

# FRVTA News



MARCH 2020

MONTHLY NEWS CONCERNING  
FLORIDA'S RECREATION VEHICLE INDUSTRY

**SALES  
STRONG**

**AT**

**SPRING**

**REGIONAL**

**RV**

**SHOWS**

*Following the record-breaking attendance seen at the 2020 Florida RV SuperShow in Tampa, the season for FRVTA's regional shows began with high hopes for continued sales success. And show participants were not dismayed!*

First up was the 35th Annual Fort Myers RV Show. Held once again at the Lee Civic Center in Fort Myers January 23 to 26, this annual event featured 13 dealers and over 100 vendors. Longtime Region One Show Manager Jack Carver said this year's event was very successful for both dealers and vendors alike as close to 12,000 attendees made their way to the civic center during the show's four-day-run.

"From all reports I received, sales were strong and continuous right from the start of the show," he detailed. "Fortunately, we were able to avoid any problems with rain like we had last year, so the crowds were strong and steady, which translated into interest and lots of sales."

Region 1 President Everett Henkel III echoed the same feelings as he said his dealership, RV Kountry, racked up lots of sales at both the show and the dealership. "These events typically stir up the marketplace and prompt many to come out, see what we have to offer and then buy. Everyone I spoke with said the same thing—great traffic and great sales."

Next up was the 2020 Jacksonville RV MegaShow held at the Jacksonville Equestrian Center the weekend of February 6 to 9. Nearly 9,000 attendees went to this year's four-day event, which was about 1,000 more than last season.

FRVTA Region 6 President Ken Loyd of Flamingo Lake RV Resort said the show overall "was very successful" for everyone. The Jacksonville event featured six dealers and 30 vendors.

"Attendance was good with the exception of Thursday, but I believe that was due to the 'doom and gloom' weather forecasts that were being put out there by the local weather people," Loyd said. "There were a lot of first-time buyers and quite a few families looking for either their first camper or upgrading to a larger one. It also seemed like there were more people interested in full timing when compared to past shows."

Como RV salesman Tim Hudson said his dealership had 20 units on display at the event and had several sales. He said show visitors were mainly in their 30s, 40s and 50s and that "all in all it was a very good show with very responsible, thoughtful people coming through. The traffic was very good."

The West Palm Beach RV Show was up next, held at the South Florida Fairgrounds the weekend of February 20–23. Nine RV Dealers came together with hundreds of new and used RVs on display. The show opened Thursday with warm and sunny weather, but that all changed on Friday and Saturday.

"We had lots of wind and on and off rain both days," said FRVTA Executive Director Lance Wilson. "All the dealers I talked to on Sunday said that despite the weather they had a very good show. The show also featured a number of booths from RV parts and accessories to CBD oil, campgrounds, camping grills and bug repellent candles. Attendance for the show was a little off from last year's show, but still brought in over 6,300 people over the four days. Plans are now in the works for a possible spring/summer event."

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## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE...

### *RVillage— A Different Kind of RV Club*

*I recently attended an RVillage rally where about a thousand RV's got together in Live Oak, Florida. I've done several FMCA rallies and different user-group rallies, and found that each one has its own personality, so I was curious to see how this would be different.*

*RVillage is more than a club, it's a connecting tool to help RVers find other like-minded RVers. It uses a technology platform (phone app) to indicate if other RVillage members are near your location. It then offers a messaging option to communicate with the other member. Users of the app tell stories of how they met new friends, or pulled into an area and did a search to find they have friends they know located in the same campground. What a great concept!*

*In typical fashion, this group of RVers is much like most: very social and eager to make new friends. The difference is they are all technology users. Many have their own YouTube channels or Facebook user groups. A lot of them are mini-celebrities who share their experiences online and have lots of followers. And at the same time, they are following the adventures of others who are posting their travels. It's interesting that when they finally meet for the first time, they already know each other pretty well.*

*The other thing I noticed about the group was how diverse they were. Unlike other rallies I've attended, this one had everything from home-converted vans to new diesel pushers. I'm certain every tax bracket was covered here, but they were all very accepting people who shared the love of camping and connectedness. It was great to see this type of open-mindedness at a rally.*

*My overall impression is that RVillage is a movement that is here to stay. It could be a great way for you or your customers to stay connected with each other. Check out RVillage and see what you think!*

