



APRIL 2016

# FRVTA news

MONTHLY NEWS CONCERNING FLORIDA'S RECREATION VEHICLE INDUSTRY



## FRVTA Scholarship Applications Now Available!

*Another great membership benefit from the Florida RV Trade Association is the annual FRVTA Scholarship. A mailing with scholarship requirements and applications was recently sent to all members.*

The FRVTA Scholarship Committee encourages you to alert all your employees so their dependents can apply for this outstanding program, which has been designed to allow students to achieve their dream of an undergraduate degree.

All you need to do is display the posters and applications that were mailed to you in an area where your employees will see it (time clock, break room, etc.)

The scholarship is open to any of your employees or their dependents who are working toward an undergraduate degree at one of Florida's state colleges/universities. Part-time students can apply as well.

This is a wonderful opportunity for you to offer a scholarship to your employees without any cost or obligation to your company!

So, please display the materials as soon as possible, and mention the scholarship to those employees you know who have children in college or are getting ready to graduate from high school.

### *Here are the requirements for a student to be considered:*

1. Applicant must be an employee or dependent/grandchild of an employee.
2. Employer must be an FRVTA member in good standing on the date an application is submitted.
3. Applicant must have and maintain a 3.0 or better GPA.
4. All accredited two- and four-year Florida universities are acceptable.
5. \$2000 awarded per applicant per year for a maximum of four years.
6. For undergraduate study towards a bachelor's degree only.
7. Applicant can be a full-time student (nine or more hours/semester) or part-time student (eight or fewer hours/semester).
8. Applicant must submit a copy of their most recent high school or college transcript.
9. Applicant must submit an essay of not more than 500 words entitled "My Goals and Objectives for Attending College."
10. Scholarship effective Fall 2016 semester.
11. Must show proof at the end of each semester of enrollment and GPA to retain the Scholarship Award.
12. **APPLICATIONS MUST BE RECEIVED BY JUNE 10, 2016.**  
**AWARDS PRESENTED BY JULY 29, 2016.**

*Thank you for your help in making our scholarship program successful!*





**STATE OFFICERS**

- PRESIDENT  
Rob Rothenhausler
- VICE PRESIDENT  
Ryan Hollan
- TREASURER  
Nelda Iacono
- SECRETARY  
Rob Cochran
- CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD  
Sam Abdo

**REGIONAL OFFICERS**

- REGION 1  
Chris Morse - PRESIDENT  
Tom Wegge - DIRECTOR
- REGION 2  
Sean Thompson - PRESIDENT  
Brian Copley - DIRECTOR
- REGION 3  
Deanna Pearce - PRESIDENT  
Snow Chamberlain- DIRECTOR
- REGION 4  
Ken Gifford - PRESIDENT  
Traeanne Reynolds - DIRECTOR
- REGION 5  
Lyn Hart - PRESIDENT  
Bartow Myers - DIRECTOR
- REGION 6  
John Schuster - PRESIDENT  
Mike Waggoner - DIRECTOR
- REGION 7  
Dell Sanders - PRESIDENT  
George Grimm - DIRECTOR  
George Lempenau  
CAMPGROUND DIRECTOR

**OFFICE STAFF**

- Lance Wilson  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
- David Kelly  
MARKETING DIRECTOR
- Mike Ryan  
CONTROLLER
- Lesla Colvin  
SHOW DIRECTOR
- Patty Flanagan  
SHOW COORDINATOR
- Damarys Cuebas  
ADMINISTRATIVE COORDINATOR
- Sharlene Nelson  
MEMBERSHIP COORDINATOR

FLORIDA RV TRADE ASSOCIATION  
10510 Gibsonton Drive  
Riverview, Florida 33578  
(813) 741-0488 • Fax (813) 741-0688

e-mail address: [info@frvta.org](mailto:info@frvta.org)  
website: [www.frvta.org](http://www.frvta.org)

**PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE**

*April, showers... (you know the saying) and our brief spring begins. Now that the majority of FRVTA-sponsored Regional shows have been completed (and successfully I might add!), it's time to turn your business attention to sponsoring your own sales event.*

