



# FRVTA news

MONTHLY NEWS CONCERNING FLORIDA'S RECREATION VEHICLE INDUSTRY

## Don't Miss Out on the Best Birthday Celebration Ever!

It's your chance to celebrate two great birthday events at this year's annual FRVTA Convention. Taking place at the preeminent Gaylord Palms Hotel in Kissimmee, September 9 through 12, this year's convention marks the 30th Anniversary of the Florida RV Trade Association as well as the 100th Anniversary of the RV Industry. Both milestones prompted this year's convention theme of "We Hear It's Your Birthday...It's Our Birthday, Too!!"

What this means for you is that this will be an outstanding chance for you to experience the learning, networking and relaxing opportunities available all in one location.

As part of your Association's efforts to continually improve Florida's RV Industry, this year's educational seminars will be the best ever. And, we've returned to the three-day schedule to allow more free time to spend getting to know all participating FRVTA members.

Thursday evening's "Get the Party Started" Welcome Reception is a great place to meet up with old friends and make new ones. Of course the "Party Central" Hospitality Room will be open that evening to continue the meeting and greeting.

Friday morning the convention starts with the General Session. Highlighting this opening session will be the RV Industry Panel representing all segments of the RV Industry. Featured participants are Rick Horsey from Parkview RV Center in Delaware, Linda Profaizer from ARVC, Mark Beecher from Bank of the West, Bob Parrish from GE Distribution Finance, Bob Morder from NTP Distribution and Doug Gaeddert from Forest River, who will address the problems their particular segment of the industry faces in the coming years and what we can expect.

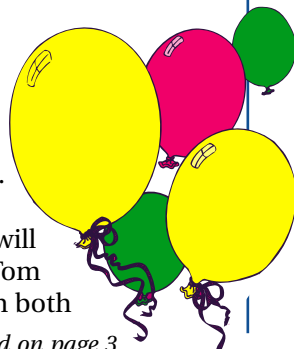
The next session will focus on the newly-passed Health Care Bill and what it will mean to all businesses. This session will be hosted by Erick Swinson from Morgan Stanley Smith Barney. The Political Round Table will wrap up the morning General Session. Hosted by FRVTA's Legal Counsel Marc Dunbar, this session will have some of the state's most prominent legislators discussing the importance of the RV Industry for the State of Florida.

Friday afternoon will feature the annual golf tournament and a fun scavenger hunt held at the Gaylord Palms Hotel. You can choose to take part in the organized activities or enjoy the pool, spa or any of Orlando's many attractions.

Whatever you choose to do, be ready to party hardy at the "Rolling Through the Years" Costume Party. Dress in any fashion from the past 10 decades—roaring '20s flappers, gangsters, sock hoppers or '70s disco queens are only a few of the many costumes you're sure to see at this fun-filled dinner/party.

Saturday's morning breakout sessions will cover an array of topics on information you can put to use in your business immediately. Dr. James Hogg from UCF will cover Social Networking and how to use it in your business. Allen Monello and Larry Peters will address Title Work and Privacy Compliance. Kim McCorvey from the Department of Revenue will talk about Sales Tax and Audit Issues. Bob Morder from NTP Distribution will speak on making your parts departments more profitable and Tom Walworth with Statistical Surveys will discuss Industry Trends in both

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## STATE OFFICERS

**PRESIDENT**  
Donnie Davis

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Larry Schaffer

**TREASURER**  
Sam Abdo

**SECRETARY**  
Rob Rothenhausler

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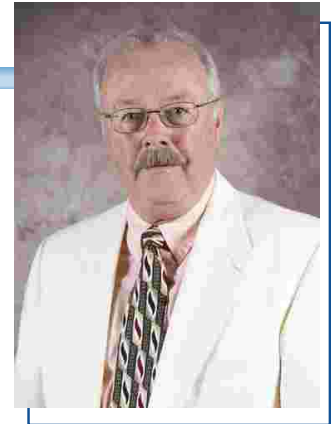
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## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Dear FRVTA Members:

*September has arrived and thoughts of our state convention are at the forefront of my mind. I hope you and your team are already scheduled for this great experience. As you must already know, this is our 30th Anniversary and our staff has planned a very special event to celebrate such a milestone in our history. Come prepared to unwind and to learn.*