**ROB COCHRAN**  
FRVTA State President



## 2020 FRVTA SHOW SCHEDULE

### Ocala RV Show

**FEBRUARY 27 - MARCH 1** • Florida Horse Park  
11008 US Highway 475 South • Ocala, FL 34480

### SuperSaver RV Show

**MARCH 25 - 30** • CenturyLink-Lee Co. Sports Complex  
14400 Ben Pratt Six Mile Cypress Pkwy • Ft. Myers, FL 33912

### Tampa Bay Summer RV Show

**JUNE 18 - 21** • Florida State Fairgrounds  
4800 US Highway 301 North • Tampa, FL 33610







**FINANCIAL CHECK-UP • by JERRY MANN, FRVTA Benefit Consultant**

*Positive Changes to the tax code*

Do you remember the old saying “the more things change they are still the same?” Well, when it comes to the tax code the IRS is like a chameleon. Change is constant...and it’s not always good.

However, sometimes we taxpayers get lucky. Such is the case with the “Secure Act of 2019.” For example, under prior law, you were required to begin Required Minimum Distributions (RMD) no later than April 1st of the following year in which you, the taxpayer, turned 70½.

Under the “Secure Act of 2019” taxpayers who turn 70½ after December 31, 2019 may now wait until as late as April 1st of the following year in which you turn 72. This rule applies to IRA’s and tax qualified retirement plans.

In addition, taxpayers who are still working may now continue to fund IRA’s beyond age 70½, if they are still working. Formerly, this was not the case, so even if you are required to take the RMD’s out of an IRA you are still permitted to build your retirement fund. Participants in other tax-qualified plans like 401(K) plans may continue to fund their plans as long as they are still working.

Many taxpayers will be glad to see new rules regarding distributions from a Qualified 529 Plan. Under previous law, the definition of “Higher Education Expenses” was generally limited to tuition, books, fees, and room and board for post-secondary education, elementary and secondary education tuition. 529 distributions used to re-pay student loans are not “qualified distributions” and therefore are taxable.

Under the new law, the definition of “higher

education expenses” has been expanded to include apprenticeship programs. Further “qualified distributions” has been expanded to include up to \$10,000 (lifetime cap) for repayment of student loans of the plan beneficiary or siblings of the plan beneficiary. While student loan interest deduction is limited by this provision, the \$10,000 cap is calculated separately for the beneficiary and sibling.

There is both good news and bad news for employers under the Secure Act, but some of the bad news doesn’t take effect until 2020. The bad news is that for Plan years after 2020 employers with 401(K) plans are required to have dual eligibility to allow part-time workers with more than 500 but less than 1000 hours annually to be eligible to contribute to the Plan.

Some of the good news is that the Act creates a new credit (notice, not a deduction) of up to \$500 for smaller employers to defray costs when establishing a new qualified retirement plan that includes automatic enrollment. And, the credit is available for the first three years of the plan.

There is also a new incentive for employers to establish a 401(K) plan. The new rule does away with the old rule that was more complex. Section 104 of the “Act” gives employers a 50% tax credit on hard dollar costs to the employer for establishing a Plan for the first three years for up to \$5,000 per year. Please note this is a tax credit, not a tax deduction.

**In summary, knowing about tax law changes will help you better plan for the future.**

*Jerry Mann, owner of Mann and Associates, Inc., has been a member of FRVTA Region 3 since 1996, and has served as Regional Treasurer three times. For other tax-saving ideas and insurance solutions, contact Jerry at 813-541-6071 or 813-769-1829. You can also reach Jerry online at [Jerry@mann-benefits.com](mailto:Jerry@mann-benefits.com).*



**Cornwell: Florida RV, Park Sectors Experience “Boom”**

Bobby Cornwell, president and CEO of the Florida Association of RV Parks and Campgrounds (FARVC), based in Tallahassee, says his organization anticipates as many as 3,000 new RV sites opening in Florida in the next two years. Those sites could come online at both new resorts and expanded existing parks.

Florida’s West Coast, from Tampa to Naples, is a hotbed of RV activity, according to Cornwell. It’s well populated, has a variety of RV parks to choose from and offers natural benefits that appeal to people, from beaches to a warmer climate than parts north.