*Last month I spoke briefly about alternatives to multi-dealer shows. In fact, our dealership recently had a three-day "Lot Show/Sale." There are a few advantages to doing one of these shows early in the spring. We spend time on our exterior maintenance, landscaping and other small beautification projects that last the remainder of the year. Our sales professionals are a little more relaxed and ready to share their knowledge with customers. And, if you are fortunate as we were to have factory reps on hand during your lot show, you have all the tools necessary for a successful event.*

*Remember, during this type of show it is necessary to have accurate information on all the "prospect attendees" because your locals don't always buy during that visit. They tend to have a hot dog, drink a soda, watch the kids play, look at a camper or two and get to know you, the sales person and the dealership, a little more in-depth.*

*A few of the side benefits I observed was the overall attitude within the dealership was lighter and the camaraderie stronger. Of course, the financial investment is always a consideration, but hopefully your media plan worked well, attracted the needed buyers and you have something to show for it after the event is over. Finally, the sales force is closer to home and more flexible with their time at the end of the normal day.*

*Which brings us to the most important phase of the lot show: follow-up, touch base and let the customer know you want their business. You also want to keep them in the loop. This is probably the most important part of the event, since as we all know only too well, some of these sales take time and effort.*

*So if it's been some time since your last "In-House/Lot Show" give it some thought, you may just add it to your annual calendar on an on-going basis.*

*Till next time...*

**ROB ROTHENHAUSLER**  
FRVTA PRESIDENT



**FRVTA END OF SEASON SHOWS**

**RV SUPERSAVER SHOW**

APRIL 15-17 • CenturyLink Sports Complex • Fort Myers

**TAMPA BAY SUMMER RV SHOW**

JUNE 23-26 • Florida State Fairgrounds • Tampa



## *New RVIA President Prepares for Rapid Changes in a Vibrant Industry*

In October 2015, Frank Hugelmeyer became the new RVIA President, succeeding Richard Coon who had served as president the preceding 10 years. Frank came to the position with not

only professional experience in the outdoor recreation industry, but also with personal passion.

“I grew up on Long Island, New York, so my family and I spent a lot of time on a boat, enjoying fishing and water sports. My father installed a canvas top on the back of our sport fishing boat, which essentially turned it into a floating RV. Those experiences instilled a lifelong love of camping and the outdoors in me. In my adventurous youth, I really enjoyed mountain climbing and the challenges of numerous mountain sports. But today, I’m just as happy enjoying a campfire with family and friends or fly fishing with my son, Cole.”

Frank says he jumped into the sporting goods industry after college. Along the way, he worked for a large specialty retailer, a fitness equipment manufacturer and a global outdoor brand. “Then in 2000, I transitioned into the association side of the business when I joined the Outdoor Industry Association [OIA] as president and CEO, where I served for the next 14 years.”

During his time as RVIA President-elect, Frank embarked on a listening tour. “I learned that our members are very pleased with RVIA and the services that are provided, but that there is room for improvement. Part of that is overcoming the ‘silo’ nature of the RV Industry. You have the RV Dealers, Campgrounds, and RV OEMs and suppliers all operating out of different camps. If we escape this silo mentality and bring the whole of the industry together, then that’s when we’ll see the full power and promise of the RV Industry realized. That is probably one of the greatest ‘aha’ moments I’ve had.”

Frank says he loves to build and inspire teams to do extraordinary things, and he believes that can be done through expanding collaboration, building trust, promoting integrity, driving innovation and rewarding leadership. “Those are the core values we’ve adopted at RVIA,” he explains.

Core values were a major subject during Frank’s presentation at the 2016 RVIA Annual Membership

Meeting held recently in Tucson, AZ. Core values and mission statements can be turned into tangible changes, he says. The key is understanding the value they have, which then allows people to transform them into results. As he told RV PRO magazine, “An association’s value and relevance is all about helping members keep pace with changing times. And that means delivering value.... Modernizing the trade show is going to show true value. It will be not conceptual change, but real change.”

The RVIA’s Board of Directors approved as much as \$500,000 to rejuvenate the National RV Trade Show. Some funds may go toward marketing because, notes Frank, the Association has not actively marketed the show to various audiences within the membership, particularly buyers. Funds may also be allotted to ease navigation through the show and buying at the show.