*Our conventions are paced so we can relax, network and share time with family and friends. It also is built on a solid base of learning. Many times we are so caught up in the day-to-day running of our businesses that we can miss an important industry happening. Whether it involves government, taxes, training or generation of a best business practice, your Association endeavors to bring the top teams to highlight these needs.*

*The convention also offers you the slate of officers to be elected and who will represent you on the state level for the following year. Please take the time to get to know the candidates and vote your convictions.*

*This convention brings to a close my last term as your President and I want to thank you for the opportunity to serve you and the Association during these past two years. It has been a pleasure, a time of learning and, for me personally, an in-depth look at an industry I serve from the outside fringes.*

*These have been hard times for all and some very tough decisions have been made. Nevertheless, through your diligence and determination this Association has performed well and continues to be a leader in our industry. Remember to express your thanks to your Regional Officers, the State Staff and to the Executive Committee for the many hours spent in committees and planning. They serve you well!*

*I send heartfelt thanks to the State Staff for all their hard work to keep me on the correct path. A special thanks to Marketing Director Dave Kelly for proofreading these monthly newsletters. You just don't know what a task he faced! You could never tell what would come from this feeble mind of mine and working together I hope we kept the news upbeat and worthwhile.*

*No one needs to tell you there are still storms ahead. September is the middle of hurricane season and the economy is...well turbulent at best. Neither is new and you have worked through them time and again. In dive school we had a saying, "Plan your dive and dive your plan." Good advice.*

*Stay strong and thank you for being the leaders you are! Continue that strong support and our Association will remain in the forefront, always setting the pace.*

**DONNIE DAVIS**  
FRVTA President



# FRVTA STATE ELECTIONS SET FOR SEPTEMBER

## *It's Your Chance to Make a Difference!*

The annual election of FRVTA State Officers will take place at the State Convention (September 9-12 at Gaylord Palms Hotel and Spa in Kissimmee) in accordance with the FRVTA By-Laws. The Nominating Committee would like to hear from any qualified candidates (see below) who would like to submit their name for nomination to State Office.

*Those candidates selected thus far are:*

**President: Larry Schaffer**

Rivers Bus & RV Sales

**Vice President: Sam Adbo**

Outdoor Recreation World

**Treasurer: Rob Rothenhausler**

Ocean Grove RV Supercenter

**Secretary: Ryan Hollan**

Camping World Fort Myers

Other members interested in running for state office should contact the Nominating Committee Chairman, Donnie Davis, at (813) 664-5801.

### ARTICLE VI SECTION III

**VOTING:** Voting on all questions or issues submitted to a vote of the members, shall be done in such a manner as is determined by the person presiding at the meeting, or by a majority vote of the members. In connection with any secret ballot vote, the person presiding at the meeting where the vote is to be taken shall appoint two tellers to distribute, collect and count the ballots.

### SECTION IV

**PROXIES AND ABSENTEE BALLOTS:** There shall be no voting by proxy at any meeting of the FRVTA. Absentee ballots may be cast for the election of State Officers, which will be held at the Annual General Membership Meeting or Convention. It will be the responsibility of the Chairman of the Nominating Committee to see that absentee ballots containing the nominations for all officers are mailed to all voting members who have provided written notice that they will not attend the General Meeting.

All absentee ballots must be returned to the Chairman of the Nominating Committee in adequate time to allow the sealed votes to be presented to the teller prior to the voting at the General Meeting.

### ARTICLE VII SECTION II

**ELECTION AND TERM OF OFFICE:** All officers of the State shall be elected by a majority vote of the members present at the Annual Meeting except where previously noted. All officers will be elected to serve a one-year term of office. Any officer can be nominated for an additional term of office with no more than two (2) consecutive years

being served in any one office. No member shall serve in the State Office of President, Vice President, Treasurer or Secretary unless they previously have served on the Board of Directors for a minimum of one year. Only an owner, corporate officer, sole proprietorship or its assigned designee is eligible to run for State Office.



*2009-2010 FRVTA State Officers; (l to r) Donnie Davis, President; Larry Schaffer, Vice President; Rob Rothenhausler, Secretary; and Sam Adbo, Treasurer.*

## FRVTA ANNUAL CONVENTION...

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Florida and nationally.