Area developers and owners of RV parks are capitalizing on the demand, and RV sales businesses, which have an interconnected relationship with parks, have experienced sales growth.

In 2008, during the recession, Cornwell says Florida saw a big downturn in park construction. Over the last three or four years, he’s seen growth pick up and now, he says, it’s at a peak. Between a good economy, millennials getting into RVing and technology that allows people to work from the road, Cornwell sees more good days ahead for the RV industry. He says, “All of the pieces are just coming together.”—*Business Observer, RVBusiness*



## TRAINING NEWS • by Veronica Rivera, Training Director

### Mentor Update

#### Greetings everyone!

*I assumed the above title (Training Director) effective February 1. Jim Carr is still on board until the end of this school year (July 31) and will continue to offer guidance, suggestions and special support as needed. He will*

*remain actively involved in the transition and clarification of the FRVTA DLN role for the next school year as the RVTI Mission and Processes become more defined.*

Please know that the FRVTA Distance Learning network (DLN) will be available for the 2020/21 school year with a new updated curriculum, tests and new Certification and Re-certification procedures clearly defined. Unfortunately I cannot explain further until we hear the total plan from RVTI – that should be out by the end of February.

I can bring you up-to-date on some new initiatives we are exploring and/or initiating for the 2020/21 school year beginning August 1, 2020:

1. We fully intend to pursue as much new Supplier and Manufacturer product-specific training as we can get and add to our Advanced Track. The question remains, "How much old material should we keep on the DLN Advanced Track?" We will keep as much as necessary since older units are still out there and it is an excellent resource IF needed.

2. *Exploring RVDA Molino Learning Center certifications available on the DLN:* Discussions have begun on making all the learning center certification programs available on the Distance Learning Network. If we can bring that about, the DLN could become a one-stop opportunity for all Fixed Ops certification programs. We have been invited to the next Mike Molino Learning Center Board of Directors meeting to discuss this exciting new opportunity. Certainly more to come on this!



3. *New DLN Mentor Training Guide:* We are moving from our manual guide to an online format. All mentors will have the ability to submit student information and completion forms via our website for the 2020/21 school year and beyond. In addition to the forms, next year we will have a "Best in Class" training plan to facilitate training with your technicians. Whether you are a new or seasoned mentor, we will have a guide that will help you deliver an impactful and engaging training session.

Next year is five months away. We ask that you keep training as a part of your weekly and/or monthly technician development plans. Make sure you take advantage of the Supplier and Manufacturer product-specific training on the DLN.

*Let us know if you have any questions.  
Thank you!  
Veronica Rivera, Jim Carr and Judy Wilson*

## RV Fixed Operations Professional Certification Week Is March 8-14 Recognizes Certified Employees and Promotes Continuing Education

The week of March 8–14 has been designated RV Fixed Operations Professional Certification Week by the Society of Certified RV Professionals and the Mike Molino RV Learning Center. Fixed ops professionals can earn certifications as parts managers, parts specialists, service writers/advisors, service managers and warranty administrators through the Mike Molino RV Learning Center's parts and service management certification programs.



"This week is about recognizing your fixed ops certified professionals by celebrating their achievements and encouraging others to begin the process of certification through the RV Learning Center's warranty administration and parts and service management certification programs," said RVDA President Phil Ingrassia.

The center's credentials were developed by experts at The Ohio State University's Center for Education and Training for Employment and a team of top performing, demographically diverse working professionals. Suppliers, distributors, dealer owners, and manufacturers were also involved in developing the programs. Dealers can learn more about professional certification and training opportunities available for fixed operations staff on the RV Learning Center website at [www.rvlearningcenter.com](http://www.rvlearningcenter.com).

–RVDA





## DEALER DETAILS • by S. ALLEN MONELLO, D.P.A. AICE

### The Message is Clear

You should have recently received an email message from the DMV (dated February 5) regarding your dealership's responsibility to process Electronic Filing System (EFS) transactions promptly. As you know, the Electronic Filing System allows you to issue a metal license plate and

registration to the customer at point of sale.

The memorandum attached to the email reminds dealers that Florida law requires you to apply for certificate of title on behalf of your customer within 30 days after delivery of the motor vehicle. The memorandum further states that dealers will be required to pay a penalty (late fee) for going past this 30-day period.