As president, Frank’s goals include working with RVIA’s volunteer leaders and staff to position both the RVIA and the RV Industry for growth and success. “Business and society are dealing with an incredible pace of change in new technologies that dictate how we interact, gather information and communicate,” Frank states. “Changing demographics – including the rise in multi-cultural diversity and the onset of Millennials and digital natives – present challenges and opportunities for us all to appeal to more diverse audiences. I’m energized to help lead RVIA and our members in staying ahead of the curve and adapting to this new environment.”

Frank believes that membership in state trade associations, such as the FRVTA, provides a tremendous forum for businesses to come together to achieve success across a wide range of areas. “I know under Lance Wilson’s leadership that FRVTA has been very successful in doing this. FRVTA’s network of RV shows does a fantastic job of promoting RV travel and camping. Its educational and technical training programs are very effective. FRVTA provides a strong voice for the RV Industry in Florida. Those are all achievements that I’m sure are appreciated and valued by its members.

“I want FRVTA members to know that the RVIA’s core reason for being is to promote and protect the RV Industry and its members,” concludes Frank. “As an Association, we promise to grow and expand the RV market, pursue a favorable business environment, create a positive experience for all consumers, elevate industry information and knowledge, and foster the continuous improvement of RV products. That is the pledge we have made to our members that drives all our efforts.”





## A Job Well Done...

The 2016 Florida Legislature has completed its work for this year on time and without incident. With the battles of 2015 seemingly behind the House and Senate leaders, this year's legislative session moved for the most part into a smooth landing in

mid-March and headed home.

Being an election year, the general activities of the Florida Legislature progressed at a more controlled pace. A total of 1,880 bills were filed for consideration during the 2016 legislative session. This is below the typical 2,500 or so we usually see. In addition, the legislature was able to agree on 279 separate bills sending them on to Gov. Scott for his consideration.

The major flash points during the session really involved the acrimony between the Governor and the Legislature over the tax relief and economic development portions of the state budget. The Governor sought nearly \$1 billion in tax cuts and economic development programs to bolster his ongoing job creation initiatives. This number was trimmed by the legislature after state economists projected a slower economy and rolled back the budget surplus to less than \$400 million. This trimming led to a debate over how to prioritize the surplus, and led to a more modest spending and tax plan passing as part of the state budget.

The Governor initially threatened to veto the budget over the lack of funding for his economic development programs, but instead used his line item veto to trim nearly \$250 million in projects. At the end of the day, the 2016-17 state budget boasts record spending on education as well as an additional \$300 million roughly in tax breaks to help further stimulate job growth in Florida.

A possibility exists for a limited special session to reallocate some funds to economic development programs and to deal with the gaming compact with the Seminole Tribe. These sessions, if they occur, will be nothing like last year's sessions that broke down as a result of dysfunction between the chambers. I expect that any session, if called, will be very controlled and result in a quick resolution of the issues to be considered.

The closing of the legislative session means the official beginning of the 2016 election cycle. As discussed prior, this election looks to be historic for a host of reasons. The national contest for President is something that continues to have pundits scratching their heads as the general malaise amongst the Republican electorate has turned to a full blown assault on the Washington, D.C. establishment. This "top-of-the-ticket" dynamic means November will be very expensive and highly unpredictable.

## Here's what this means for the FRVTA...

Florida will once again be in the spotlight as a key battleground for the Presidential, the US Senate and the US Congressional campaigns. The resignation of Sen. Marco Rubio in his failed attempt to seek the presidency has created a serious void as no clear candidate has emerged as the front-runner for his open US Senate seat. This seat is critical for which party controls the US Senate, and who controls the confirmation hearings for current and future vacancies on the US Supreme Court.

Control of the US House of Representatives also is in play due to the new congressional map drawn by the courts. At least six congressional seats that were once viewed as "safe" seats by the Republicans and Democrats are now battleground districts that could swing which party controls the House.

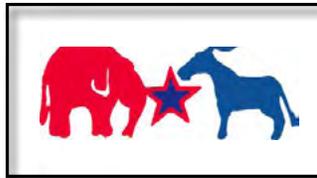
As it relates to the Florida Legislature, the presidential race will make campaigning harder and more expensive as the national candidates will dominate the airways in November. With every member of the House and Senate up for re-election due to judicially drawn maps, this will magnify significantly the cost of this election cycle. Compounding the problem is a number of members who are leaving their legislative seats early.