Dave "Guy Fiere" Kelly will host the "Surprise Party" Game Show Luncheon featuring new games similar to the ones on "Minute to Win It." This funny session will prompt participants to do some of the wildest things for a chance to win a prize. Afterwards, elections of the State Officers will take place.

Saturday evening features the "Birthday Bash" Awards Banquet. The Silent Auction, which benefits the FRVTA PAC Fund and features great gifts and wonderful trips, will end that evening as well. This is the event where outgoing FRVTA



Officers are recognized and incoming leaders are inducted into office. Music and dancing wrap up the evening and, of course, the Hospitality Suite will open into the night.

Items are needed for both the Silent Auction (\$50 minimum value) and the Game Show

Luncheon. The convention sign-up form is available on the FRVTA website. Remember, most of the regions reimburse all or part of the registration fees, so check with your regional officers or the State Office for more information.

If you need any additional information, contact Dave Kelly or Damarys Cuebas in the State Office.





## LEGISLATIVE UPDATE... by Marc Dunbar, Legislative Consultant



### *Let's Get the (Political) Parties Started!*

Now that the primaries have concluded, the next two months will see an enormous amount of increased activity in political communications. Regardless of your party affiliation or your location in

Florida, you will not be able to escape the blitz of mail, radio and television ads that will each vie to catch your attention.

Although each party is ultimately fighting to increase their numbers in each chamber, the powerful nature of incumbency ensures that very few seats will realistically change hands. I'd like to highlight a few of the more interesting races that have captured statewide attention of the parties and may potentially serve to upset the status quo in the Florida Legislature.

In the Florida Senate, District 14 is currently held by Sen. Steve Oelrich, a Republican from Alachua County. The District encompasses Alachua, Bradford, Gilchrist, Union, and parts of Columbia, Marion, Levy and Putnam counties. The District is more closely aligned with the Democratic Party, but Sen. Oelrich, a former sheriff, won in 2006 with 54% of the vote. Sen. Oelrich now faces Perry McGriff, a popular former member of the Florida Legislature and a former Alachua County Commissioner. Sen. Oelrich has raised a bit more than Mr. McGriff at approximately \$225,000 to Mr. McGriff's \$153,000, but what Mr. McGriff has failed to raise may be made up for by his political history.

In the Florida House, District 34 in the Orlando area, is currently held by Republican Rep. Chris Dorworth. Rep. Dorworth has been tapped to serve as Speaker of the House for the 2014-2016 term, but may face a difficult path in this 2010 election. Rep. Dorworth will face two opponents in this general election: Democrat Steve Barnes, a former teacher and journalist, and Tea Party candidate John DeVries. Rep. Dorworth has raised approximately \$138,000 to Mr. Barnes' \$60,000 and Mr. DeVries' \$3,000. Although the district is roughly 46% Republican, the presence of a viable Tea Party

candidate along with a 20% independent base could help swing the seat away from Rep. Dorworth.

For Rep. Bill Heller from District 52 in Pinellas County, the general election may appear to be an uphill battle. Rep. Heller has raised nearly \$65,000 for reelection but will face newcomer Republican Jeff Brandes, a former Army officer and real estate broker who has nearly double that amount at \$112,000. The District is slightly Republican, with their registration accounting for approximately 42% of the electorate, while the Democrats are at 37%, and independents at 20%.

House District 69, comprising parts of Manatee and Sarasota counties, will see incumbent Democrat Rep. Keith Fitzgerald, a college professor, against Republican Ray Pilon, a member of the Sarasota Board of County Commissioners. Rep. Fitzgerald has secured an early fundraising lead against his opponent raising \$115,000 to Mr. Pilon's \$57,000. Although the District remains nearly 50% registered Republican, it has historically split tickets and can trend Democratic in certain races.

Finally, District 81, composed of parts of St. Lucie and Martin counties, will see first-term incumbent Rep. Adam Fetterman squaring off against former legislator Gayle Harrell. Rep. Fetterman and Ms. Harrell are nearly tied in fundraising, with \$160,000 and \$161,000 raised respectively. District 81 typically favors the Republican Party with 46% party registration compared to 33% for the Democrats and 18% independent. Rep. Fetterman is expected to face some difficulty as Ms. Harrell previously represented District 81 from 2000 until 2008.