During the past year, some of you may have received a letter from DMV (many dealers have) advising you that certain transactions had not been processed within the 30-day required period. The letter directs you to provide written documentation explaining why the transactions are late. When the explanations were not adequate, many dealers were fined. (NOTE: DMV has the authority to fine dealers up to \$1,000 per violation.)

The current DMV administration has been quite aggressive in going after dealers who continuously miss the 30-day deadline. Having an electronic method to monitor your actions (through the EFS) enables DMV to first target those dealers who are the greatest offenders and then work their way down to other dealers with fewer late transactions.

If you do not participate in EFS, you are still being

monitored. Every time you issue an electronic temp tag (Electronic Temporary Registration – ETR) the clock starts running and the DMV is counting and watching.

I expect that DMV enforcement will increase and more dealers will be fined. They are determined to break the industry cycle of going past 30 days to transfer titles and to change the culture of dealers who consistently violate this part of the law.

The message in the memorandum was clear: “Failure to resolve these transactions may result in fines or other penalties against your dealer license.” (This was underscored by DMV, not me.)

Perhaps this is a very good time to review your processes and make any necessary adjustments to ensure you are able to apply for customer titles within 30 days after delivery. If you don't, DMV will be writing you a letter and you won't like the message.

**NOTE:** This article is not intended to provide legal or financial advice. It is for informational purposes only.

*S. Allen Monello, D.P.A., CPFS, is the Managing Member of the Automotive Industry Center for Excellence, LLC. Allen provides compliance consulting and training services to dealerships and is certified as a “Consumer Credit Compliance Professional” by the National Automotive Finance Association. He also is credentialed by the Association of Finance and Insurance Professionals (AFIP) as a Certified Professional in Financial Services. He can be reached by email at [Allen@TheAICE.com](mailto:Allen@TheAICE.com) or by phone at (727) 623-9075. Please visit his website at [www.TheAICE.com](http://www.TheAICE.com).*



### 39-Year RV Industry Veteran Needs Our Help

Dan Lassetter sold or sales managed literally thousands of RVs during his career in Florida. Most manufacturers, suppliers, distributors, insurance companies and bankers that serve the RV Industry have benefited from his efforts. Now due to bad luck and bad health he needs our help.

**Bad Luck:** Dan loved and believed in the RV Industry. In 2007, he invested his life savings,

purchasing an RV Dealership in Alabama. The 2009 economic downturn wiped him out and took nearly all his personal possessions.

**Bad Health:** While trying to work his way back to normalcy, Dan experienced heart problems and had emergency quadruple bypass surgery. Soon after, diabetes set in and he had to have his right foot toe amputated. Recently, he had to have the same leg amputated just above the knee. Dan is going through rehab now.

For those of you who know Dan, you know he is a

man of faith, generous to a fault, hard working and with uncompromising integrity. We are confident you will find it in your heart to help him.

For those of you who don't know Dan, please consider what he has done for the RV Industry. All manufacturers, parts suppliers, distributors, insurance programs, financial lenders, etc. are dependent upon RVs being sold to for the health and wellbeing of their business.

Dan has been putting consumers into RV's since 1981. Now his health and wellbeing need your help by donating what you can individually or on behalf of your business.

**Dan's immediate needs:** Handicap housing, motorized wheelchair, automobile modifications, etc.

Please click on this link and go directly to [Dan's Go Fund Me](#) page.

*Thank you for your time and consideration and hopefully your donation. Please contact Greg or myself if you have questions, concerns or suggestions on how to help Dan.*

John Mancinelli, 270-991-8637 call or text [johnmancinelli@twc.com](mailto:johnmancinelli@twc.com) or Greg Justice, 813-838-8828 call or text [2012justicem@gmail.com](mailto:2012justicem@gmail.com).

## MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

### Always a Survivor

By Monte Whaley, RV News, photos by Tim Allen  
Photography. Edited version reprinted with kind permission from Dana Nelson, owner and publisher of RV News Magazine, October 2019 issue.

RV Connections Co-owner Neal Stewart says the company survived last year's deadly Hurricane Michael with bare bones technology, a hastily conceived evacuation plan and the hard work of employees who refused to abandon customers.

"We're so fortunate here," Stewart says. "We've got tough people here who responded so well under tough circumstances."