In short, the FRVTA and its PAC have their work cut out for them as we try to narrow the field of candidates as to whom to support, and a higher than normal number of contests going all the way to November.

Toward the end of the legislative session, we did receive a bit of good news. As a result of all of the election chaos, Republican leaders recruited former Sen. President Mike Haridopolos to return to the Senate in his home seat from Brevard County. Many members will recall that Mike was a hero to the FRVTA by sponsoring a number of measures for us, including our landmark Dealer/Manufacturer law. We as an Association need to do all we can to return Mike to the Florida Senate.

*Along that line, this is the election cycle that I need the FRVTA membership to do all it can to help with these elections. Please get involved with the PAC or a local campaign. The more on the ground, grass roots activity we have, the more likely we are to maintain our standing in Tallahassee.*

*If you want to get involved, reach out to me or the FRVTA State Office and we can help point you in the right direction. I look forward to seeing you over the next several months as I move around the state on various campaign-related activities. In the meantime, please continue to spread the word on the historic election cycle approaching, and the need to get involved and help the PAC Fund meet its obligations.*





**TRAINING NEWS • by Jim Carr, Training Director**

**Service Center Mentor Update**

*It's almost spring and that means all those winter visitors to Florida are now heading back to their home states. If this past winter season here is any indication of what you're in for, get ready for a very busy summer.*

*I have a few important nuggets of information for you. Here they are:*

**New Mentor Training Video to be Posted This Month:**

We've gone into the studio and completely updated the on-line Mentor Training Video, some new information, a new format and generally streamlined the entire process. I think you'll note it is fact-filled, easy to follow and a great place to start if you're a new mentor. Also, not a bad update for the veteran mentor, too.

**Paper-Pencil Testing Coming Back:**

RVIA has heard our many pleas to offer Paper-Pencil testing as one option to the current on-line ONLY testing policy and agreed to allow some "pilot" trials of the old live, proctored paper and pencil test. We (Florida) will hold the first of these trials on June 1 in the Tampa area for all technicians in Florida who are planning to test and wish to take advantage of this "old" format. Let us know (contact: [judy.wilson@fgc.edu](mailto:judy.wilson@fgc.edu)) and we will send full details. (Note article at bottom.)



**Sign-Off Sheets Matter:**

Yes, it's easy to overlook, skip or even ignore those pesky sign-off sheets, but if you do you're throwing away

the opportunity to really find out how effective your training has been. Many say the sign-off sheets are the most worthwhile part of the entire training—it's where the "rubber hits the road." Many people can digest and retain knowledge from a classroom setting, but can they actually perform the tasks being taught? The sign-off sheets will tell you and provide an excellent opportunity to "cement" that knowledge. Please don't skip this important part of the process.

**And Judy Has A Few Items:**

If you call this office and don't get a response, this usually means I'm on another call. Please leave a message and I will return your call ASAP.

As Jim mentioned above—your Mentor Guide is jam-packed with information and I guarantee that 99.9% of the questions I get are right there in the Guide. I share this not because I mind answering your questions, but as a possible timesaving option for you.

I know it's early in March, but before you know it July 31 will be here and our school year ends. As always, you can continue training into the new year (August 1), but we will issue new passwords for those continuing. The current passwords will not work after July 31. Information on how to sign-up anew will be forthcoming in June.

Most of you are doing great with sending me those forms, but I want to remind the rest of you how important they are! Get your people registered and then send me those roll pages!

Some of you have mentioned that there is only one Service Advisor Class, yet the roll page shows three classes in this course—what's up? Not to worry, since we have re-filmed that course and now there is only one class instead of three.



**TO: All FRVTA Dealer/Service Center Members**  
**FROM: Lance Wilson, Executive Director**  
**RE: CERTIFIED AND REGISTERED TECHNICIAN TEST**  
***(This is a Paper/Pencil Test!)***  
**WHEN: June 1, 2016**  
**TIME: 10:00 am to 1:00 pm**  
**WHERE: Aparicio-Levy Technical College, Tampa**

As many of you know, over the past few years the protocol for Technician Certification Testing has moved to a 100% online test, computer based only. We have had numerous requests to offer a Paper/Pencil type test as an alternative. Many felt that the computer-style test put older techs at a disadvantage. We have petitioned RVIA/RVDA over the past few years for the opportunity to offer the Paper/Pencil test as an option. We are finally able to offer this test to you.