These are just a few of the races that could help change the balance of power in the Florida Legislature this campaign season. It is primarily through your help and support that FRVTA and its PAC Fund are able to effectively voice the concerns of our industry in Tallahassee. Please be sure to talk to your board members and state officers on how you can get involved.



## FRVPC UPDATE

September is a transitional month as the hot summer begins to slowly end and the cooler fall months beckon. In Florida, however, we all know that what the calendar says and how it feels outside can be misleading.

This is also true of this election season as the campaigns continue to heat up the closer we get to November. Many of the electoral campaigns have become very focused and pointed, especially now that the August primaries have been decided.

FRVTA's Legislative Consultant, Marc Dunbar, highlights several of the more contentious races that will definitely affect our Tallahassee representation.

Who will win in these races will depend on the amount of support a candidate receives. This support can be active street canvassing, the placing of political signs or cash

donations. All are important to a candidate's success.

While it's not possible for FRVTA members to support all candidates, Marc's assistance and insight enables us as an Association to focus on potential and current legislators who support and understand Florida's RV Industry.

Our support comes via financial assistance to worthy candidates who recognize the importance of our various businesses to the economic health of the Sunshine State. That's why this year it's especially important to make sure our FRVPC PAC Fund remains healthy and strong.

In this election season, please make sure our businesses continue to grow by supporting the FRVPC PAC Fund. Send your checks today to FRVPC, c/o Florida RV Trade Association, 10510 Gibsonton Drive, Riverview, FL 33578. Call the State Office with any questions you may have about the FRVPC.



## TRAINING NEWS... by Jim Carr, Training Director

### *The Silver Tsunami... A Double Edged Sword for the RV Industry*

The "Silver Tsunami" is a term you may or may not have heard of, yet it's one that describes very well the coming wave of "Baby Boomers" and I'm sure everyone knows that is the huge wave of 65+ individuals among us.

What does that mean for the RV Industry? Two things; on the positive side they represent one of the single largest groups ever with both disposal income and free time that should and could convert to RV sales. On the downside, they also represent a huge segment of our workforce. Are we ready for all the ramifications of that dynamic? Let me first outline the scope of the wave.

#### How Big an Age Wave?

When the Baby Boomers start turning 65 in 2011, 10,000 people everyday will turn 65 and continue to do so for the next 20 years. By 2030, almost one out of every five Americans, some 72 million people, will be 65 years or older. By 2050, the 65+ population is projected to be between 80 and 90 million, with those 85 and older close to 21 million.

Not only will there be many more senior Americans, but they'll be living longer, with individual life expectancy increasing. But a significant proportion of seniors age 65+ suffer from health problems and chronic disease, such as cardiovascular disease, cancer, hypertension or Alzheimer's. About 80 percent of seniors have at least one chronic health condition and the majority suffer from multiple chronic conditions, robbing them of quality of life, rendering them less productive and running up a huge and unsustainable bill for medical care.

More than 80 percent of health care spending is for people with chronic conditions. Health expenditures are already skyrocketing and are expected to reach \$16 trillion

by 2030. The only current defense between this growing "age wave" and an already overburdened health care system is the hope that medical research breakthroughs and new technologies can remake the experience of chronic disease, and remake it quickly!

#### Preparing for the Silver Tsunami in the Workplace

I recently heard a speech at a convention by a vice president of one of the large Florida power companies addressing their concern about the coming Tsunami Wave. It was stated that of their 18,000-person-workforce 53% were eligible to retire today. When management got their minds around that figure and the possibility that almost 10,000 employees could walk tomorrow, they went into "crisis mode" planning: Where will we find a new workforce? How will we train them and get them productive so we don't lose our high standards of quality and public confidence? And, should a large number of these "senior employees" decide to stay on, what additional or unique services will they require to remain productive? The impact of the "Silver Workforce" is a very great concern among employers.

#### What does all this mean to the RV Industry?

As stated in the opening paragraph, two things; the market impact and the employee impact. It's time to look at your organization and see if indeed you are ready for both of these dynamics. I know many of our RV Dealerships are small and that fact in itself could bring bigger issues if even one or two individuals were to leave tomorrow. Do you, the owner or GM, have an exit strategy? Are you preparing your successor?