One of the toughest employees, Stewart says, is receptionist Tina Smith, who used a cell phone in what could only be described as an inconsistent AT&T hotspot to field frantic phone calls from RV Connections customers devastated by Hurricane Michael. Thousands lost their Panama City homes during the hurricane. They were calling the 20-year-old business to find any kind of temporary shelter.

"It was wild," Smith says. "I would look down and see 20 to 30 phone messages, and I couldn't get to them."

Stewart says many RV Connections customers are fierce off-road campers, always up for an extreme RV adventure. Those same adventure enthusiasts now looked shell-shocked. Hurricane Michael had ravished their lives, their homes, their community and their city.

"Most RVers I know are pretty street-smart, tough people with real common sense," Stewart says, "but these same folks now looked like they just emerged from a war. They were tired, beat up and just wanted a place to live. I've never seen them like that before. It was scary."

#### The Day After

RV Connections' staff found the dealership ravaged. The building had a damaged roof, debris was strewn everywhere, and RVs were so badly mangled that many were unusable. Of the 180 units on the lot, Hurricane Michael mauled 160 of them. Stewart says 30 went straight to the junkyard.

"We had to pay \$100,000 out of our own pocket to replace fencing and a sign," Stewart says. "One of our biggest problems was that we were a little underinsured. Businesses need to keep track of things like this, or they may get caught behind the eight ball."

Although Hurricane Michael put many of RV Connections' 85 workers out on the street, sales, service and other support staff still trudged to work immediately

following the storm.

"Just a couple of days after the hurricane hit, about everybody came to work, ready to help out," Stewart says. "We were just fighting the same stuff everybody else was."

He says many people, including his customers, were much worse off.

"Some people were calling, begging us to please get them into a home," Stewart says. "They were desperate. Things were bad—really, really bad."



#### RVs Evacuated

Stewart says before the hurricane's arrival, employees trucked some product to the company's recently opened facility in Dothan, Alabama, for safekeeping. And, despite all precautions, he says he could not protect all the units. The storm blew into the city with ferocious speed, leaving little time as it approached.

RV Connections procured a large generator to keep the business running as the rest of Panama City struggled to provide electrical power to residents. Before the generator arrived, the company worked out of a unit from inventory.

"It was months before we got all of our power back," Stewart says. "A few people just left; they couldn't handle it, but we hung in there."

#### Like Never Before

Stewart says the dealership's team fought a losing battle to accommodate as many customers as possible.

Management slashed prices from 50 to 70 percent on still-livable damaged units. Staff delivered the units as quickly as possible to area homesteads that no longer had homes.

Stewart says his crew moved 130 units in a month, double what the dealership usually cranks out. In the first two months following the storm, he says the dealership sold 80 percent of the damaged RVs.

Customers showed up with emergency insurance company checks, Stewart says. They signed off on the "as is" condition of the RVs they purchased. He says most of the unit

damage was cosmetic: scratches, dents and scraped paint jobs.

Contractors were a large segment of the buyers, he says. Many bought travel trailers to house workers brought in to do repair work in Panama City.

Stewart says the company converted its technicians into a "mobile patch-up-and-repair force" to fix previously sold models that could not travel to the dealership for repairs. Following the aftermath, the dealership prioritized fixing the biggest problems before moving to minor ones.

continued on page 7



## ALWAYS A SURVIVOR

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 6

### No Man Is an Island

The dealership sustained \$130,000 in damage and fought through lost power and little or no telephone service for weeks. RV Connections basically operated off an AT&T hotspot using Tina Smith's cell phone.

"About 60 to 70 percent of phone calls we were fielding were going through to our receptionist's cell phone," Stewart says. "She would look down and see 20 voice mails. People were calling in to either buy an RV, or they wanted to bring their RV in for service, or were calling for repair parts."

Eventually, Stewart says, the business purchased a second cell phone just to handle frenzied service and sales calls.

### Bolstering Inventory

Stewart says his insurance carrier promptly covered the difference in the discounted prices of the damaged trailers sold. He says the insurer also quickly hauled off most of the unusable products from the lot.

RV manufacturers responded and wasted little time in helping to restock. As soon as the hurricane passed, Stewart began placing orders for replacement units. Demand and sales opportunity were abundant.