This will be a three-hour timed test for both Certified/Master Certified and Registered Candidates. To be able to deliver this test, we must demonstrate that we have a sufficient number of candidates. Please advise as soon as possible your anticipated numbers via response to [judy.wilson@fgc.edu](mailto:judy.wilson@fgc.edu).

*Thank you and we will get full confirmation and details for registering out to you by May 1 so you can plan accordingly. We need a good turn out so we can expand this type of test offering in the future!*



## A Bi-Partisan Issue: Clarifying RV Definitions

*Editor's Note: The following column by Recreation Vehicle Dealers Association (RVDA) President Phil Ingrassia appearing in the March issue of RV Executive Today offers perspective on the recent move by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to better define RVs.*

In election years, partisan divisions in the United States get more attention than usual, but on at least one front that's near and dear to everyone in this industry, there is some bipartisan consensus.

Last month, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) published a proposed rule entitled "Manufactured Home Procedural and Enforcement Regulations; Revision of Exemption for Recreational Vehicles."

Indiana's U.S. senators Dan Coats (R) and Joe Donnelly (D) were instrumental in getting HUD to address the issue once and for all, clarifying that it does not have jurisdiction over RVs.

Donnelly and Coats have been working together on a bipartisan basis since 2014. In addition to writing several letters to the agency outlining the problem, they also successfully included language in a Senate Appropriations bill in July of 2014, urging HUD to update the definition. RVIA, which has been working on this for more than a decade, coordinated an industry effort that included RVDA and ARVC to move the rule-making forward.

"HUD's RV regulations date back to 1982," Coats said. "Since that time, the industry has made dramatic

improvements to its vehicles. An update to these regulations has been long overdue, and HUD has taken a positive step forward by proposing a new rule."

"I'm pleased that HUD is finally acting on this pressing concern, and it's a step in the right direction," Donnelly said. "I look forward to continuing to work with Sen. Coats to make sure HUD gets this rulemaking right."

You may have seen the joint statement the three associations put out shortly after HUD announced the proposed rule, but it's worth reviewing why the rule is so important to the RV industry. The proposed rule gives RV dealers additional regulatory guidance, so that the proper paperwork, forms, and disclosures that dealers need to provide during a sales transaction are based on the design intent of the RV, and not housing regulations.

The rule would give RV manufacturers the critical regulatory clarity they have long sought. As long as manufacturers build to the nationally-recognized RV standards, the modern RVs they are building do not and will not fall under HUD's jurisdiction.

The proposed rule also gives RV campground operators the regulatory certainty that they need. In many cases the business license for RV parks and campgrounds only allows them to accommodate RVs, not manufactured homes, so under the proposed rule they would be able welcome any unit that is certified to an RV standard.

HUD is now in the process of gathering public comments, and RVDA will work with its allies to insist that HUD issues a decision that's in the long-term best interests of the industry. The due date for filing comments on the proposed rule is April 11.

## RV Growth to Continue in 2016

The recreation vehicle industry's shipments will reach 381,100 units in 2016, a 2.0% increase above the 2015 total of 374,246, according to a new forecast from the Recreation Vehicle Industry Association (RVIA) prepared by RV Industry analyst Dr. Richard Curtin and released at RVIA's annual meeting held recently in Tucson, Arizona.



The 2016 gains are expected to continue the strong performance of conventional travel trailers, and type C motorhomes.

"Last year marked the longest period of sustained growth in the past 50 years," said RVIA's new president, Frank Hugelmeyer. "The industry has recovered from the recession and we're looking forward to sustained growth into the future."