It may be a good time to assess your workforce and begin answering these questions. The statistics stated above are an absolute and the Silver Tsunami is upon us. The question is: *are we ready?*

### **Retail Shipments Climb to Highest Level in Over Two Years**

Deliveries to retailers of all RVs climbed to their highest level in more than two years as June shipments reached 27,000 units, 10% greater than last month and 72.6% greater than this same month last year. This marked the 10th consecutive month where shipments were greater than the same month one year earlier. June totals presented an annualized rate of more than 285,000 units.

Towable RV shipments increased 67.3% over June last year as travel trailers improved 65.3% while fifth wheel trailers nearly doubled. Conventional type A motorhomes tripled in June helping to raise all motorhome totals to 2,500 units in the month and raised year-to-date totals to 13,500 units, which is slightly better than all of 2009.

Total wholesale shipments to retailers in May were reported at 24,400 units in May 2010. This was slightly less

than the previous month but nearly double the total from this same month last year.

Overall, towable RVs continue to provide the greatest volume increase while motorhome totals reflect the greatest percentage gains. On a seasonally adjusted basis, this month's total shipments presented an annual rate of more than 262,500 units, an increase of 6% over last month.

Year-to-date, total RV shipments have now reached 108,900 units through May this year, up 91.1% compared to this same period last year. All vehicle types have enjoyed growth in shipments this year with type A motorhomes continuing to experience the greatest percentage increase while conventional travel trailers have experienced the greatest unit increase.—RVIA

## RVIA's Gary LaBella to Retire at End of Year

Gary LaBella, vice president and chief marketing officer for the Recreation Vehicle Industry Association, has announced he will retire from RVIA after 32 years at the end of 2010. LaBella made the announcement to the industry in early August while receiving an award from the RV/MH Hall of Fame and Museum in Elkhart, Ind.

"When I was planning the industry's 2010 Centennial Celebration, I realized I've been in the same chair for a third of this industry's history...and I was afraid I might end up here planning a Bicentennial," LaBella joked.

"And so I am going down a different road, very proud of what we accomplished in three decades to improve and elevate this great industry's image and stature. I've been surrounded by outstanding fellow staff members as well as outstanding agency account teams at Barton-Gilanelli and The Richards Group, at least eight of whom have been with me for 15 or 20 years or more, led by the very talented Chris Morrison, my colleague of 25 years. And I've had the honor of having BJ Thompson as my PR Committee chairman for 25 years."

"Gary LaBella has contributed greatly to this industry's success over the past three decades," said RVIA President Richard Coon. "The effort he has led in the marketing of RVs has helped unify this industry and transformed the way consumers think about RVs in this country. He is a very innovative and creative person and these talents will be missed."

LaBella has led an aggressive industrywide marketing



program that earned high acclaim throughout the travel and recreation communities and in marketing circles. Under his direction, RVIA and industry partners (RVDA and many others) launched the award-winning, groundbreaking Go RVing national advertising campaign in the mid-'90s. The

program has been funded in the \$15-\$20 million range annually ever since and is frequently credited with attracting more new families to RVing. It is often referred to as one of the most successful programs in the industry's history.

Under LaBella's leadership, RVIA's award-winning "Top of Mind Awareness" public relations program has triggered a growing level of RV exposure in national media. By using touring media spokespersons and personally knocking on the doors of many New York-based national editors, LaBella and his staff and Barton-Gilanelli account team members have produced glowing publicity for the industry and have helped keep the industry's positive image intact even

during slumping sales.

Most recently, LaBella planned the RV Centennial Celebration of 2010 that was seen as a huge success by industry members.

LaBella graduated from Utica College of Syracuse University in 1975 and joined RVIA in 1978. He was elected to the RV/MH Hall of Fame in 2005. He recently received the Hall of Fame's Spirit Award for his ideas and programs, such as the Go RVing Hall and Centennial Celebration, that have helped raise the Hall's awareness.—RVIA



## Speaker Lineup for 2010 RVDA Convention

*The 2010 RV Dealers International Convention/Expo is shaping up to be one of the best conventions ever, the*

*RV Dealers Association announced.*

The convention/expo committee, chaired by Peter Albano, of American RV in Olive Branch, Miss. and the RV Learning Center staff, reviewed more than 100 program proposals – the most the group has ever received – and selected almost 50 of the best and most valuable workshops for this year's program, said Phil Ingrassia, vice president of communications. Many of these workshops will be presented by new speakers. Some of those speakers include:

### DEALER/GM FOCUS

- Fact-Based Dealer Management by Hal Ethington, with ADP Ligtspeed
- Motivation Fit by David Spader, with Spader Business Management

### SALES FOCUS

- A Complaint Is a Gift by Janelle Barlow, with TMI US
- Super Session: Internet Marketing Best Practices to

Increase Sales by Robert Basha, with Auction123

- Harnessing the New Digital Disorder by Robin Beebe-Moussaoui with Giant Recreation World, Inc.
- Smart E-mail Marketing by Pamela Cox with PC Direct Marketing
- Your Dealership and Social Media by Bethany Grabher with Huebner Petersen

### SERVICE FOCUS

- Super Session: Presenting a Service Menu Schedule and Synergy of a Service Tour by David Foco, with A World of Training
- How Service Can Prevent and Defend Lawsuits by Jeffrey Nowicki, of Dolenga & Dolenga, PLLC

### F&I FOCUS

- From Survive to Thrive in the F&I Office by Greg Artman, with Diversified Insurance Management
- Innovative Training & Selling Solutions by Luis Garcia, of Safe-Guard Products International, LLC

For more information on the 2010 RV Dealers Convention and Expo, please go to [www.RVDA.org](http://www.RVDA.org).—RVDA

## Dr. Curtin Forecasts RV Shipments To Rise 39% in 2010

In the recent summer issue of RV Roadsigns, Dr. Richard Curtin, of the University of Michigan Consumer Survey Research Center, predicts RV shipments will increase 39% over 2009's tally, rising to 230,300 units this year. RV Roadsigns is published quarterly by the Recreation Vehicle Industry Association.

This increase continues Dr. Curtin's positive outlook for the RV Industry. This past February, he estimated 2010 shipments would jump 30% to 215,900 units and in December 2009 he estimated 2010 shipments to reach 203,500 units. Earlier, Dr. Curtin had projected 185,800 units and, before that, in June 2009 he said 169,500 units would be delivered.

Here is Curtin's latest forecast:

"Total RV shipments rose to 59,900 in the first quarter of 2010, up from just 30,500 a year ago. This year-to-year gain in shipments was 96%, the largest ever recorded. The extraordinary gain was widely shared by conventional and fifth-wheel travel trailers, as well as all types of motorhomes.

"RV shipments are expected to total 230,300 in 2010, an anticipated gain of 39% above the 2009 total of 165,700 units. The expected percentage gain will be the largest for Class A and Class C motorhomes, closely followed by conventional and fifth-wheel travel trailers.

While the initial surge in shipments was due to restocking depleted dealer inventories, sales of RVs to consumers will also improve in 2010.

"The industry is firmly on the road to recovery, although the overall pace of progress will slow in the second half of 2010. While improved, job and income growth will remain subdued, and the availability of credit will slowly improve in the year ahead. Volatility in financial markets, lackluster trends in home prices, and prospects for higher inflation, interest rates and taxes in the year ahead will keep consumers in a defensive spending posture. The lingering effects of the economic downturn on the lower end of the RV market will push shipments of folding camping trailers and truck campers as a share of the total market to the smallest level on record."

Dr. Curtin's forecast includes the following category shipment figures:

- Travel trailers, 140,600
- Fifth-wheels, 50,000
- Folding camping trailers, 14,700
- Truck campers, 2,400
- Class A motorhomes, 11,200
- Class B motorhomes, 1,600
- Class C motorhomes, 9,800.—RVIA, RV Business



## FRVTA and RV Learning Center Renew Online Training Partnership

The RV Learning Center is teaming up with the Florida RV Trade Association (FRVTA) for the fifth consecutive year to provide online training for RV Dealership personnel through the RV Technician Training Online program. The 2010-11 program includes a range of topics to improve the performance of both experienced and novice technicians, and service writers/advisors. The Distance Learning Network also includes a 50-minute greeter receptionist program addressing the basics of customer service, and training for dealer/GMs.