The company placed several 30-pack orders of entry-level Springdale and Puma travel trailers from Keystone. The units arrived mere days after the hurricane hit.

"That really kept us ahead of the game," Stewart says. "It kept us just a little bit ahead of the customers."

### The Beginning

When he was 16-years old, Neal Stewart came home from school and found his dad, Jack, quietly sitting on the family couch.

"I thought that was weird," the younger Stewart says. "He was never home during the day. He was always busy running the RV dealership."

Jack explained to his son how the dealership, Emerald Coast RV, had just been bought by Freedom Roads. The precursor company to Camping World had laid off the Emerald Coast staff, including his dad that very day.

The elder Stewart wanted to start his own RV business

but needed his son's help. Always loyal to his dad, the young Stewart sold his lucrative lawn mowing business to help the family.

"He told me, 'son, I will take care of you when this thing gets going,'" Neal Stewart says. "That was fine with me and we got to work."

The family cleaned up an abandoned mobile home park to make way for newly arriving Springdale travel trailers, and Cardinal and Montana fifth wheels.

During the Great Recession, a floor plan lender asked the Stewarts to store and sell consigned units from other failed RV dealerships. The business slowly expanded and leveraged the arrangement to stay afloat through the recession.

The business then closed a second location in Panama City in 2014, he says, to invest in its main headquarters and consolidate sales/service.

### Attracting New Customers

Stewart says his dealership has excelled at leveraging its social media presence with email blasts, almost daily blogging and constant Facebook page updates. The company's social media activity played a big part in the company's rebound from Hurricane Michael.

"We hit social media hard after the storm," Stewart says. "We got the word out on all of our platforms that we were open for business."

Stewart hires vendors to handle his social media presence, another practice he began a few years ago. He says having experts handle this aspect of his business not only keeps his company front-of-mind, but also allows his team to instead focus on the core of the business.

### Back on Pace

RV Connections finally caught up with its repair backlog and Stewart says both the dealership and Panama City are on the mend.

In hindsight, he advises dealers to have in place an evacuation plan to move product, protecting it from damage when impending catastrophe is imminent. He says dealers should also check their insurance policies to ensure they have the proper coverage.

"You need to be real current and have a policy that is as comprehensive as possible," Stewart says. "Don't be caught coming up short."



### FRVTA Visits Local Kindergarten

As part of their Transportation Month, FRVTA visited The Learning Center, a local school that FRVTA's Administrative Coordinator Ana Correia's son Kai attends. FRVTA Marketing Director Dave Kelly and Ana took the kids on a tour of a brand new motorhome courtesy of Lazydays RV Center and Snow Chamberlain.

"A lot of kids had already traveled in RVs, but many had never seen the inside of one," said Dave. "They really enjoyed discovering that everything they have in their homes are inside an RV."



## *RVDA's Ingrassia: Signs Indicate a Strong Year in 2020*

*The following column by Recreation Vehicle Dealers Association (RVDA) President Phil Ingrassia, appearing in the January issue of RV Executive Today, offers an analysis of the industry's prospects in 2020.*

A flurry of media coverage about the RV business closed out 2019, as analysts speculated about what 2020 has in store for the industry. New shipment forecasts grabbed headlines, and several public companies released their quarterly numbers last month.

The RV Industry Association (RVIA) projects RV shipments to total 402,100 units when the books are closed on 2019, down 16.9% from the 2018 total of 483,700. The manufacturers' association has begun adding a "probability" figure to its shipment forecasts — which is a wise move — and the double-digit percentage declines seen throughout 2019 are expected to ease.

Total RV shipments are expected to dip 3.9% to 386,400 this year, in the most likely scenario (60% probability). A more aggressive outlook (15% probability) shows a slight rise in 2020 shipments to 404,600 units. The low end of the range, based on the most conservative forecast (25% probability), sets the annual total at 359,600.

Specific RV manufacturers are publicly optimistic about the coming year, which is consistent with the latest Baird dealer survey, conducted in partnership with RVDA.

As RVDA's Jeff Kurowski reported in RV Executive Today last month, the survey shows dealer sentiment on the upswing as dealers get their inventories in shape. Survey respondents are generally expecting a good 2020 and the investment in new and revamped sales and service facilities across the country shows dealers are confident in the industry's long-term prospects.