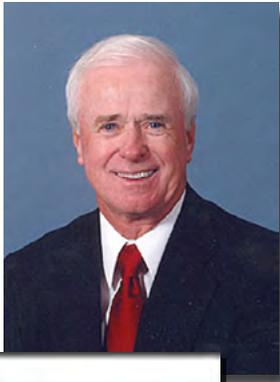
The forecasted total for 2016 is more than double the industry's 2009 recession low and is being driven by an improving economy, a deep-seated preference of consumers for the RV Lifestyle and innovative RV designs

"The favorable RV outlook is based on continued gains in jobs and wages, as well as low inflation and interest rates," said Curtin. "Although interest rates, inflation and gas prices will move up in the future, there is no reason to expect a sudden increase during the year ahead."

The RV industry's resurgence also reflects the ability of manufacturers to quickly deliver new features and options that appeal to marketplace changes.



Dr. Curtin noted there is a wide band of possible outcomes around the current RV forecast because of unusual levels of uncertainty in economic data and the political arena. These uncertainties, however, are expected to be offset by strong and unyielding consumer preferences for the RV Lifestyle.—RVIA



## Searer Marking Fourth Year As Hall President

Darryl Searer is marking his fourth anniversary as president of the RV/MH Hall of Fame. The RV/MH Heritage Foundation board installed Searer on March 9, 2012. At that time, he worked with then Chairman Bill Garpow during a time of turbulence for the facility.

“As I reflect back to that day when I volunteered to make a one-year commitment to help the Hall out of its difficulties, I didn’t expect that one-year commitment would become four and more,” Searer said in a news release. “Little did I realize that the Foundation would become my passion to see it become debt-free.”

Without exception industry leaders have applauded Searer’s focused leadership and accomplishments during his tenure as president of the foundation.

RVDA President Phil Ingrassia said, “Darryl has done an outstanding job uniting the industry behind the RV/MH Heritage Foundation and the RV/MH Hall of Fame. His knowledge of the industries, as well as business acumen, has put the foundation on a solid path for the future. Congratulations Darryl on a job well done!”

Cavco’s President and CEO Joe Stegmayer, who also serves as vice chairman of the foundation’s board, noted, “Darryl Searer is one truly amazing person. A successful businessman in his own right, he offered to be president

and chief staff person of the RV/MH Hall of Fame and Museum. The selfless part of all this is that he took on these responsibilities as a true volunteer – no salary, no incentive bonus, no compensation of any sort, no perks, no benefits.”

Searer’s list of accomplishments while leading the Foundation include:

- “Boots” Ingram Family’s loan paid in full.
- Settled with the city of Elkhart.
- David Woodworth debt paid in full.
- Debt reduced from \$5.5 million to \$1.6 million (minus valid pledges of \$400,000).
- By registering the name Northern Indiana Event Center (NIEC) in the summer of 2012 it has become the No. 1 contributor to the Hall’s actual income over the last four years. NIEC now covers more than 50% of total operating expenses each year.
- The land to the east on nearly 40 acres of property has been cleared adding an additional eight acres of useable land for all types of outdoor events.
- The process for nominating and selecting inductees into the Hall has been updated, adding professionalism and integrity to become a Hall member.

Searer said, “Although we have made great progress in only four years, we still have work left to do. I challenge each of you to dig down deep and ask, ‘Has the RV and/or manufactured housing industries been good to me and my family?’ If so, please find it in your heart to support the Hall at whatever level you can afford and help us take the final step to our debt-free goal.”

Visit [www.rvmhhalloffame.org](http://www.rvmhhalloffame.org) to make a donation or to volunteer at the RV/MH Hall of Fame.—news release



## January 2016 Motorhome Sales Rise, Towables Flat

January saw motorhome retail registrations grow by 6.6% when compared to January 2015, Statistical Surveys Inc. (SSI) recently announced. Thor Industries was the motorized sales leader posting a 30.3% market share with Forest River at 21.3% and Winnebago Industries registering a 15.1% share.

For a breakout, Class A motorhome sales were basically flat in January, only rising 0.5%. Thor lead with a 25.3% market share followed by REV Recreation Group with 15.8%, Forest River at 15.1%, Winnebago with 14.2% and Tiffin Motorhomes at 13.9%.

Class C registrations, however, jumped 15.1% in January with Thor again the sales leader with 36.5% market share. This was followed by Forest River with 29%, Winnebago at 16.2% and Jayco at 10.4%.