"Our goal is to create an opportunity for dealerships to offer in-house training, in a group setting, overseen by a local training mentor to all dealership personnel as needed," said FRVTA Executive Director Lance Wilson. "The program also offers advanced product-specific training from RV Manufacturers and Suppliers, mentor guidance through ongoing support for distance learning best practices, and a technical help line." A 75-minute mentor training workshop is also held annually at the RV Dealers International Convention/Expo.

Dealerships receive unlimited access to train and prepare technicians for the RVDA-RVIA technician certification, or recertification. The subscription includes unlimited access to over 40 training sessions, reviews, and test preparation sections, which are available anytime

throughout the program year to suit your operation and determined pace.

"This program eliminates many of the training costs associated with travel and time out of the shop," said RVDA Education Foundation Chairman Rick Horsey of Parkview RV in Smyrna, DE. "The program is also useful for getting new technicians started on training immediately."

The only requirement to participate is a high-speed internet connection. A video cable connected to a television is also useful for group training. A one-year subscription to the program costs \$995 per dealership location; for FRVTA members the cost is free and is part of your membership benefits. The subscription term is August 1, 2010 – July, 31, 2011.

For more information and a sign-up form, visit [www.rvlearningcenter.com](http://www.rvlearningcenter.com), [www.rvtechnician.com](http://www.rvtechnician.com), [www.rvda.org](http://www.rvda.org), [www.frvta.org](http://www.frvta.org), or call the RV Learning Center at (703) 591-7130 or FRVTA at (386) 754-4285.

The RVDA Education Foundation is a tax exempt organization as described in section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. Contributions may be tax deductible as charitable donations. FRVTA's purpose is to promote and protect the general welfare of Florida's Recreation Vehicle and Camping industry.—FRVTA, RVDA



## Independence RV named Newmar's Best for Customer Satisfaction



(l to r) Newmar CEO and Chairman of the Board, Dick Parks presents the 2009 Mahlon Miller Service Excellence Award to Independence RV's Service Manager, Todd Simpson, President/Owner Ronnie Jordan and General Manager Chuck Simpson.

A customer satisfaction score of 95.24 percent, which exceeded last year's score of 94.26 percent, earned Independence RV in Winter Garden its second consecutive Mahlon Miller Service Excellence award for the best RV customer service in the nation from Newmar, the dealership recently announced.

The award was presented by Newmar's Chairman Dick Parks and Vice President of Service Operations Matt Utley to Independence RV President Ronnie Jordan and Service Manager Todd Simpson during a recent visit to the dealership. Independence RV won in the highly-competitive super-large RV category.

"The 10 questions on the Newmar customer satisfaction survey cover the entire RV Dealership experience, and an operation must receive high marks on all parts of the experience to earn this award," Parks explained.

To even be considered for Newmar's top award, a dealer must score 90 percent or better in post-service customer surveys. To win, a dealer must beat out all other dealers throughout the United States and Canada.

Independence RV is not new to awards. The dealership has been in the top tier of Newmar service providers for each of the past five years. This is the second time Independence RV has won the nation's top award.

*Congratulations!*

## Severe Storm Hits Dusty's Camper World



Dusty's Camper World in Bartow suffered over \$1 million in damages after a bad storm hit the dealership this past July. General Manager Jeff Crum reports that over two dozen units were damaged during the tempest.

Jeff recounts that some of the RVs, weighing almost 14,000 pounds, were launched nearly 500 feet across the parking lot. Additionally, almost all of the units lining the dealership's lot on State Road 60 were pushed back from the curb.

The National Weather Service said the storm produced wind gusts up to 50 miles per hour and .72 inches of rain within an hour.

"It's amazing what a little wind can do," Jeff said. "It was like (Hurricane) Charley all over again. Thank God nobody was hurt."

A total of 16 of the trailers were totaled and 26 were heavily damaged. This number, however, may increase following analysis by insurance adjusters of additional units that suffered water damage.

## FRVTA Adds Seven to Scholarship Program

The Florida RV Trade Association Board of Directors at the July meeting added seven new students to the FRVTA Scholarship. This brings the total number of students on the scholarship program to 25 full-time and five part-time.

The FRVTA Scholarship began in the fall of 1990 and since that time over 80 students have received an undergraduate degree with the aid of the scholarship. The scholarship pays students \$500 per semester or up to \$1,000 per year for a total of \$4,000 per student. Students must attend an in-state college and must maintain a 3.0 grade point average.