Thor Industries Inc. announced in December that net sales for its first quarter increased 22.9% to \$2.16 billion. "Dealer optimism is strong in both the North American and European markets, with excellent feedback from our September open house in Elkhart," said Thor President and CEO Bob Martin. "We look forward to continuing that momentum as the spring RV show season starts in North America in January."

Winnebago Industries Inc. also reported first-quarter revenues of \$588.5 million, an increase of 19.2% compared to \$493.6 million for the same period a year ago. "We continue to monitor the health of the RV and marine channels and the confidence of consumers," said Winnebago President and CEO Mike Happe in the earnings release.

Citing another reason for optimism, a December Wall Street Journal story pointed to changes in the U.S. passenger car fleet.

Pickups and sport-utility vehicles now dominate sales, and the market share for lighter, more compact RVs has increased. "You have half the investment for a towable RV already sitting in your driveway," Happe told the Journal.

As the retail show season kicks off this month, the recession talk of late summer 2019 has faded. Unless election jitters or something unforeseen rattles the economy, 2020 should be another strong year for dealers and the industry.



## **Actor Jeff Goldblum Investigates RV Industry**



*Jeff Goldblum at Jayco  
(photo courtesy of Disney)*

Hollywood icon Jeff Goldblum, made famous by many movies including *The Fly* and *Jurassic Park*, recently took a deep dive into RV culture on his Disney+ series *The World According to Jeff Goldblum*.

The episode features Goldblum visiting the "RV Capital of the World" in order to understand the mode of transportation and the accompanying lifestyle.

At the RV Hall of Fame, Goldblum was given a tour by Ryan Szhlarek, vice president of the Hall to better understand the evolution and merger of recreation and vehicle. The star also toured Jayco's Entegra production line, assembling parts of an RV himself and gain exposure to the Amish employees comprising a large portion of the RV workforce.

The National Geographic series on Disney+ aims to explore various cultures and movements. The urge to explore RVs stemmed from the recent boom in RVing — from nomads to Millennials. In this episode, Goldblum "ponders the conflict between our need for stability and desire to roam free," according to a Disney news release.

This is the second time this year Disney has promoted the RV Lifestyle through media. In June, Disney-owned Pixar released *Toy Story 4*, which featured an RV for the majority of the film, promoting the movie in partnership with Go RVing.—RV Pro



## NEW MEMBERS

### ALLIANT CREDIT UNION

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### BOTTOM LINE MARKETING

Kendall Kennely  
860 US Highway 1, Ste 111  
N Palm Beach, FL 33408-3825  
PH: 561-791-6295  
Website: [www.bottomlineblack.com](http://www.bottomlineblack.com)  
Email: [kendall@bottomlineblack.com](mailto:kendall@bottomlineblack.com)  
Service, Region 2

### BRIGHT IDEA VENTURES

Gary Glenn  
2887 Goat Creek Rd, Lot 243  
Kerrville, TX 78028-8991  
PH: 325-665-4993  
Website: [www.brightidearvledlights.com](http://www.brightidearvledlights.com)  
Email: [gary@brightidearvledlights.com](mailto:gary@brightidearvledlights.com)  
Supplier, Region 10

### CHARLOTTE MEMORIAL FUNERAL HOME

Erin Regan  
9400 Indian Spring Cemetary Rd  
Punta Gorda, FL 33950  
PH: 239-699-1826  
FAX: 941-637-1795  
Website: [www.charlottememorial.com](http://www.charlottememorial.com)  
Email: [erin.regan@sharelife.net](mailto:erin.regan@sharelife.net)  
Service, Region 1

### CITRUS PARK RV RESORT

Keith Madden  
25581 Trost Blvd  
Bonita Springs, FL 34135-6422  
PH: 239-992-3030  
Website: [www.mycitruspark.com](http://www.mycitruspark.com)

Email: [kmadden@murexproperties.com](mailto:kmadden@murexproperties.com)  
Campground, Region 1

### FIRE DISC COOKERS

Lou Gasperin  
16840 Barker Springs Rd, Ste C-300  
Houston, TX 77084-5066  
PH: 281-206-2678  
Website: [www.firedisccookers.com](http://www.firedisccookers.com)  
Email: [customerservice@firedisc-cookers.com](mailto:customerservice@firedisc-cookers.com)  
Supplier, Region 10