Class B sales also rose in January, up 7.5% when compared to last year. Winnebago was the top-selling manufacturer with 33.9% market share. Roadtrek Motorhomes with 31.6% and Thor with 24% rounded out the top three Class B sellers.

For Towables, sales were flat, dropping 0.6% when

compared to January 2015. For a category breakout, Statistical Surveys reports:

- Sales for travel trailers were flat, slipping 0.1%.
- Fifth-wheel registrations slid 3.4%.
- Folding camping trailer sales dropped 12.1%.
- Park model RV sales were up a whopping 83.8%.

Forest River was the January towable sales leader with a 34.9% market share followed by Thor at 33.7% and Jayco with a 13.1% share.

By segment, Forest River was first in travel trailers for January with a 37.3% market share, followed by Thor with 30.8% and Jayco at 14.1%. Thor held the largest market share for fifth wheels at 45.8% followed by Forest River with 28.6%, Jayco at 11% and Grand Design RV at 7.8%.

In folding camping trailers, Forest River also led January sales with a 59.3% market share. This was followed by Columbia Northwest/Aliner at 16.7% and Jayco at 13.8%. Fleetwood Homes led the park model segment with a 37.4% market share, followed by Skyline at 10.4% and Champion Builders with 8.8%.—RVBusiness



## Certified Pre-Owned Vehicles Makes Money

By Wayne Hulit, CEO, Cedar Mountain RVI

“We see reconditioning as an investment, not as an expense.” – Norm Olson, former sales operations manager of Toyota Certified, in speaking about certified pre-owned programs.

Ten years ago certified used vehicles occupied a small space on car and truck dealership lots. Today, certified cars and trucks are a distinct and important business line.

Dealerships that have invested in certified pre-owned (CPO) programs have benefited from higher profit margins on used vehicle sales. Now, certified inspections for RVs are here.

In the company’s latest Used Vehicle Market Report, Edmunds.com analysts noted that in 2014 CPO sales hit an all-time high. Last year, CPO’s made up 20.8 percent of total used car sales at franchised dealerships, the highest percentage since certified pre-owned programs were introduced.

The report also noted that in 2014, the average one-year-old vehicle sold 5.7 percent higher than in 2013.

“Car shoppers are finding a great selection to choose from, and in the current economy, many are comfortable spending a bit more for that extra peace of mind that a CPO car brings,” explains Edmunds.com Senior Analyst Jessica Caldwell.

*An independent third party RV Dealer certified pre-owned program is the rising tide that floats all boats and RV Dealerships can now position themselves to ride the waves to higher profits while offering a superior product to customers:*

- General managers can offer more from their used RV inventory, and serve more buyers who are familiar with and comfortable buying CPO vehicles.
- Sales managers will gain from increased sales value.
- Service managers will benefit because their technicians will be able to concentrate on higher dollar repairs rather than inspections.
- Finance and insurance managers will have an easier time finding sources of funding and insurance because the value of the RV has been determined by an independent source.

By participating in a certified pre-owned program, the dealership gets a positive infusion of profit to their bottom line.

Inspections performed by certified RV inspectors follow a code of ethics and standards set by an industry body. With car and truck CPO programs, there are no industry-level standards for inspection and reconditioning. However, car and truck CPO programs have standards that are dictated by the manufacturer.

Additionally, the manufacturer enforces the program by auditing the dealerships to make sure they are performing the reconditioning and CPO labeling according to those standards. While dealing with individual manufacturers can become cumbersome, the overall positive effect of a CPO program is that it increases value and reduces customer dissatisfaction.



In an industry report titled, “Guide to Certified Pre-Owned Vehicle Programs,” Patrick McFall, former VWoA’s certified pre-owned corporate sales manager, is quoted saying, “If you do the inspection the way you’re supposed to do it and the reconditioning the way you’re supposed to do it, generally there should be no claims in the first 30 days.”

*So, how does a CPO program make you more money? Consider this:*

- A CPO program is an investment, not an expense. It’s been proven by the car and truck industry that a CPO endorsement increases retail value of the product. If done right, it will reduce 30-day warranty return visits.
- Qualified by a third party inspector, a buyer knows an independent specialist has inspected that CPO RV. That brings credibility to a CPO program and eliminates the question of reliance on vague or non-existent manufacturer reconditioning standards.
- Inspections have to be done. Why do them with an in-house tech that can be better assigned to high-dollar repair work? An independent inspector will get them done in more detail at a lower cost per inspection point and will bring industry credibility to the CPO program.
- Reconditioning is still done by your staff of trained and certified RV techs. What an excellent combination! A CPO program that is backed by independent inspectors; repairs done by YOUR dealership using YOUR experienced, award winning RV techs.

