





***2016 Winnebago Grand Tour Interior***







***2016 Winnebago Grand Tour Exterior & Cockpit***



## ***In Conclusion***

I always enjoy attending the Pennsylvania RV & Camping Show and the National RV Trade Show. These shows give us a glimpse of where the RV industry is now and where it is headed. All indications point to a strong future for RVs and camping from every aspect. RV manufacturers, vendors, campgrounds and consumers all contribute to the RV lifestyle that promotes family bonding, travel and lasting memories that we all enjoy so much.

That wraps up my coverage of the Pennsylvania RV & Camping Show and the 53rd Annual National RV Trade Show. I mentioned a couple times that regardless of what type of RV you are interested in, what size RV, and what price point there is an RV out there to suit your particular needs. Take time this winter to attend some local RV shows and don't rush into making a buying decision. Do your research on RV manufacturers, RV dealers, the different types of RVs and look at some floor plans. Like I said, when you see it you will know it. Go find your dream RV and have a wonderful 2016 camping season.

[To find some local RV shows in the state where you live visit RVIA](#)



[Airstream](#)



How will you  
**Remember**  
your travels?



*The laptop we would've used to  
keep in touch with the kids.*



*Cook's Field, the week after we  
missed the Bluegrass Festival.*



*The guy from Ed's Towing.  
Spent three hours with him.*

Not all insurance is equal. Just because you have your RV insured, doesn't mean your whole RV experience is covered. Things like personal effects coverage, vacation liability, and towing expenses are frequently left out of other carriers' policies. But at Explorer RV, we believe it's more than just your RV we're covering. It's the travels, the good times, the memories. Visit us online to learn more or to get a quote.

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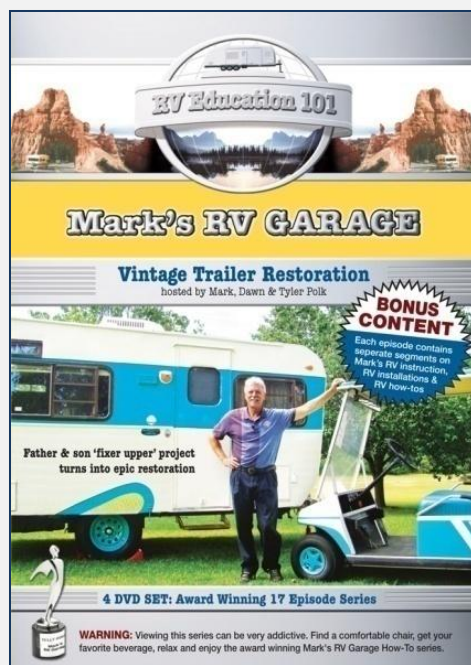
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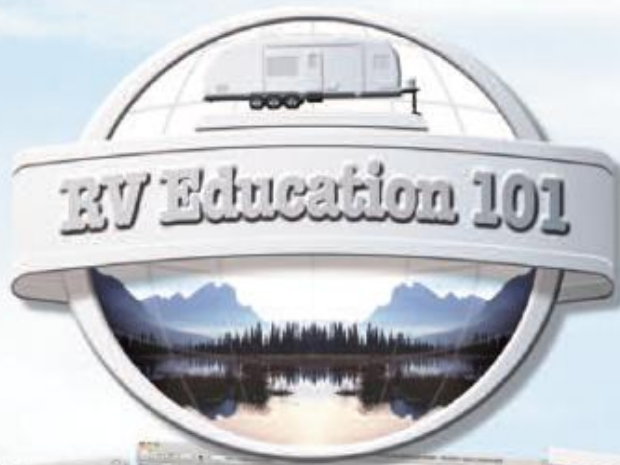
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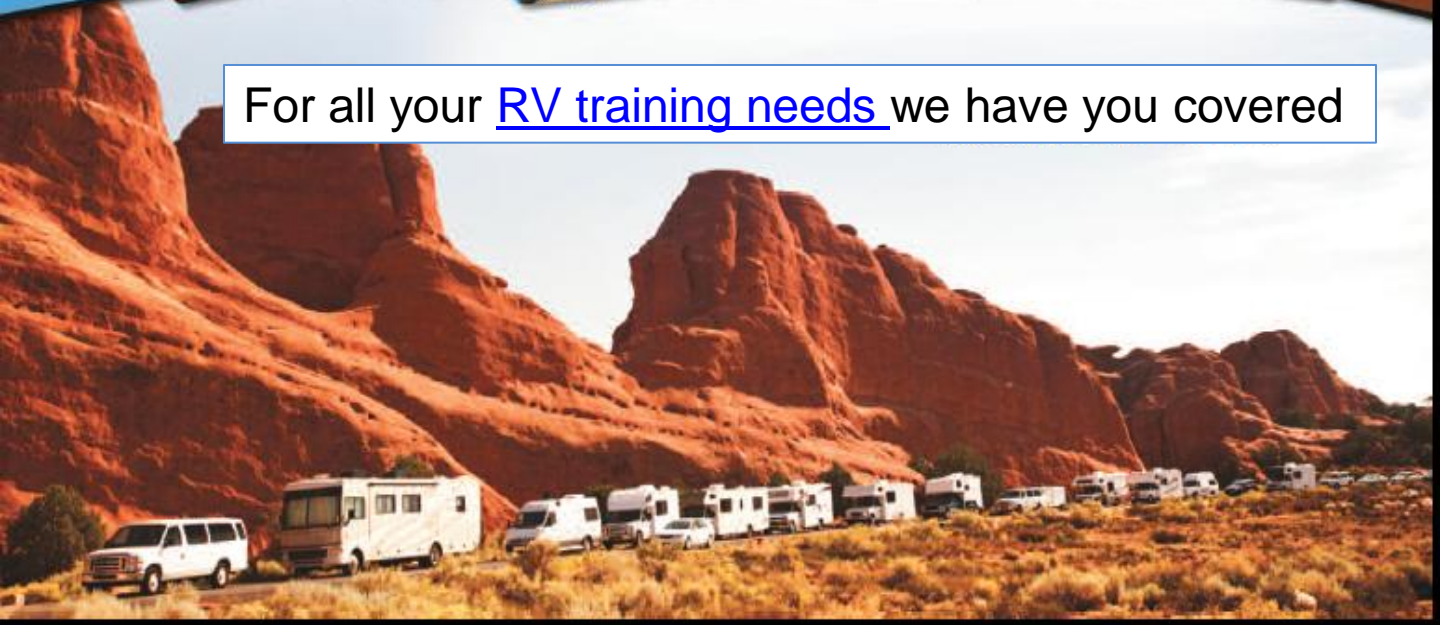
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Our goal with RV Consumer E-Magazine is to provide you with helpful information to make all of your RV experiences more enjoyable. I left my position as an RV Sales and F&I manager in 2000 to start RV Education 101.

We produce RV educational videos & DVDs and publish books and e-books on how to safely & properly use and maintain your RV. The reason I left my job was because of my concern about the lack of educational and safety awareness material available to the RV consumer, in other words you.

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 35-foot Class A motor home and travel with two dogs Roxie & Gracie. If you would like to learn more about us and about RV Education 101 please visit [www.rveducation101.com](http://www.rveducation101.com)

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