### GINGER MOUNTAIN COMPANY

Robert Neidler  
O'Brien, FL 32071-1805  
PH: 912-495-8270  
Website: [www.GingerMountainCandles.com](http://www.GingerMountainCandles.com)  
Email: [gingermountainco@gmail.com](mailto:gingermountainco@gmail.com)  
Supplier, Region 7

### HARBOR BELLE RV RESORT

Gary Bailey  
3701 Baynard Dr  
Punta Gorda, FL 33950-7517  
PH: 941-639-2010  
Website: [www.harborbellervresort.com](http://www.harborbellervresort.com)  
Email: [hbrv@cobblestoneassets.com](mailto:hbrv@cobblestoneassets.com)  
Campground, Region 1

### HEALTH & BEAUTY CONNECTIONS LLC

Maria Stoynov  
6501 Arlington Expressway, B105  
Jacksonville, FL 32211-5779  
PH: 407-307-8574  
Website: [www.hnbconnection.com](http://www.hnbconnection.com)  
Email: [info@hnbc.us](mailto:info@hnbc.us)  
Supplier, Region 6

### MID FLORIDA RV RENTALS

Darrell Hovarter  
6128 Lewis Ave  
Gibsonton, FL 33534-4704  
PH: 813-494-8501  
Website: [www.midfloridarvrental.com](http://www.midfloridarvrental.com)

Email: [oinfo@midfloridarvrental.com](mailto:oinfo@midfloridarvrental.com)  
Service, Region 3

### PETER STONE

Peter Koslowski  
Selbyville, DE 19975-1008  
PH: 302-344-5454  
Toll Free: 800-397-8787  
FAX: 302-380-4779  
Website: [www.peterstonelive.com](http://www.peterstonelive.com)  
Email: [live@peterstone.com](mailto:live@peterstone.com)  
Supplier, Region 10

### PHOENIX AMERICAN COMPANIES

Steven Brooks  
6303 Blue Lagoon Dr, Ste 225  
Miami, FL 33126-6004  
PH: 305-266-5665  
Website: [www.phoenixamerican.com](http://www.phoenixamerican.com)  
Email: [sabrooks@phoenixec.com](mailto:sabrooks@phoenixec.com)  
Insurance, Region 2

### SHOW BUCKETS

Diana Holder  
2221 W County Road 44  
Eustis, FL 32726-2604  
PH: 352-250-3206  
Website: [www.showbuckets.com](http://www.showbuckets.com)  
Email: [showbuckets@gmail.com](mailto:showbuckets@gmail.com)  
Supplier, Region 7

### SOUTHERN ROOTS DESIGN

Ashley Till  
4170 Gordon Rd  
Senoia, GA 30276-2612  
PH: 678-492-6428  
Website: [www.southernrootsdesign.net](http://www.southernrootsdesign.net)  
Email: [ashley@southernrootsdesigns.net](mailto:ashley@southernrootsdesigns.net)  
Supplier, Region 10

### SUNCOAST MOBILE RV REPAIR

Brian & Amy Mellott  
North Port, FL 34288-8307  
PH: 941-467-4001  
Website: [www.suncoastmobilervrepair.com](http://www.suncoastmobilervrepair.com)  
Email: [suncoastmobilerv@gmail.com](mailto:suncoastmobilerv@gmail.com)  
Repair, Region 1

## MEETING DATES



*Region 1 • March 5 • Twin Isle Country Club • 301 Madrid Blvd • Punta Gorda*  
*Region 2 • March 11 • PGA National Resort • Palm Terrace Room, 400 Avenue of the Champions • Palm Beach Gardens*  
*Region 3 • March 10 • Westshore Grand • 4860 W Kennedy Blvd • Tampa*  
*Region 4 • No Meeting • Tony Roma's • 8560 International Dr • Orlando*  
*Region 5 • No Meeting • Tuscany Italian Bistro • 36178 Emerald Parkway • Destin*  
*Region 6 • March 17 • Bonefish Grill • 10950 San Jose Blvd • Jacksonville*  
*Region 7 • March 24 • Braised Onion • 754 NE 25th Ave • Ocala*  
**ALL MEETINGS: Cocktails 6:30 PM • Dinner 7:00 PM**