"Every year we get a lot of qualified applicants," said Nelda Iacono, chairman of the FRVTA Scholarship Committee. "I wish we could give them all scholarships, but I'm real pleased with the applicants we've chosen. We base the scholarship not only on academic achievement, but upon financial need and extracurricular activities. I feel this is one of the most important membership benefits our Association offers."

Students currently on the FRVTA Scholarship are Brooks Ballard, Jack Fitzgerald, Lindsay O'Bryan, Michael Pawley, Leon Bard, Allison Peacock, Ericka Kelley, Katelyn Whidden, Ashley Wilson, Jordan Connor, Taylor Davenport, Christy Alba, Ashton Connor, Brittany Masterson, Lindsay Crisp, Katelyn Searcy, Jessica Meyer, Rachael Williams, Brittany Scanlon, Stephanie Scanlon, Sara Farney, Courtney Runte', Evan Richardson, Ciara Sibbick, Brittani Worden, Jenna Mallek, Tahni Carver, Ethan Merryweather, Christopher Adams and Lisa Sansbury.

## MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION

### NEW MEMBERS

**BRANSON/LAKES AREA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE** • PO Box 1897 • Branson, MO 65615 • Phone: 417-334-4084  
Toll Free: 800-214-3661 • Fax: 417-334-8005 • Email: explorebranson.com • Campground, Region 10

**KEYSTONE AUTOMOTIVE OPERATIONS** • 600 Hartman Industrial Court • Austell, GA 30168 • Phone: 770-739-4321, X-256  
Fax: 770-745-9522 • Email: dmmartin@key-stone.com • Website: keystoneautomotiveoperations.com • Supplier, Region 10

**ORLANDO MOBILE RV REPAIRS, INC.** • 2850 N. Orange Blossom Trail • Orlando, FL 32804 • Phone: 407-388-8688  
Fax: 407-872-0230 • Email: rvrentalsorlando@bellsouth.net • Websote: orlandomobilervrepair.com • Supplier, Region 4

### Manufacturers Draw More Space for 2011 Florida RV SuperShow

The Florida RV Trade Association held the space drawing for the 2011 Florida RV SuperShow this past August during which RV Manufacturers drew 20 percent more space for the 2011 compared the 2010 show.

The “grandfathered drawing order” determined the order in which space was selected.

“We see this as a sign that the manufacturers are feeling better about the upcoming winter selling season in the south,” said FRVTA Executive Director Lance Wilson. “With a record attendance in 2010 of more than 50,000, we are expecting the 2011 SuperShow to be even bigger and better than ever.”

The theme of the 2011 Florida RV SuperShow is “Wish You Were Here!” This theme emphasizes the fact that people need to escape their chaotic lives and RVs have everything you need to do just that. It is also an invitation to discover what so many people have already found out, RVs offer freedom, flexibility and fun not found in any other activity.

Industry Day at the 2011 Florida RV SuperShow will be Jan. 11 from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Attendees will be treated to coffee and donuts in the morning and a free lunch. Public Days will run Jan. 12 to 16. The RV SuperShow hours are Wednesday thru Saturday from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m., and Sunday from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Wednesday is Senior Citizens Day with seniors receiving \$1 off the cost of admission (not valid with other discounts).

For more information on the 2011 Florida RV SuperShow or to register for Industry Day, visit [www.frvta.org](http://www.frvta.org).



### ANNUAL RV DIRECTORY AND SUPERSHOW PROGRAM AD SALES

Advertising sales for the 2011 RVer's Guide to Florida and the Official SuperShow Program and Directory are under way! These two publications are an excellent way to promote your business to the thousands of RVer's who travel to Florida each year as well as first time buyers.

Deanna Pearce is once again handling the advertising sales for both publications and will contact you shortly or you can secure your placement in the publications by contacting her directly at 1-863-318-0193 or email at [dlpearce7@aol.com](mailto:dlpearce7@aol.com).

The complete media kit including rates, advertising guidelines and deadlines are available online at [www.frvta.org](http://www.frvta.org). If you have any questions, please contact Dave Kelly in the FRVTA State Office at 1-800-330-7882. Your support of these two very important publications is appreciated!



## MEETING DATES



*No Regional Meetings  
Due to the Annual Convention.  
See you there!*