*Cedar Mountain RVI is an independent RV inspection service that has been rigorously trained and is NRVIA certified using a code of ethics and standards of practice set by RV Industry standards. The RV Dealer Certified Pre-Owned Program was created by the RV Inspection Connection, of which Cedar Mountain RV Inspections is a contracted partner.*

*For more information on the RV Dealer Certified*

*Pre-Owned Program, or to schedule an inspection, visit [www.cmrvi.com](http://www.cmrvi.com). –RV Daily Report*



## MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION

### NEW MEMBERS

**FINANCE ANGELS**  
 332 Fullers Cross Rd  
 Winter Garden, FL 34787  
 321-229-2795  
[www.financeangels.net](http://www.financeangels.net)  
 Finance – Region 4

**THERAPY GEAR WORLDWIDE**  
 5753 Hwy 85 North  
 Crestview, FL 32536  
 801-232-8122  
 Supplier - Region 5

*If you have a story or item of interest concerning your business that you would like to share with the FRVTA membership, please contact Dave Kelly at [davekelly@frvta.org](mailto:davekelly@frvta.org) in the State Office.*

## **Alliance COACH** Launches Traveling Show Team

Alliance Coach RV Sales and Service recently announced that Tracy Williford has joined as show team manager. Williford has over 16 years of sales and dealership management experience, making him well-prepared for managing offsite promotions for both the dealership's Wildwood, FL, and Lake Park, GA, locations.

President Alan Shapiro said, "We are always working to find more ways to give every one of our customers a better RV experience. Adding Tracy to the team will help us take the sales department to the next level."

Alliance Coach has experienced impressive growth in both sales and service, and was recently listed among the Top 50 Dealers in the U.S. and Canada by RV Business Magazine for the second consecutive year.

If interested in joining the show team, please contact Williford at 540-598-6342.—*news release, RV Daily Report*

## Annual Spring Surge Drives Gas Prices Higher

Gasoline prices have started their annual springtime migration higher, but motorists should still save money at the pump in 2016.

According to the Associated Press, the national average price for a gallon of regular has risen — the first time that has happened since last May, according to auto club AAA. It's still 54 cents cheaper than at this time last year.



Forecasters say prices should rise at least 30 cents more by June. Demand will rise as people drive more, and supplies will tighten when refineries slow down to perform maintenance and switch to more expensive summer fuel blends.

The U.S. Department of Energy predicts that the national average for a gallon of regular gasoline will peak at \$2.08 from June through August. Tom Kloza, an energy analyst with the Oil Price Information Service, says the peak will be between \$2.10 and \$2.50 a gallon.

Either forecast would leave prices well below recent years. From 2011 to 2014, the national average on June 1 topped \$3.60 and some places saw gas over \$4.—*RVBusiness*



## SAVE THE DATE!

*The 36th Annual FRVTA State Convention takes place this year at the tropical Hawks Cay Resort on Duck Key, September 8-11. Mark your calendars now and make plans to attend this outstanding annual event filled with fun-filled activities and educational opportunities!*

## MEETING DATES



**REGION 1 • April 4 (ELECTIONS) • JD's Bistro & Grill • 1951 Tamiami Trl. • Port Charlotte**

**REGION 2 • April 20 • Gander Mountain • 100 Gander Way • Palm Beach Gardens**

**REGION 3 • NO MEETING**

**REGION 4 • April 13 • Bone Fish Grill • 7830 West Sandlake Rd. • Orlando**

**REGION 5 • NO MEETING**

**REGION 6 • April 19 • Copeland's of New Orleans • 4310 Southside Blvd. • Jacksonville**

**REGION 7 • April 28 • Braised Onion • 754 NE 25th Ave. • Ocala**

**ALL MEETINGS: Cocktails 6:30 PM • Dinner 7:00 PM**